

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS
City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street
Farmington, Michigan
May 9, 2016

Chairperson Crutcher called the Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan, on Monday, May 9, 2016.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chiara, Crutcher, Gronbach, Kmetzo, Waun

Absent: Buyers, Majoros

A quorum of the Commission was present.

OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT: Director Christiansen

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Gronbach, seconded by Kmetzo, to approve the agenda as submitted.

Motion carried, all ayes.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

a. Minutes of Regular Meeting – March 14 , 2016

Motion by Kmetzo, seconded by Waun, to approve the items on the Consent Agenda.
Motion carried, all ayes.

Christiansen stated the order of Agenda Items 4 and 5 would be switched for tonight's meeting.

PRELIMINARY DRAFT 2016 RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Crutcher introduced this agenda item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen stated this agenda item is a review of a preliminary draft of the 2016 Recreation Master Plan. He stated the City has been working with LSL Planning for the last six months to move forward with updating the City of Farmington Recreation Master Plan. He indicated the last update was in 2005. He said the City entered into an agreement last November with LSL with a goal to complete the Recreation Master Plan by June. He stated the draft requires review and approval by the Planning Commission and a Public Hearing must be held. He indicated a Parks and Recreation Committee was formed existing of five members, one being Commissioner Buyers, a representative from the DDA, one from City Council, Annette Knowles and the President of South Farmington Baseball, Inc., John Barber.

He stated it was quite a process evaluating existing conditions, that a survey was sent out to the community and was kept open and remains open on the City website. He said an open house was held at Farmington High School regarding City parks and residents were given an opportunity to share ideas on what they would like to see changed, enhanced or modified at any of the City's parks. He indicated the culmination of the gathering of all of this information has resulted in a preliminary draft of the 2016 Recreation Master Plan.

He introduced the representatives from LSL, Josh Penn and Chris Gruba, and invited them to the podium.

Gruba introduced himself and stated that he is new with LSL but has been a planner for some time and is excited to work with the City as he takes over the job duties of Michelle Foster and will be the lead contact for LSL, but indicated that Josh Penn had done most of the work on the project.

Penn stated that he would be taking the Commissioners through the presentation of the Preliminary Draft Plan which they had been provided a copy of. He encouraged them to interrupt and ask questions if they had any during the course of the presentation.

He stated the purpose of the plan was to inventory and provide strategies for park & recreation projects incorporating the feedback from the open house and set goals for the next five years and set an action plan moving forward. He indicated one of the criteria for eligibility for grant funding opportunities from the MDNR is to have a five year plan in place.

He indicated a city inventory of parks was done and stated there are six parks consisting of roughly 37 acres, that classifications of parks were based on size and proximity to people with each of the parks falling into different categories that cover a variety of uses. He said that the changes in Flanders Park will be brought up to date before the final draft.

He then went on to the school inventory, citing there are five public schools consisting of roughly 93 acres that provide athletic facilities, playgrounds and open space. He stated that the regional inventory was included to get a sense of where Farmington fit within the Southeastern Michigan region with respect to other Michigan State Parks with the Huron Clinton Metro Park System and other county parks, many of which are located within a short distance or drive from Farmington.

Crutcher asked to define "short distance" and Penn responded that the shortest is ten minutes and could go up to a half hour in distance.

Kmetzo asked Penn if the definition of "school parks" was a park near a school and he responded that it is a park owned by the public school system be it sports fields, playground areas that are owned and operated by the Farmington Public Schools.

Crutcher asked if it included private schools and Penn responded in the negative but noted that their analysis will document and inventory the private facilities as well but for the purposes of this inventory those were not considered semi-public but will be accounted for in their final document.

Kmetzo asked if in addition to the six parks identified there are 93 acres of school parks and Penn confirmed that number.

Gronbach stated that Farmington has a joint agreement with Farmington Hills where parks and recreation are operated together somewhat, and asked if their park system was included in the inventory and Penn responded no, not for the presentation tonight but is included in the community wide recreation inventory and will be reflected in the final plan.

Crutcher asked if they would then be included in the regional parks count since they are not in the City and Penn answered that it will under a category that will include private park facilities and other local parks, which again may shift depending on feedback from the stakeholder committee. He stated they created this inventory as a preliminary draft for presentation at tonight's meeting and on Thursday, May 12th, he will be attending a stakeholder committee meeting and will put flesh on the bones of this structure, specifically to action plan goals and a draft will then be sent to the committee for review for accuracy of inventory, providing feedback on the order of things and if any concerns arise, they will be addressed then.

He stated the overall park analysis reflected a surplus in park acreage, two slight deficits in mini parks and community parks but indicated that because the neighborhood and regional park categories made up for the deficit, no recommendation will be made to the City to seek land acquisition or take any action based on the deficits.

He then went on to the facilities analysis and stated there were several small deficiencies, but mostly surpluses, citing there is a deficiency of one basketball court, two volleyball courts and nine-hole and eighteen-hole golf courses, reminding the Commission these figures are public facilities and does not include any private ones in the reflection.

Gronbach asked if the Farmington Hills Public Course was included in the count and Penn responded in the negative even though Farmington residents are allowed use of the facility.

Chiara stated that Farmington residents no longer get the same rates as Farmington Hills residents.

Gronbach indicated that knowing that the City has a joint agreement with Farmington Hills, he would hope that is being recognized and acknowledged in the analysis where appropriate and how it would fit into the plan seeing as it was the intent of Farmington to

be a part of that in order to provide that facility to residents and that it be taken into consideration in any recommendations made.

Penn thanked Gronbach for the feedback and indicated that is something that is worth discussing with the stakeholder committee.

Gronbach asked if that topic had been discussed and Penn indicated it is in the plan and he is aware of the intergovernmental agreement and Gronbach stated he would think that it should be discussed and they should be aware of the details to see how it coincides with the City's plan.

Penn stated that it is something that would be added in and a footnote created to indicate it is a Farmington Hills facility so that those reading the plan down the road are aware of that and there is no confusion and a distinction is made between the two.

He then presented the goals reflected in the 2005 Recreation Plan and asked the Commissioners if they were still useful, accurate and relevant for the current planning process.

He stated the 2005 goals as follows:

Retain the existing recreational land.

Continue to develop recreational land, facilities, programs, and services to meet the evolving needs of the residents of the City and the neighboring communities.

Expand green spaces areas within the downtown.

Kmetzo stated it would be good to know if the 2005 goals were reached, where we are now, where do we want to be and do we want to continue with those in place and/or make new goals for 2017.

Gronbach indicated that one of the points mentioned was to make sure things are integrated and stated there have been other studies and other visions done and in the last year or so there was a vision plan done that involved Shiawassee Park and the connection between downtown and some of the future development and he would want to make sure that LSL and the committee are both aware of that plan and that that be integrated into or at least referenced in this plan to ensure everyone is on the same page.

Penn thanked them for the feedback.

The next item discussed was the Action Plan and he stated the reasoning behind the inventory and analysis is so that it can be put in a year by year listing of prioritized projects, goals and actions for the parks. He then went over the findings compiled from the open house in March for the various parks and asked the Commissioners to provide feedback when he was finished.

Chiara stated he would like to see the underutilized tennis courts be turned into outdoor pickle ball courts, as that is the fastest growing sport and he is unaware of any outdoor pickle ball courts in or around the community, only indoor ones.

Kmetzo stated it is very difficult to come up with ideas on what should be done with the parks but commented if the recreation goals were determined and then prioritized based on the needs of the community, that that process would determine what the end result would be with Flanders and other parks.

Penn indicated he had heard mention of dog parks, playscapes, and picnic areas being discussed possibly for Flanders.

He then went into the Action Plan and asked the Commissioners what they would like to add, remove or change in the goals for the various parks. He stated outdoor pickle ball courts could be one, accessibility ramp to Shiawassee Park could be another.

Gronbach stated the whole visioning process done for Shiawassee Park and the connection in the downtown presented a lot of good ideas, including water features, pathways, disc golf, and rather than reiterate the findings of that visioning study, they should be included in the Recreation Master Plan.

Christiansen stated the vision plan for Shiawassee has been studied by the committee and indicated the purpose of the agenda item for the Planning Commission tonight is to bring the Commission up to speed as to where things are at and find out where the Commission stands as far as the City's park system and provide feedback, if any, where they feel necessary and provide an opportunity to share opinions.

He also described the process of having specialized subgroups look at each park individually and come up with recommendations for same.

He stated LSL is looking for any comments to bring to the stakeholder meeting on Thursday and indicated once the preliminary draft is done, the public hearing will then be scheduled that is required by State statute and then move forward with the draft being acted on and approved by the Planning Commission so it can be current and allow the City to be eligible for funding from the State for the park upgrades.

Kmetzo asked for clarification on the purpose of the individual groups looking at the parks and if they are working towards the same vision for the City of Farmington and their parks plan and expressed concern about it becoming disjointed as to which direction to follow.

Christiansen explained that there are various groups but they are all working under the same umbrella of the Recreation Master Plan, with the staff facilitating the process, the consultant who is providing services to help the City prepare the plan, the Recreation Master Plan Committee, a cross section of leaders from the City's Boards and Commissions and stakeholders in the community, and then the individual park

subgroups looking at the various parks and bringing ideas back to the committee and now to the Planning Commission.

Kmetzo asked if there were guidelines that the Recreation Master Plan would follow to provide consistency and current standards in their process such as wireless connections, ecofriendly, technical savvy and the like for them to follow and Christiansen responded there are State guidelines by Statute for what is mandated to be in the Recreation Master Plan and that it can contain anything the City wants as long as it meets requirements to make the City eligible for funding.

Waun recommended that some type of public art component be included in the plan that is interesting and not just functional.

Chiara reiterated his request for outdoor pickle ball courts.

Christiansen stated if there were any comments the Commissioners wanted to make post meeting that he would relay them to LSL. He invited everyone to attend the stakeholder meeting on Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

Penn explained the next steps in the process being presenting the preliminary draft to the committee on Thursday for direction, making an action plan and present that to the stakeholder committee for review which will be turned back to LSL for edits and initiate a 30-day public review on the City website, at the end of which a public hearing will be scheduled and recommendation for adoption and sent to the MDNR.

Crutcher thanked them for their presentation.

OUTDOOR SEATING SITE PLAN REVIEW – CHIVE KITCHEN, 33043 GRAND RIVER AVENUE, The Groves Retail Center

Crutcher introduced this agenda item and turned it over to staff.

Christiansen indicated that a representative from S3 Architecture, Alex Steinke, is present at the meeting to present the request for Chive Kitchen.

Steinke introduced herself and stated she is a student at Lawrence Tech University and is serving as the representative of S3 Architecture and their client Chive Kitchen.

She stated they are proposing a site plan and design review for the outdoor seating area in front of the Chive Kitchen in downtown Farmington. The floor plan of the outdoor seating was presented on the screen which demonstrated the plan with the walkway around with the area situated in front of the building located at 33043 Grand River in the Groves Retail Center.

Renderings were shown from the straight on view showing that the seating would be located more towards TJMaxx. Specs of furniture were shown that consisted of basic chairs and tables and planter boxes in addition to create greenery in the space as well.

Christiansen indicated there is a staff report in the meeting packets which states that the owner of Chive Kitchen, Susie Sylvestri, has submitted a site plan application for proposed outdoor seating for her existing restaurant located 33043 Grand River Avenue at the Groves Retail Center, in the Central Business District in downtown. Outdoor seating in the CBD requires approval by the Downtown Development Authority and the Planning Commission. No changes regarding building dimensions or other site improvements are proposed. He stated at their April 14, 2016 meeting the DDA Design Committee recommended approval of the proposed outdoor seating for Chive Kitchen to the Planning Commission. The plans they reviewed were in the packets which include a layout of the proposed outdoor seating area as well as samples of the proposed seating tables and chairs and planter boxes. Additional site plan information for Groves Retail Center was attached.

Christiansen stated the outdoor seating area for the Groves Retail Center was designed and reviewed and approved as part of the redevelopment of Grove Street and Groves Retail Center which includes all of the uses from Dress Barn to the TJMaxx and part of the redevelopment was the City acquiring the parking in front of the Center and combining that with Groves Street to create a new Groves Street which is a two-way boulevard, one in each direction, with angle parking and then on the Groves Retail side a new promenade, outdoor seating area and all approved as part of the PUD for the entire Groves Retail Center. He indicated on a case by case basis new tenants if they desire outdoor seating are required to appear before the DDA Design Committee with their plans and the Planning Commission. Christiansen stated they are very excited to have a restaurant use using the outdoor seating area. He noted adjacent uses that aren't restaurants like The Cheese Lady have some tables and chairs outside and use the area but not for the serving of food.

He also noted that in the elevation plans the series of awnings that are attached to the building and come down and are anchored by poles are now installed.

He indicated there is a State statute regarding outdoor seating, serving of alcohol, and the owner has gone through that process with the Liquor Control Commission to be able to serve outside. He also stated the former requirement was that the area be entirely enclosed and that that has changed and now requires just a defined area which the use of planter boxes meets that requirement.

The floor was opened for questions from the Commissioners.

Chiara commented out of all the outdoor seating plans that have come before the Commission, this is the best plan they've seen.

Crutcher asked if there was trash receptacles in the area and Christiansen stated they are required to by the Health Department because they are serving food. He also indicated the tables and chairs are portable and able to be moved and stored on a nightly basis.

Kmetzo inquired of Christiansen if the initial plan for Groves was to accommodate outdoor seating what is the purpose for the need to present the plans for outdoor seating and have approval by the Planning Commission again.

Christiansen responded that on a case by case basis the uses have to come before the Planning Commission to make sure they comply with the requirements.

Crutcher asked how the barrier free seating is addressed with the seating arrangements and Christiansen responded there are drop down curbs directly adjacent from the street and there are barrier free parking spaces adjacent with barrier free access.

Kmetzo asked how far the seating extends beyond Chives and it was pointed out on the screen as being from pillar to post. She further inquired if there is enough space on the walkway if people want to come from TJMaxx all the way to Dress Barn and Christiansen responded in the affirmative.

Gronbach stated that there were comments by the Design Committee about the wood tables being scissor shaped and the materials and asked if there should be something more durable and Christiansen stated that was reported to the Economic and Community Development by the DDA and that was followed up with the owner and S3 and additional review was done on the tables and their stability and it was reported back by S3 that they were satisfied with the proposed tables.

MOTION by Chiara, supported by Waun, to approve the site plan for outdoor seating for Chive Kitchen, 33043 Grand River Avenue, The Groves Retail Center.
Motion carried, all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None heard.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS

Chiara stated he would like the contact list of commissioners updated with email addresses and phone numbers.

STAFF COMMENTS

Christiansen gave a preview of upcoming items for the Planning Commission as well as the status of various projects ongoing in the City.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Kmetzo, seconded by Chiara, to adjourn the meeting.
Motion carried, all ayes.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary