

# Parks Commission

## Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 8, 2014  
6:00 p.m., Council Chambers



City of South Haven

### 1. Call to Order by Reinert at 6:00 p.m.

### 2. Roll Call

Present: Cobbs, Moore, Toneman, White, Montgomery-Reinert

Absent: Comeau, *Fitzgibbon*

### 3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Moore, second by Toneman to approve the agenda as presented.

All in favor. Motion carried.

### 4. Approval of Minutes for the Record – June 10, 2014

Motion by Cobb, second by Moore to approve the June 10, 2014 regular meeting minutes for the record.

All in favor. Motion carried.

### 5. Public Comments and Inquiries Concerning Items not on the Agenda

There were none.

### OLD BUSINESS

### 6. Commission will be requested to review conceptual plans for the Dyckman Beach Access Improvements.

Halberstadt reviewed the options provided by Cornelisse Design Associates, Inc.

Reviewing Option A, which has a low seat wall that would serve as the sign, Halberstadt noted that there is a similar seat wall in front of City Hall and directed the commission to the photograph of same in the packet. Noted that there could be decorative bricks or tile in front of the seat wall in lieu of the swath of concrete shown in the illustration.

In response to questions from the commissioners regarding the size of the proposed seat wall and whether this intersection would still be a 4-way stop, Halberstadt informed that during the reconstruction the driveway into the parking area will shift to be centered on the driving aisle in the parking lot and there will still be signs to indicate a 4-way stop. The seat wall would only have two sections of concrete as opposed to the larger one in front of city hall. Toneman questioned whether the number of parking spaces in the Dyckman Access would increase or decrease, to which Halberstadt responded neither, the number of parking spaces will remain the same. Halberstadt noted that the cost of this conceptual plan, Option A, would run around \$8,000.

Reviewing Options B, C and D, Halberstadt indicated that all use some form of free-standing sign. Halberstadt pointed out the Ellen Avery Park sign included in the packet which is made from a plastic composite as an example of a sign being used in the city that is a little nicer quality than some of the other signs. Options B, C and D would cost around \$4,000 to \$5,000. Discussion ensued regarding the life span of this type of sign with Halberstadt noting that the sign shows little sign of wear.

Photo 5 in the Parks Agenda packet shows supplementary signs that are available at the far end of the parking lot as people enter the beach area. These signs inform of the beach hours and rules.

Halberstadt displayed the new kiosk at City Hall as another potential sign type to consider, with size modifications appropriate to location.

Reinert asked whether the designer made any recommendations. Halberstadt noted that the designer did not make any recommendation but she suggested getting something for such entrances that are a little nicer than what has been used in the past. Noted that signs posted at the entrance of a park or beach area often have too much information to digest when driving into the park. Halberstadt suggested just the name of the area at the entrance with the informational signs closer to where patrons are entering the beach area from the parking area. Reinert commented on continuity of signs and believes a welcoming sign at the entrance is sufficient in that area.

Elaine Herbert, 140 North Shore Drive. Noted that standardizing all over town, repeating the same image, colors and design, is good marketing practice. Asked whether Dyckman access is a park. Reinert noted it is a public beach access. Halberstadt noted that some areas are in the charter for the parks, however he is not sure if Dyckman access is one of them. Herbert noted that there are a few of these areas, naming Newcome and Oak Street, and stated, "Understanding where they fall and whether they need all these park rules, etc. is up to you guys. My concerns are that this is a significant beach access, it's very busy; very visible; anyone going to North Beach goes by it. It is one of the last small open views; the sunsets are directly visible when coming across the drawbridge in the summer. For those who don't own lake property it's a very significant view. Anything that blocks the view can be somewhere other than in the view of the lake." Herbert recommended keeping the front sign low-profile, noting Option A is low profile and she thinks the simpler the better.

Reinert asked why this is called an "access" and suggested calling it "Dyckman Beach". Halberstadt noted that the city treats these as parks, whether or not there is a formal legal description of it as a park. Herbert commented that calling it an access seems to indicate to some people that this is a place to launch a boat, so they drive in there pulling their boat or jet-skis on a trailer and then have to maneuver back out.

After discussion initiated by Moore regarding public and private beaches, Herbert noted that the high water mark is where private property starts. Moore commented on the high taxes people with lakefront property pay and stated that the Michigan law only made the public beach available for traverse by things such as quad runners. Herbert said general understanding is that people can walk the beach and enjoy it, but only park a blanket on a public beach. Halberstadt noted that the bottom lands belong to the state; people can actually put their chair in six (6) inches of water beyond a privately owned lot.

It was noted that Dyckman is a place for people to park and walk down to the beach. It is not a park; there is nothing there but parking spaces and the beach.

Reinert agrees with Herbert that Option 1 is the best, and also consider whether this type of signage could begin to be used as signs are replaced in other areas. Halberstadt agrees with working toward some consistency.

Moore suggested using the logo on the sign/bench. Reinert and Herbert reiterated simplicity. Reinert suggested less concrete and maybe brick pavers; keep the openness but do less sidewalk.

Herbert noted that a lot of people in this town would like to have one beach that could be a dog beach and she would have no objection if that were Dyckman Beach.

Herbert commented that Suzie Fitzgibbon has talked to her about not liking the beach grasses, such as those at Avery Park and noted, "I respect her opinion but I love those grasses. If Dyckman had the low beach grasses it would be a beautiful, soft transition." It was discussed that there are smaller, low-growing grasses available and when they get overgrown they need to be divided.

Moore noted that there seems to be some consensus among the board:

- Low profile
- Use the term Beach instead of Access
- Consistent signage throughout the Parks and Beaches

Reinert requested that Halberstadt go back to Cornelisse and ask that she address some of the concerns discussed. "Is everybody agreeable with Option A?"

Toneman disagreed with less concrete; he likes Option A the way it was presented. Toneman spoke to the concrete being a spot where bikers could stop momentarily to rest or wait for others in their group to catch up. Herbert commented that she would like bikes to stay off the sidewalks and stay on the streets. Reinert wondered if Cornelisse could show some variations on Option A.

Halberstadt noted that what is put in the public right-of-way is up for discussion. Reinert noted that Fitzgibbon objected to grasses that impede the view; there may be some type of plants that could be used on both sides that would be appealing. A combination of this and Option A might be a good place to start.

Motion by Moore to accept Option A with plantings being low profile and change the name to Dyckman Beach. Second by White.

Yeas: Cobbs, Moore, White, Reinert.

Nays: none.

Motion carried.

Toneman indicated that he abstained.

Halberstadt recommends that we get Cornelisse to show some actual plants that are low profile, perennial and low maintenance.

Toneman suggested that it be checked to be sure whether this is even something the Parks Commission can rule on, asking where this request came from. Halberstadt noted that the City Manager asked that he bring this to Parks Commission.

Herbert asked if there is a consistent font that is used on signage throughout the city, noting "that makes the city look good".

Discussion of whether this Dyckman beach access property is in the DDA (Downtown Development Authority). Herbert suggested that there is a lot of money that could be made available for this kind of project. Discussion ensued regarding the fence removal being a big improvement to that area already.

#### NEW BUSINESS

#### **7. Commission will be requested to review changes to the play structure at Kid's Corner.**

Halberstadt explained that this play structure was built as a community project in 1988 and noted that the city wants to be sensitive to the people that originally built this.

Halberstadt informed that there was a bit of an incident where a child tripped on one of the higher tires and got his head stuck in the inside of a tire. In response to that incident staff stuffed the tires with some plastic tubing to eliminate anyone else getting stuck in them. "The question I'm bringing to you is whether you want to replace these tire climbers with something else".

Moore asked how many similar incidents have been reported, to which Halberstadt responded that this is the only one he is aware of. After discussion of replacing the tire climbers with a metal climber, Toneman suggested the metal climber appears more dangerous than the tires. Reinert commented that she thinks putting in metal components takes away from what the park is. Consensus of the commissioners is that the retrofitting of the tires has solved much of the issue. Discussion ensued regarding whether the tires need to be replaced or not, putting boards under the tire climber or rubber underneath the tires. Further discussion regarding this being a freak accident and the only one staff is aware of in over twenty-five years. Reinert noted that staff has already done something to make it safer and again suggested putting a rubber safety mat beneath the taller tire climber. Toneman noted that the structure was built for safety.

Halberstadt noted that a major safety issue could be improved upon by putting a different base material under the entire structure, but that product is very expensive.

Reinert asked if there is pressure from somewhere to do more to address the safety concern, to which Halberstadt responded that there is not.

Motion by Moore, second by Toneman to accept the safety modifications that have been done to the present tire climbers at the Kids Corner play structure at Monroe Park.

All in favor. Motion carried.

In response to a question from Reinert, Halberstadt responded that the restrooms at Monroe Park have been repaired and are open to the public.

Halberstadt also noted that during the course of working around the restroom building, it was observed that the roofing is in need of repair or replacement. Bids are being solicited for that work.

Halberstadt informed of an incident this past weekend in which a child was going down a metal slide which has a wooden railing framework. The child slid down holding onto the wooden rail and got a big sliver in his hand. Toneman suggested replace the rails or sand them down. Moore suggested replacing the wood with composite material. There was discussion of the prudence of future replacements being done with composite material.

## **8. Commissioner Comments**

Moore: Asked for an update on bike racks. Halberstadt reported that he has not gotten any out yet but has been working with Ron Dotson, the Operations Manager, regarding where best to place racks that would not be in the way of spring sand removal. Reinert stated that she noticed that no new racks have been placed on North Shore Drive and that she looked at various bike racks in town. Moore asked if the goal is to unify the bike racks or just make sure there are bike racks there. Reinert pointed out that the city wants bikers to come into the community so bike racks need to be installed. Halberstadt noted that the original discussion was a simple concern that there were not any bike racks in some areas, so the question is whether to just put in the bike racks we have or do something nicer. Halberstadt noted that if we unify things, we could have a backup in stock in case we need to replace one due to damage. Reinert pointed out that if the funds are available, one bike rack could be placed at each spot. Halberstadt said that is his intention.

Moore: Still has questions about tennis courts. Halberstadt noted that nothing has really happened since the last meeting and reminded that there are plans to have tennis courts in the SHARP park when they get the funding to build it. Moore noted that project has been going on for ten years with no progress. Halberstadt noted it has been a long project and he does not really know what to tell you as he has not been involved.

Moore: Asked why the bench donor had to ask permission to put a bench on his own property. Halberstadt explained that the request was for the bench to be placed in the public right of way.

Moore noted that there is a cleanup at Black River Preserve on 8<sup>th</sup> Street, next to the Rod and Gun Club tomorrow.

Toneman: Observed that the dogs were taking over the farmer's market on Saturday. Big dogs. Noted that Holland has barred dogs from their farmer's market. There were big dogs, going at it, going after the food. Moore agreed that it was very uncomfortable this weekend. Halberstadt will bring this issue to the city manager's attention.

Moore: Asked for an update on the sailboard rental operation. Halberstadt said it was approved at City Council. Discussion ensued regarding the number of red flag and rainy days. Moore noted that the he is sure the owner is not going to take them down there when there are warnings out.

Cobbs: No comment.

White: Asked about fencing for Elkenburg Playground. Halberstadt informed that Abonmarche has been getting quotations. Once they had three (3) quotations the request will go to the State of Michigan granting agency for permission to go forward. Halberstadt hopes to see that installation within the next four (4) weeks. Cobb asked whether parking on the street near the play area could be eliminated. Halberstadt said staff can certainly look at that, noting that there are some weird older regulations in place. Halberstadt hopes once the fence is up it will eliminate most of that problem. Suggestions of placing No Parking and Children Playing signs at least until the fence is up.

## **9. Adjourn**

Motion by Moore, second by Cobbs to adjourn at 7:04 p.m.

All in favor. Motion carried.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Marsha Ransom  
Recording Secretary