



March 1, 2010

Meeting Minutes of the Birchwood Parks and Natural Resources Committee

Members Present: Craig Aichele, Mike Connelly, John Lund, Kathy Malles, Cynthia Tomlinson,
Gene Ruehle

Absent: Deb Harrod

Also Present: Barb Carson, Council Representative

Meeting called to order at 7:10 p.m.

Discussions:

Tennis Courts and Warming House: The Committee discussed which project the committee should advise to the city for action this year: a new permanent warming house or tennis court repairs.

The factors in favor of fixing the tennis courts this year are that they are in extremely poor condition, bids for repairs have been received and reviewed, funds have already been set aside, the USTA grant application already in motion applies to this year, bidding is very competitive this year, and repairs could be made in time for summer. Factors against proposing a new warming house for this year are that it would take considerable lead time to seek and apply for funds, and a suitable temporary solution is available to rent a portable unit again next winter.

The bids received for tennis court repairs were discussed in more detail, including the eco-friendly materials used (recycled from plastic bottles), tree removal if needed, life cycle/warranty, prep, and installation process.

Moved by Cynthia, seconded by Gene, that the committee recommend Flex Court International for tennis court repairs to be done this calendar year. Motion unanimously approved.

John will work with Mike and Cynthia to prepare a presentation packet of the committee's recommendations to the council for presentation at the March 9th council meeting.

Tennis Lessons: Assuming the USTA grant will be approved, the committee discussed their requirement that Birchwood offer five years of organized tennis lessons. Kathy will contact WBL and area community education programs to see if lessons at our courts could be offered through their tennis program (if not too late for their publication). Other sources would be checked into as well. Cynthia thought it may be better for Birchwood to organize the lessons and that it wouldn't take much time to do.

Birch Easement Rain Garden/Stormwater Runoff:

Gene reported that some plants need to be replaced at the Birch Easement rain garden. Cynthia said that it had been built using professional advice. Kathy recommended a booklet by MPCA, *Plants for Stormwater Design*, that details which plants do better in different situations and said that the Blue Thumb education program would be a good resource on rain gardens and will try to schedule a workshop.

Gene would like to organize a subcommittee to deal with the stormwater runoff and erosion. Craig knows someone with the RCWD, and Kathy suggested contacting the Washington Conservation District for advice since they provide engineering help and can suggest grant sources from RCWD, MPCA, MDNR,

and BWSR. The MPCA has announced additional funding for Section 319 and for the Clean Water Partnership this spring. These grants provide financial and technical aid for non-point source water pollution. Also, the BWSR is offering new grants with most of the funds earmarked for runoff reduction.

Gene recommended prioritizing and planning for the areas to focus on with input from the WCD engineer. Kathy will schedule it. Mike recommended a subcommittee to address stormwater issues, and Gene has and will be contacting people who may be interested.

Miscellaneous:

John plans on getting a wood chipper for placing chips onto Ash walkway. Gene suggested composing leaves also. Gene suggested that Birchwood offer swimming lessons as it has been done in the past.

Proposed Preventive Park Maintenance Schedule:

An ongoing parks maintenance list from Randy LaFoy was compiled by Cynthia. Committee members should review the list and decide how often tasks need to be done on a regular basis and if others need to be added or removed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35.

Submitted by:
Kathy Malles