

DRAFT FOR APPROVAL

Oasis Park Planning Committee Minutes Regular Meeting Monday, February 2, 2009 7:00 P.M.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Larry Falbe called the Oasis Park Planning Committee ("OPPC") meeting to order at 7 pm.

II. Roll Call

Upon a call of the roll, the following Committee members were:

Present: Members Borkowski, Breslow, Donato, Gray, Pickell, Towne, Forrest, Tindall, and
Chairman Falbe

Absent: none

III. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the January 11, 2009 meeting were not available for approval, so Chairman Falbe stated this item would be continued until the next meeting.

IV. Introductory Remarks – Chairman Falbe

Chairman Falbe thanked everyone for coming to the OPPC meeting. He reported that he had walked the property under consideration with the MOLA President, Sheryl Pytlarz since the last meeting, and they reviewed the tree quality of many trees. Chairman Falbe also discussed the letter he had sent to all Mettawa residents and stated that future updates may be done via the Village website in order to save money. He also had updated the Village Board since the last OPPC meeting and had received a \$7,500 budget for the Village Planner's work on this project. He had received two email comments from residents as well as various conversations regarding the park. One individual stressed her desire for a bathroom since she has children who would be using the park.

V. Comments from Village Planner and Committee Members

The Village Planner (Nick Patera of Teska Associates) walked the OPPC and the public attendees through a presentation which included an initial sketch drawing and four scenarios. Three of the scenarios assumed the purchase of all three parcels of land, totaling 18 acres. One of the scenarios assumed only two of the parcels being purchased, totaling 14 acres. He noted the existing wetland at the north end of the property. He discussed using berming by the oasis where needed to provide security. He discussed the idea of having two ponds – one at the north and another at the south – which would catch the water detention runoff. All the plans included smaller parking lot areas than the prior drawings, approximately 15 parking spots. He reviewed the location of the pavilion, playground, waling trail, and the equestrian trail. The different scenarios had the entrance to the park in various locations on Bradley Road, and each scenario offered a variety of different layouts for the park.

Each committee member then had a chance to ask questions and to comment. These included:

- Suggestion that the playground include areas for various ages of children, so the park would remain interesting for kids as they grow up (toddler area, preschool, 5-8 year old area, etc.)
- Concern regarding a pond on the south end from a safety perspective; more kids will be in this area if the playground is in the south half of the park.
- Much discussion regarding the ponds in general – whether there should be two, one, or no ponds. Although no consensus was developed, a majority of the comments seemed to favor one larger, nicer pond at the north end of the pond.

- Security from the oasis continued to be discussed a significant concern
- A “walking entrance” at the south end is desired. Given the immediate proximity to the Hamilton Estates and Enclave subdivisions – both which contain a large number of kids – this will allow many families easy walking access to the park.
- Consensus on having a small parking lot, perhaps 5-10 parking spots in total. The park needs some parking in order for all Mettawa residents to be able to use it, but the purpose of the park is not to serve other communities or to host programmed sports events. The parking lot will go a long way towards managing this issue.
- One sports court (basketball, maybe tennis) is desired.
- A few committee members requested that a bathroom be included since this is much more convenient for young children. Other committee members discussed potential drawbacks of a bathroom, including upkeep/maintenance. No decision was made, other than that additional discussion was needed.
- A “peek-a-boo” on the south end was discussed. This would allow drivers on Bradley Road a glimpse of the park as the drove by, and could also accommodate the “walking entrance.”

The Village Planner thanked the committee members for their input and said based on what he heard, he was leaning towards a modification of Scenario B.

VI. Public Comment

Comments from the public were then taken. These included:

- Bill Nicholson (Village Board Trustee) commented that the park should definitely be intended for all Mettawa residents to be able to use, and that necessitated at least some limited parking for those residents who were not within walking distance. He said that residents had expressed ideas to him for park amenities, including fishing, tennis, and a gun club. He wondered about the liability to the Village if a pond and/or playground were included. He asked if the committee understood the costs involved to the Village to maintain a park. He commented that the park would be costing each household approximately \$50,000, and that all residents needed to feel benefit from it.
 - Chairman Falbe responded that the OPPC would need to get insurance quotes for the pond. Member Tindell commented that insurance would not be affected by including a playground. Chairman Fable also responded that every resident would benefit from the park due to the open land preservation.
- A question was asked regarding how many children lived in the village.
- Additional comments regarding both safety from the ponds and security from the oasis were discussed. These comments were similar in nature to the prior comments on these topics.
- One resident stated that while he understood the “parents of kids” concern about a pond on the south end of the park, he also felt that residents on the north end of the park would be concerned about a pond in close proximity to their homes.
- Chairman Falbe noted that the park benefits residents in at least three different ways:
 - Open space preservation
 - Stops commercial development (since the Village owns the land)
 - The park itself (e.g. the recreational benefit)

After all public comments were heard, the committee discussed next steps with the Village Planner. The Planner will work on the next iteration of Plan B based on the comments from the OPPC and the public, including centralizing the amenities and being flexible on the pond issue. He encouraged the OPPC to think about the long-term management of the park (e.g. what will happen to it in 5 years, 10 years, etc.) After the next iteration of the park plan, Chairman Falbe expects to take the proposed plan to the Village Board for an interim report, then proceed with obtaining cost estimates in preparation for making a final recommendation in the coming months. Full detailed “architect plans” would not be ordered until after the land is actually acquired

Major questions for the OPPC to consider at future meetings include:

- Pond/no pond and related pond issues
- Inclusion of a bathroom, and if so, related issues

- Berming and/or brickwall around oasis and related security issues

VII. Schedule Next Meeting

The next OPPC meeting was scheduled for March 3, 2009, at 7 P.M., again at St. Basil's Church.

VIII. Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded, with the committee unanimously voting in favor. Chairman Falbe declared the motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

Mike Borkowski
OPPC Secretary