

Town of Verona
Open Space and Parks Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 1, 2013

Present: Keen, Miller, and Stellick

Absent: Siehr and Hoffman

Also Present: Tom Mathies and John Wright, Clerk-Treasurer (C-T)

Called to order at 7:35 PM

Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Stellick to approve agenda; 2nd Miller. Motion carried.

Public Comments

C-T Wright reported that Town Residential Building Inspector Dick Steele reviewed the temporary location of fire numbers for member Stellick and resident Cathi Raemisch and found both proposed alternate locations acceptable on a permanent basis. Wright noted the revised burn schedule he sent to subscribers of the Town's listserv contained dated material that was no longer relevant by the date it was sent.

Chair Keen reported he had spoken recently with Darren Marsh of Dane County Parks. According to Marsh, canoe/kayak access and signage for the property purchased off of Bobcat Lane will probably be installed by late May, 2013.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Stellick to approve the April 2013 minutes as presented. There was no objection to the minutes from April 17, 2013; minutes approved.

Update on Property Purchase from the Bruce Company

Chair Keen stated that as of 3:00 PM, May 1, 2013, Bill Welsh of the Natural Heritage Land Trust (NHLT) signed papers for the purchase of the property offered for sale by the Bruce Company. Although the grant money has yet to be awarded to the NHLT, Dane County Parks had enough fund monies available to secure the purchase. Access to the property will most likely be off of STH 69 south of the Sugar River bridge on the east side of the highway. Parking and a canoe/kayak launch point, according to Keen, are in the plans for the near future.

Update Regarding Mulch Request from De Marco Neighborhood Residents

C-T Wright reported that he contacted Jarod from Purple Cow Organics about mulch for the Town of Verona use. The current tipping fee for the Town recycling of organic waste does not include the cost for mulching. Double ground mulch is available for \$12 a cubic yard and colored mulch is \$23 per cubic yard. There followed a general discussion regarding other options for offering residents an opportunity to pick up processed mulch whether it is collected from the Town right-of-way (ROW) by the Patrolman or dropped off by residents at a central location. C-T Wright was uncomfortable with discussions that would involve the use of the Town Patrolman to collect brush from residents that was not from foliage that previously overhung the ROW. Wright reasoned that the Patrolman's authority was to maintain public safety; beautification of private property did not fall under that authority. Wright advocated for contracting with an outside vendor whose insurance would cover any potential liability created by the collection and processing of organic materials.

Chair Keen proposed contracting with a tree service twice annually to process brush brought to their equipment by residents. C-T Wright noted that the Town Office/Hall/Garage is located within a residential neighborhood and that the noise from a chipper would likely encounter local objections. It was noted that the Town is listed as the owner of the 3.648 outlot located at the end of the Pheasant

Lane cul-de-sac near Goose Lake. The Town owns the property, but the property is maintained by a neighborhood association. Other ideas were discussed, including:

- Request quotes for 3 hours of chipping from local contractors
- Ask surrounding municipalities if they own chippers and would be willing to process brush/trees
- Make inquiries with local tree services to see if they will chip a tree they are contracted to remove into a town vehicle
- See if brush pickup can be added to the new Pellitteri contract

Tom Mathies, an applicant to fill one vacancy on this Commission who was present, remarked that chips from some types of trees could be unsuitable for mulch.

Update on Trimming and Brushing Statement of Policy

Chair Keen stated that the language of the Trimming/Brushing Policy with annotations is not what he recalled as the most current version. Keen and Stellick noted several instances where the language was not grammatically correct. There was a brief review of suggested trimming standards to accommodate the passage of emergency vehicles on private drives. C-T Wright wondered if this body wanted to consider a permitting process for any residential work within the Town ROW beyond seeding grass and maintaining the same. The members reviewed some key points and recommended the policy include the following:

- The current standard for trimming along a residential driveway recommended by the Verona Fire Department is 12' by 14' high; Keen recommended increasing 14' to 16'
- Most Town roads have a 66' wide ROW; no obstructions should be present 33' from the centerline of the road, unless the road is not centered within the ROW
- The exception to the ROW clear space rule is a mailbox mounted on a 4" by 4" treated wood post
- Owners whose property is adjacent to the ROW will be notified by the Town 30 days prior to the removal of any planting removals unless the removal is on an emergency basis
- Grass clippings and/or trimming/brushing waste should not be disposed of within the Town ROW, ditching, or drainage culverts unless there is prior permission granted to do so or provisions are made by the parcel owner that it will be picked up by a contractor in a timely manner (paid for by the parcel owner unless the Town agrees to the cost)
- The State Statute should be cited regarding the Town's authority to authorize work within the ROW
- Remove item I from the list of **General Recommendations**
- Add a section appropriate to property owners (dumping, planting, notification); the current policy is geared towards the authority of public works

Members present were uncertain whether the Town of Verona allows boxes mounted on metal poles. C-T Wright noted that the Town does not have intentions to remove all trees or other obstructions nearer than 33' of the centerline of the ROW, but has the authority to do so if its presence becomes an issue. Similarly, if the Town or a public utility the Town grants permission to for work within the ROW has to remove a planting to perform the work, only the sod will be replaced and reseeded and there would be no compensation for a removed tree, shrub, wall, or other structure. Tom Mathies recommended that prior to the Town removing or trimming a planting or removing a wall or fence, the property owner should be given an opportunity to remedy the problem first. Member Miller reported that Dane County required dedication of the ROW to the public when he divided his property. The majority of ROW within the Town is dedicated to the public; fewer property owners have land that extends to the centerline.

C-T Wright was instructed to search for other versions of the policy before the next regular meeting.

Report/Update from Clerk/Treasurer Wright Re: Department of Natural Resources Parking Area

Wright reported that Bruce Richards of Epic agreed for Epic's donation and placement of boulders around the periphery of the parking lot.

Establish an Agenda for the June 5, 2013 Meeting

The following items were suggested for the June meeting: Call to Order; Approval of Agenda; Public Comments; Approval of Meeting Minutes from the May 1, 2013 Meeting; Installation of New Member(s); Continued Review Trimming and Brushing Statement Policy; Report/Update from Clerk-Treasurer Wright on the Department of Natural Resources Parking Area; Report on Mulch and Possible Resources to Chip Brush; Establish July Agenda; and Adjourn.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by Stellick; 2nd by Miller. Motion carried at 9:08 PM.

John Wright
Clerk-Treasurer

Approved: June 5, 2013