

# TOWN OF SHELBY

County of La Crosse

State of Wisconsin



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## APPROVED

### Park and Vacant Land Committee Draft Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, December 6, 2021

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Location: 2800 Ward Ave, La Crosse, WI 54601

**Commissioners Present:** Co-Chairperson Renee Knutson, Co-Chairperson Tim Ehler, Commissioners Jeffrey Butler, Josh Blum, Jean Wiggert, Monica Redmond, Public Works Supervisor Terry Wright, Administrator Christina Peterson, and Town Clerk Fortune Weaver.

**Commissioners Excused:** Brad Reinhart, Meredith Tomesh

**Attendance List:** None

1. Meeting called to order by Knutson at 5:33 p.m.
2. Minutes from 11/8/2021. Knutson proposed a few changes. Motion by Butler to approve minutes from 11/8/2021, second by Blum. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Frisbee Golf Signage - Updates. Wright noted he was given the name of the person who makes the signs, but not the contact information. Wright followed up to get contact information.
4. Park/Trail/Green Space Vision Discussion – Key Items. A lot of similar thoughts and visions submitted. Knutson asked for any additional comments from commissioners. Redmond recommended creating a vision statement, Knutson agreed that it would be a great goal, but the commission should see all the parks and trails before creating a vision statement. Knutson noted comments received that are a great start. Peterson noted that every decision made should be cohesive with the Comprehensive Plan. Conversations had by this committee could lead to some language being added to the Parks and Recreation section of the Utilities and Community Facilities Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Peterson noted that before the committee creates a vision statement, it should reflect on the Comprehensive Plan. Knutson noted she agrees with the common themes and called for any additional comments. No additional comments made.
5. Letter Addressing Concerns with Pammel Creek Park Covered Shelter. Knutson read letter received regarding concerns with the shelter in Pammel Creek. Wright noted that the reason work has halted is because the area needs to settle and should be settled by Spring. Wright noted the plan is to put mulch around the shelter, and to allow for access for wheelchairs and strollers, a ramp will be built on one side. Some foliage can be planted in the mulch to improve the appearance. Ehler noted that a path to the pavilion is needed, but Ehler is unsure if there is a way to put a path without compromising the green space. Redmond noted that if nothing can be done until Spring the residents should still receive a response with a tentative plan and timeline. Wright noted a plan for a tentative trail to the pavilion. Ehler noted that the edges of the pavilion should be completed first and walkway issues should be addressed after. Knutson reiterated the common theme in the vision for parks is accessibility. Knutson noted that all complainants should be reminded of accessibility requirements for Town parks. Redmond reiterated that a response with a tentative plan and timeline would be the best way to address the concern at this time.
6. Citizens' Concerns.
  - a. Arbor Hills Wellhouse Concern. Knutson noted that resident was unable to attend tonight's meeting and read concern aloud. Resident feels the project at the wellhouse is taking a long time and wants to know about the plan to improve the park after the wellhouse is done. Ehler noted the size of the park would not allow for a new baseball diamond. Candahl noted that a pavilion and play equipment would be utilized. Wright noted that there is some existing play

equipment in that park. Redmond asked what residents have requested in the past. Ehler noted that the residents were divided between new play equipment, a soccer field and just leaving green space. Ehler noted picnic tables could be added. Knutson reiterated that the park needs more accessibility. Wright noted wellhouse provides parking. Ehler noted that power and water are there so adding a pavilion wouldn't be a difficult to put in. Ehler reiterated that unless it's a peewee baseball field, there won't be enough space. Candahl noted there are a lot of young families that would use a playset. Wright noted the contractor's vehicles and equipment need to be there until the job is done, and nothing can really be done about that. They need to be there until the work on the wellhouse is completed, which should be done before December 31<sup>st</sup>, but might be later. Knutson will follow up with resident and provide information and bring back any feedback.

7. Lions Club- Light Up the Park- Mormon Coulee Park. Knutson gave overview of the event in Mormon Coulee Park. Redmond noted that there is a lot of lights and Redmond and Ehler agreed it looks nice. Ehler noted that there are now three options for viewing lights in the area: Northside, Rotary Lights and now Mormon Coulee Park.
8. Action Item Discussion – Breidel Coulee Park and Brookwood Park Visits.
  - a. Breidel Coulee Park: Knutson asked for feedback. Redmond noted that it looks like there is so much potential. Wright reminded the commission that much of the area is a swamp. Ehler gave history of an idea in the park for a "learning shelter" that would have been paid for by the La Crosse School District, but it was denied by a former Town Board. Ehler intends to remind the La Crosse School District of this and ask the current Town Board to explore this option. This could be used by all the schools and other groups in the area. Knutson noted the current condition of the park and what the park needs. Redmond asked if there is potential for a walking path into park from surrounding houses, Knutson noted the Town owns adjacent parcels. Knutson also noted that although it's a "blank slate", the committee needs to be mindful of the pheasant population and habitats that exist in that area. Butler noted that it wouldn't take much effort to make this park accessible. Wright noted that some areas are too wet to maintain regularly, so that limits the amount of space the committee can plan for. Ehler mentioned potential for bridges over the marsh. Wright reminded the committee of the potential DNR involvement with bridges. Wright also noted that a game trail exists and is used regularly when weather allows. Wright encouraged committee to utilize the trail when they're able. Ehler agreed the trails should be investigated further by this commission. Knutson noted that Shelby has opportunities to provide greenspace, education, and other unique areas for people to visit and explore. Ehler will touch base with La Crosse School District to see if they would like to be involved. Redmond mentioned a boardwalk would be a great addition to Breidel Coulee Park, Knutson agreed.
  - b. Brookwood Park: Butler noted the park has similar open space as seen in Breidel Coulee. Wright noted the spring riders can no longer be put into parks, existing ones were grandfathered in, but once they break, their done. Butler noted one is broken in Brookwood Park. Redmond stated she liked the mature trees. Discussion on future development going in. Blum gave history of the necessity to limit access to property to existing town roads. To avoid any issues with WisDOT, a road could come through the park. Town could potentially sell this area to developer to allow for access to the development. This would also encourage developer to provide a nice lot for a park instead of the "unbuildable lot" which the Town typically gets. Blum reiterated per every acre sold 1/10 acre must be dedicated to Parkland per ordinance. Knutson asked for clarification of where the road would go. Wright noted that it would go through the park and tie into Green Street. Redmond noted that it's not a terrible idea to move the park to a different part of the area or create two separate parks. Butler agreed the park can

be relocated with very little trouble. Blum noted the road can be on private property (would require an easement) or on state right of way which would be less likely to be an issue for public access. Wright noted three driveways have already been approved. Ehler noted that Town Board, Parks and Sanitary District are all being included in the decision for what park space the Town wants. Ehler also noted previously a Fire station was intended to be built there, but the cost would be astronomical. Redmond stated the Parks Committee needs to be proactive and communicate with the developer. Wright noted that it's not going to be a fast process, but it's happening. Knutson noted this park will appear on the agenda in the future. Wright noted that each lot must be able to fit two full septic systems per county requirement. Kunert sold parcels in 3 acre lots. Discussion on encouraging walking trails to be added in that don't count towards land allotment. Knutson made last call for additional comments. Wright asked if selling lot for development to provide funds for park's projects would be an option. Needs to be explored further.

9. Action Item Discussion – Garbage Cans. Knutson three price points, most expensive is the one that matches the benches the Parks Committee has previously decided on, but other options still look nice. Ehler noted the trash cans would need to be bolted down. Wright asked for clarification if they will stay in the parks year-round, Knutson and Ehler confirmed. Ehler noted the Shelby Youth Ball (SYB) can fundraise for trash cans in parks they use. Donations or other fundraising can be done for other parks. Butler noted that there can be advertisements placed on there to cover the cost. Ehler noted that having a dog bag station in each park would encourage more people to clean up after their pets. Knutson noted that garbage cans should be addressed before dog waste disposal bags. Butler noted that garbage cans are inclusive of all users of parks and trails. Knutson noted that the Committee rating parks and listing out what needs are most urgent would help establish a “hit list” of what needs to be accomplished sooner rather than later and provide ideas for future projects and content for the Comprehensive Plan. Ehler will investigate bag dispensers. Board agrees that the DuMor #157 receptacle would be the best fit. Wiggert doesn't like any of the options and holds the opinion that if it's carried in then it should be carried out. Board quorum agreed on the DuMor #157. (See options attached)

10. Administrator Report.

- a. Peterson touched on the Comprehensive Plan process. Reiterated that it's great that park's is talking about goals and vision statements. Parks and Recreation section could almost be written by the parks board. Feel free to give input. Peterson noted one goal could be to review all publicly owned land and determine best use for that land, even if the best use is to sell it to accomplish other projects. Additional parks or trails could be pursued with funds.
- b. Schmitz property for sale on 14/61. Bluffland coalition group looked at the property to see if any parties would be interested in purchasing any portion of that land to be in conservation or trails. Conversations started but no decisions made.
- c. Shelby Youth Ball meeting on Thursday, December 9<sup>th</sup> to plan for 2022 Season.
- d. Peterson addressed the trail along Highway 35 to follow reconstruction project. Starting to talk with WisDOT for funding for that trail. Blum spoke on issues with Highway 35 reducing 5-foot paved shoulder and 5-foot gravel shoulder. Blum believes it should be 8-foot paved shoulder as the path is being shared by both pedestrian and bike traffic and 5 feet would be inadequate. Blum noted speaking with La Crosse County, WisDOT and City of La Crosse would be the best way to communicate these issues. Vernon County line goes from 10 feet to 8 feet. Blum noted staying consistent with 8-foot shoulder would reduce the gravel shoulder not the roadway and would be consistent from La Crosse to Stoddard. All three municipalities would be better front to present to WisDOT. La Crosse County has interest with Goose Island and City of La Crosse and Town of Shelby have interest with Highway 35 areas.

- e. Potential trail along 14/61 goes through private property. Planning will be starting soon.
11. Public Works Report
- a. Wright noted parks are shut down so not much to report. Knutson noted that hit list of projects should be discussed to plan for 2022.
  - b. Rain gutters will be coming waiting for materials. Will have to wait until Christmas lights come down.
  - c. Blocks for retaining wall will be finished in spring.
  - d. Concrete slab will be poured in spring. Dirt is settling now.
  - e. Wright can get price for concrete slab and retaining wall costs for better planning on what is left of the budget for 2022.
12. Co-Chairperson/Commissioner Reports.
- a. Ehler reiterated importance of seeking out alternate funding sources to allow for larger scale projects to take place in 2022.
  - b. Knutson noted 2022 can be planning year for larger projects and 2023 is when those plans can be put into action.
13. Action Items for December.
- a. Visit both Battlestone Station and Boulder Ridge Parks.
14. Future Agenda Items. None.
15. Adjournment. Motion by Ehler, second by Redmond to adjourn at 7:06 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting on January 3, 2021, at 5:30 p.m. at Town Hall (2800 Ward Ave, La Crosse, WI 54601)

Respectfully Submitted, Fortune M. Weaver