

**MINUTES OF A THE LAKEFRONT, PARKS, AND NATURAL AREAS COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
HELD ON JUNE 22, 2022 5:02 PM**

Present: Commissioner Kaplan, President Grossberg

Absent: Commissioner Freeman

Also, Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Smith; Director Voss; Director Peters; Director Gogola; Assistant Director Maliszewski; Assistant Director Murrin; Manager Schwartz; Manager Johnson; Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speaker: None.

Additions to the Agenda

None, however, Executive Director Romes requested to that the Fink Park Athletic Field Development Update be presented upon before the Park Avenue South Storage Lot Repair Update.

Fink Park Athletic Field Development Update

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that the Giants Athletics Boosters is comprised of dedicated and invested community members and is an affiliate of the Parks Foundation of Highland Park, a 501c3 resident-led organization, dedicated to the belief that every resident of the community deserves the opportunity for an enriched, healthy lifestyle. Furthermore, the mission of the Giants Athletics Boosters is to enhance the experience for players and spectators by investing in the growth and development of Park District athletic fields to better serve the community and attract new families to the area. The Athletic Booster achieved this by raising funds to improve Park District fields and diamonds to be the best in the area and raise the profile of the District's athletic programs.

He shared images of the existing baseball field compared to the rendering of the renovation project, which would convert the infield to turf, keep the natural grass outfield with updated underdrains and irrigation, a portable outfield fence, enhanced warning track, and bleachers, include an event space, spectator area, and covered dugout.

The estimated cost for this renovation is \$1 million. At the March 30 Regular Board Meeting the Park Board of Commissioners authorized the Executive Director to enter into a professional services agreement with Gewalt Hamilton Associates for engineering and professional services in the amount of \$84,900. As a result, Gewalt Hamilton completed the schematic design and are estimating the renovation at \$700,000, which includes site preparation and demolition, excavation and paving, installation of the athletic surface, equipment, fencing, and amenities, plus a 20% contingency. Plus another \$300,000 for a Musco LED light structure system. If funds are still available, the renovation will include a scoreboard and a new double batting cage.

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that geotechnical investigation and topography will begin in July, design engineering will commence in November, permitting in December, the project will go out to bid in April of 2023, the bid will be awarded in May of 2023, construction will begin in July of 2023, substantial completion is estimated for October of 2023, with a grand opening in the spring of 2024.

He is pleased to report that the Athletic Boosters funded all but \$1,400 of the schematic design costs (\$84,900). The Athletic Boosters and Parks Foundation are working together to solicit donors to raise \$1 million for this renovation. Updates and financial milestones will be shared with the Park Board of Commissioners.

President Grossberg would like to know the difference between the flood plain and the floodway.

Director Smith reported that the floodway is the portion adjacent to the channel which is more restrictive. The flood plain is in the infield. The new design will address drainage, however, there will be times that the field will flood when the river exceeds its banks since there's no place for the water to go.

President Grossberg would like to know if the players could help maintain the field, similar to high school or travel requirements.

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that there are different liabilities when volunteers help maintain fields that they would like to avoid, so players will not be asked to volunteer to help maintain the field.

Park Avenue South Storage Lot Repair Update

Director Smith reported that high Lake Michigan water levels and an associated increase in storm intensity resulted in erosion to the southeast corner of the south storage lot at Park Avenue Boating Facility in spring 2019. The damage has reduced the boat storage area available for use. Although lake levels have receded since the record highs in 2020, this area is undergoing active erosion and the failed area continues to increase in size. As a result, the Park District hired the engineering firm AECOM to develop a repair approach for this area.

President Grossberg would like to know why the Park Board decided to ignore this area.

Executive Director Romes reported that the District was operating on an expired Intergovernmental Agreement in 2019. The Park Avenue Working Group was developed in the winter of 2019/2020. The pandemic closed all facilities in March of 2020, and this was one of the many projects deferred. In 2021 a new IGA was developed and approved.

Terry Refai with AECOM presented two repair concepts.

Option 1: Steel Sheet Pile Wall

Armor stone revetment will be placed in front of a sheet pile wall to absorb wave impacts. The sheet pile wall will protect the pavement. The width of the storage area will increase with this option. The probable cost for this option is \$800,000 with a 50-year life expectancy.

Option 2: Reinforced Concrete Block Wall

Armor stone revetment will be placed in front of a block wall to absorb wave impacts. The wall can be reinforced with concrete or steel. The block wall will protect the pavement. The probable cost for this option is \$530,000 with a 20-year life expectancy.

Vice President Freeman would like to know if these options will protect the south storage lot if the lake levels rise.

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AECOM reported that both options will protect the south storage lot due to the armor stone and retaining wall (sheet pile or block wall).

Commissioner Kaplan would like to know why AECOM prefers the Steel Sheet Pile Wall option.

AECOM reported that the Park District will never have to worry about erosion and the parking lot will always stay intact due to the reinforcement from the Steel Sheet Pile Wall. Furthermore, this option has a 50-year life expectancy.

President Grossberg would like to know if the armor stones would have to be rearranged or moved due to wave impacts.

AECOM reported that the armor stones will not need to be rearranged due to the added support from the steel sheet pile.

President Grossberg would like to know if the sheet pile or block wall could be reinforced with other materials instead of armor stone.

AECOM reported that the armor stone cannot be replaced with another material, however, the amount of armor stone used can be reduced.

Director Smith reported that the armor stone is necessary, and there are no replacements, however, the amount of armor stone being used could be reduced.

Commissioner Kaplan would like to know if there are other options to reduce the erosion from wave impacts.

Director Smith reported that staff are not aware of any other options other than the two options being presented this evening.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know what the goal is, to stop the erosion or repair the paved area so the District can use it for storage.

Director Smith reported that staff are trying to address both.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if there is a less costly option if the District no longer used this area for boat storage.

AECOM reported that the budget will be cut in half if the steel sheet pile wall is removed.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the 9 boat storage spaces are worth the proposed repair costs.

AECOM reported that erosion will continue unless a repair is implemented.

Director Smith reported that the failure has extended north as well, so the steel sheet pile wall would be a long-term solution. Without either a steel sheet pile wall or block wall future failures will occur.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know the operational impacts of losing those boat storage spaces and if the new breakwater will address this issue.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff can follow up with operational impacts from losing this storage area.

Director Smith reported that the breakwater will not address the erosion in this area since the length of the breakwater is not changing.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the proposed repairs are in the five-year capital plan, furthermore, he would like to know if there is a way to preserve the status quo so the long-term repairs can occur in future years.

President Grossberg would like to know if the sheet pile wall can be installed now and if the armor stone could be installed in the next year or so.

Commissioner Ruttenberg would like to know if the void can be filled with other less costly materials are the steel sheet pile walls are installed.

AECOM reported that the void can be filled with gravel as a short-term solution to reduce the costs.

Director Smith reported that staff are looking for direction from the Park Board as to which repair option to pursue. Staff are recommending Option 1: Steel Sheet Pile Wall.

Commissioner Bernstein reported that there is a \$200,000 placeholder in the five-year capital plan. Since this project exceeds the placeholder, he is not comfortable moving forward without discussing this with the Finance Committee and how this impacts the five-year capital plan.

The Committee requested that staff get the costs for a third option, installing the steel sheet pile wall and filling the void with gravel or a similar less costly material, and asked that all three options be reviewed at a future Committee Meeting.

Director Smith reported that since the lake levels are declining, this project could occur in 2023, however, he will work with AECOM to gather a third option to be presented at a future Committee Meeting.

Other Business

None.

Open to the Public to Address the Board

None.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Hejnowski

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary