

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Real Estate Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
October 2, 2018

ATTENDEES

Present: Commissioners Landt and Heller; Director Black

Public: There were none

Absent: None

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Landt called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. at the APRC Administration Office, 340 S. Pioneer.

II. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

a. Update on Lincoln School Lease

With regard to the park behind the school, Black said APRC staff spoke with School District staff about a 100-year lease and the School District said they would be comfortable with a 10 to 20-year lease. Black said APRC wouldn't be interested in a 10 to 20-year lease so it was off the table. Black said in 10 years APRC would have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in maintaining and upgrading the land. Those funds would be lost if the lease was not renewed. Black said the School District also did not like the idea of a bike or skate park on the property.

b. Update on Glendower Entrance to Ashland Pond

Black said the property owner of a small section of land located near the entrance to Ashland Pond off Glendower, who previously blocked the entrance with blackberry branches to prevent people from accessing the trail, had since removed the debris and the trail was now open. Everyone associated with the situation agreed that a more permanent solution was needed. Black said he would contact the owner again to see if he was willing to sell that parcel of land to APRC. APRC first offered him a reasonable amount but then offered a higher amount; however, both offers were not accepted so the matter remained unresolved. Landt said it would be easier to use the existing road than build a new one. Black said there was also a house that encroached onto APRC property in that area and he would turn the situation over to Code Enforcement if that was what the Commissioners wanted. Alternatively, he could send the landowner a letter. Heller suggested letting the landowners know that APRC needed to rectify the encroachment.

Landt said Ashland Pond had amazing wildlife and the area was not compatible with dogs. He said it had never been identified as a dog friendly park but it was being used that way. Heller asked if the signs for "Dogs on Leash" has been installed; Black said they were in place.

III. NEW BUSINESS

a. Update on Property Acquisition in Progress

In terms of a piece of property proposed for donation, Black said the City already owned property through the watershed and APRC had trails all through it that they helped maintain. Landt said if they traded one for one it would be a great deal for the owner. Heller asked if the piece of property would be an advantage to the City. Landt said it would extend the fire break and also be of value in terms of its estimated worth of \$250,000. If sold in the future, those funds could be used in the future to buy more land for the APRC system. Heller asked if the trails community would be agreeable about a trail in that area. Landt said that would be a good question to ask the trails community. Heller asked if there were any other areas that weren't developable by the City. Landt said there was a piece down by Riverwalk and Black said that unless it was open space, it couldn't be sold. Black said the City Attorney had indicated that because it was deeded as open space, it could only be sold to the Homeowner's Association as open space. Black said a pollinator garden was recently approved for that area; Landt expressed dismay with the project.

b. Update on Nutley Property

Black said he informed the property owner at the corner of Nutley and Granite Street that there wouldn't be a board of appeals for hardship. He said APRC could not authorize private citizens to disproportionately use private property for their own benefit. Black informed her that they had worked in good faith but had not come up with a solution so he made it clear to her that she was required to pay the rent owed in arrears. Black said he gave her the option to come up with the arrears and an agreeable contract; otherwise, the project would need to be removed from APRC property pending payment of the arrears. Black said if a deal could not be reached, he would turn it over to the City Attorney. Black said the goal was to get to a solution and she had a deadline which she had acknowledged. Black said there was no guarantee the property could be sold to her in the future. In his email to her he stated that she had been allowed to use the property for free for a period of time because she was moving an historic structure, her former home. Black said he would expect that the City Attorney would write a letter stating that she was trespassing on the property and that a timeframe for action would need to be established.

c. Update on Property Sale / Acquisition in Progress

Black said he would make a presentation to Ashland City Council on October 2 about two items: APRC's sale of the lower Clay Street property to Jackson County Housing Authority and their purchase of a larger portion of land on East Main Street that would be developed into the second dog park. He said the charter stated that once something was in the open space program it must have a public hearing before being sold. Black said the East Main property would be purchased for the same price, more acreage and water rights. Landt asked Black about the wetlands and Black said there was an area of interest on the map that was 6,000 square feet and someone would need to come in and do a study. Landt asked what would happen if the study revealed that it was largely wetlands. Black said that a decision would then be needed about whether to purchase the land or not. Landt said this was part of the due diligence process and if half of the land turned out to be wetlands, they would have less developable land. Black said they would need to annex the property through the City. Black said it was not a big deal to annex the property as they would be the property owners. Black said these were topics that had been discovered during the due diligence period.

IV. SET FUTURE MEETING DATE – none

V. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Wysocki, Temp Office Assistant
Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission