



**MINUTES OF THE OF THE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC HEARING ON CENTRAL PARK IMPROVEMENTS
WEBER LEISURE CENTER
9300 WEBER PARK PLACE, SKOKIE, IL
AUGUST 11, 2021 - 6:30 P.M.**

ATTENDANCE AT MEETING

Board Members Present: President Susan Aberman
Vice-President Mike Reid
Commissioner Minal Desai
Commissioner Ezra Jaffe
Commissioner Mary Oshana

Others Present: Executive Director/Secretary Michelle J. Tuft
Superintendent of Parks Corrie Guynn
Office Manager Park Services Dima Kirland
Landscape Supervisor Stephen Ames
Parks Supervisor John Gacki
Operations Supervisor Jeff Hacker
Park Specialist III Jim Hallm

CALL TO ORDER

President Aberman called the public hearing of the Board of Park Commissioners for the Central Park Improvements to order at 6:30 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS

President Aberman introduced herself, and Executive Director Michelle Tuft. Executive Director Tuft then introduced the rest of the board, Vice President Mike Reid, Commissioner Minal Desai, Commissioner Mary Oshana, and Superintendent of Parks Corrie Guynn. Commissioner Ezra Jaffe arrived at 6:35.

CONCEPTUAL PLAN PRESENTATION BY HITCHCOCK DESIGN

Mr. Guynn introduced Mr. Joe Brusseau from Hitchcock Design to present the proposed renovation plans. Mr. Guynn said the Park District is applying for an Open Space Land and Acquisition Development (OSLAD) grant for up to \$400K for the renovations. The plan presented is dependent on the park district receiving the grant, otherwise, a scaled back plan will be presented.

Mr. Guynn said the presentation and synopsis will be posted to the Central Park page on the Skokie Park District Site.

Some of the highlights of the design are:

- Install a splash pad
- Repave the widen the paths to 8 feet
- Replace the playground with a lava/volcano theme
- Expand the rain garden area, the water run off from the playground will go the rain garden area
- Install workout stations along the path by the basketball courts
- Repave the basketball courts
- Replace two water fountains, benches, and garbage cans
- No trees will be removed from the site
- Playground surfacing will be poured in place and is fully accessible

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

The following comments were made:

- A resident said everything the District is proposing is great, however, the general look of the landscaping needs work, such as weeds, shrubs need pruning, it just doesn't look as good as it did in past years.
 - Mr. Guynn assured residents that staff will work on improving these items, the District is short- handed and is currently behind.
- A resident said that there is a ton of runs off at the baseball fields.
 - Mr. Guynn said that staff is aware of that. As a long-term project, staff are planning to add sod around the field to eliminate the problem.
- A resident also suggested removing some landscaping for security reasons.
 - Mr. Guynn said he and staff will take a look.
- A resident asked about the proposed playground equipment for special needs children. She was concerned about the woodchips by the swings as well as wheelchair accessibility to the playground equipment. She would like to see access to as much as possible.
 - Mr. Guynn assured the resident there will several ADA features and accessible paths in the proposed playground equipment. Mr. Guynn said he would look at adding paths to the swings.
- A resident said that he sees parents sitting on timbers, there is not enough seating.
 - Mr. Guynn said the timbers will be replaced and additional benches will be installed.
- A resident reported that two gates are not functioning at the tennis courts and the fence needs to be replaced.
 - Mr. Guynn said that he will have staff look and fix it accordingly.
- A resident requested trash cans around the perimeter of the park especially for dog walkers.

- The project is scheduled for the spring/summer of 2023. The project will take about three months from beginning to end. The budget is currently \$1.2 million. Some equipment has increased in price and is difficult to get.
- Executive Director Tuft explained the OSLAD grant process. If the District is awarded the grant, then the district will move forward with the plan Mr. Brusseau presented. If not, there will be a scaled back Plan B, which will include replacing the playground, repaving and widening the paths to 8 feet, repaving the basketball courts, and replacing the benches, garbage cans and two water fountains.
- A resident asked about other grant opportunities.
 - Executive Director Tuft said the District is always looking for grants and if anyone hears of any out there, to let staff know. She informed the group that the district has received grants for solar panels, LED lighting, and Native pollinators to mention a few. A larger grant (PARC grant) was awarded for the Skatium project.

CLOSING COMMENTS

President Aberman encouraged the patrons to share the design with their children and grandchildren to get their perspective.

ADJOURNMENT

President Aberman thanked everyone for attending and providing input, and adjourned the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

Susan Aberman
President

Michelle Tuft
Secretary

Vision Statement

The Skokie Park District envisions a community where all its residents enjoy a high quality of life through leisure time pursuits, beautiful open spaces, and first-rate facilities.

Mission Statement

The Skokie Park District will realize its vision through teamwork, community partnerships, sound fiscal management, and creativity in every area of its operation.

Core Values

The Skokie Park District will fulfill its mission through:

- Commitment● Integrity● Innovation● Service ●Openness ●Environmental Stewardship ●Inclusiveness