

CITY OF BURTON
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 16, 1998, 7:15 P.M., COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The Special Meeting was called to order by Paula Zelenko, Council Vice President, at 7:19 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Centilli, Cox, Cross, Martinbianco, Walls and Zelenko.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Hammon.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mayor Charles Smiley; J. Major, DPW Director; K. Cheli, Rowe, Inc.; G. Webster, Clerk and C. Ladd, Deputy City Clerk.

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING: PUBLIC HEARING FOR GRANT APPLICATION FOR KELLEY LAKE REGIONAL PARK PHASE I, YEAR 1.

PRESENTATION:

Mrs. Zelenko stated, as Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission, she would like to thank the Administration and Commission Members for their hard work. She commented that at this particular time, there is nothing specific planned for the Kelley Lake area. Also, if the grant application is approved this evening, it would be contingent upon no public access off Howe or Munson.

Mr. Major noted this meeting is a public hearing for submittal of a grant application by Rowe, Inc. Council did act at the last meeting to allow Rowe, Inc. to submit that application. Once the application is submitted, the State could either approve, deny or modify the grant application request. If the application is postponed, application could be made later in the year. We are looking at the year 2000 before getting site specific for design and what features the park may have.

Keith Cheli, Rowe, Inc., explained there are wetland constraints and it is not the intent of the Commission to disturb the wetlands in any way.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

The following people spoke against the proposed park at Kelley Lake:

Terryl Sperlich, 1253 Howe Rd., concerned about the wetlands and entrance off Howe Road, safety of people and property values.

Wayne Bovee, 1227 Howe Rd., concerned about increased millage, Howe Rd. entrance, flooding, increase in traffic and danger to the kids on Howe Rd., also concerned about increase in gang activity and property values.

Wayne Gorman, 4375 Lapeer Rd., opposes park such as Kelley Lake, but not parks in general. He would like to see neighborhood parks and keep them maintained. He thinks we should work closer with the schools and possibly work with IMA for a youth program. Residents won't support a millage for a park.

Cheryl Johnston, member of the Audubon Society, P.O. Box 4, Flint, MI 48501, opposes any disruption of the wetland area.

Margaret Bovee, 1227 Howe Rd., concerned about the neighborhood being split. She named many of the birds and animals that are seen on this property. She thinks children should see this kind of nature and have another area for swings, bikes and ball diamonds.

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Paula Zelenko, Chairman of Parks and Recreation, once again reiterated that it is not the intent of the Commission Members to disturb the wetlands. She explained that the plan is an elaborate wish list only. Also, there has never been any intentions to make an access off Howe Road.

Norman Maynard, 6138 Crabtree, said the park is no good for the people. He has picked up trash at the Fire Station #2 park. He is concerned about an increase in traffic.

Jan Bolen, 1169 Howe Rd., asked that everyone be given an opportunity to vote on the issue. She is concerned about the smaller children hearing the older children use bad language while in the park. Also, she didn't receive notification about the meeting.

Charles Clark, 4223 Lapeer Rd., suggested Lapeer Rd. be taken care of before putting a road in off of Howe Road.

Jerry Jurasek, 1156 Howe Rd., has concerns about people using lake because of a 35 foot drop-off, and is against a Howe Rd. entrance. Other items addressed were graffiti and gangs hanging around in the park. He said all the neighbors on Genesee Road from Lapeer Road to the I-69 overpass are against the park proposal.

Carol Cheney, 5094 Raymond, spoke about the parking along Genesee Rd. and Raymond Street. She agrees with having parks, but has concerns about the maintenance of them. She thinks school property should be used instead of a wetland area. She would like to see Kelley Lake area kept as a nature area.

Steve Heffner, 1181 Munson, said he is concerned about gangs, neighborhood safety and policing of the area. He opposes a millage and noted his bedroom window is 20 feet from the property line of Kelley Lake. He thinks a bridge would have to be built if Genesee Road is used for an egress. He doesn't think the park at Bristol and Saginaw would be used and suggested using the Veteran's Memorial area for a park.

Mayor Smiley stated he isn't certain a millage is necessary. The City has the largest fund balance it has ever had. He said the only logical egress for the park is off Genesee Road. Howe Road wasn't considered for an egress. The wetlands are under the DNR control and will not be disturbed. That 25 acres of property belongs to every citizen in the City of Burton and the only way of getting to it, is by crossing private property. He said he has never once proposed a millage and is not proposing it now. He explained that other units of government are wanting parks for quality family recreation and that is exactly what Burton is missing.

Tim Waterson, 1149 Arapaho Dr., thinks there is a need for parks in this City. He noted that he works at a detention center and kids to need a place to go. He doesn't want to take his daughter to another area to have access to a park.

Larry Petrella, 1081 Howe Rd., said he represents Pheasants Forever. He said the organization is partners with the DNR and Fisher and Wildlife, and is against the wetlands being disturbed. He would like to see the organizations get involved with the youth and possibly with the Parks and Recreation meetings.

Mrs. Zelenko said Mr. Petrella has pledged his support in protecting the habitat and wildlife.

Tari Rowen, 4271 Lapeer Rd., said Paradise Beach and Groveland Oaks Camping Grounds in Oakland County, have the police in and out of the park for troubles that occur. She is concerned about Lapeer Road not being maintained and the increased traffic will make Lapeer Road more dangerous.

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Pauline Dargel, 6119 Hugh, asked how many acres are involved in this property and where the entrance would be located. She suggested using the existing County Parks and also the For-Mar Nature Park. She said For-Mar is used by children, not just from this area, but also from other counties. Cost benefit should be considered when making a decision, as well as the green space. She asked who owns the title on the wetlands.

Mrs. Zelenko said the entrance would be off Genesee Road.

Mayor Smiley said he isn't certain about the size of the parking lot or even the need for it. He doesn't think there will be a tremendous amount of cars at any one time. He said the grant will either be approved or denied sometime this year. There are no sketches, just ideas that may happen, nothing is concrete.

Keith Cheli, Rowe, Inc., said if the grant is approved, the funding will be approved in July of 1998.

Mr. Major said Sanifill Corporation owns the wetlands with a covenant that it will be deeded to the City of Burton.

Don Waterbaugh, Treasurer of Genesee Christian Schools, commented that apparently the school is part of your plan somewhere down the road. We have not been approached about this issue. He asked if the City owns property on Genesee Road and how wide it is. He asked if there were plans for the school, and asked how they were planning to get to the park property. He would like to be notified of any meetings.

Mr. Major replied, the City owns property between the viaduct and the school and it is about 60' wide. He said a site plan is not being submitted at this time, because they are not site specific.

Mrs. Zelenko stated there has been some discussion that possibly down the road, the Parks and Recreation Commission may approach the school about land acquisition.

Discussion continued regarding the possibility of acquiring the Genesee Christian School.

Karen Howe, 6051 Bellingham Ct., questioned the funding for the parks and is concerned about maintenance, as this is not mentioned in the plan. She asked if the grant was approved, could the money be spent on anything else. She also had concerns about the wetlands, and commented about the different kinds of recreation offered in Genesee County, as well as other areas. She thinks the issue of parks should be placed on a ballot for the vote of the people.

Keith Cheli replied the funds would be used for public access to Kelley Lake. Mr. Cheli commented that there are many guidelines in improving and protecting wetland areas and Rowe, Inc., is aware of the criteria.

A former resident, who lived on Alberta St., said she is a Senior at U of M, Flint, and is researching the parks in Genesee County. She commented on the concerns of the residents and suggested the schools be used for the ball fields and improve the facilities in the school districts.

Jeff Bovee, Grand Blanc Township resident, said his parents spoke earlier and he appreciates the efforts of the Parks and Recreation Commission, but would like to see this area stay as it is. He is concerned about the safety if the road is near the expressway. He doesn't think a park is a good idea for this area.

John Stapish, 5160 E. Atherton Rd., spoke concerning the use of Thread Creek instead of Kelley Lake. Thread Creek has already been deeded to the City and can't be used for anything else. He suggested not spending money for Kelley Lake.

Mrs. Zelenko said Thread Creek has been designated in the Parks and Recreation Plan.

Angela Hartel, 230 Peer Ave., Flint, MI, said she is speaking on behalf of a friend. She lives in a park area, where there are gangs and about 3 months ago, a rape occurred. This park wouldn't be any different than the other parks.

The following people spoke in favor of the Parks:

Mary Crawford, 6203 Briggs, noted she is a Block Club Member and a Parks and Recreation Member. She said surveys were taken and she has 261 at the meeting tonight. There are 75% in favor of paying \$20.00 per year for a park in the City. These surveys were taken at the Block Club meetings and it is an on-going process. Many people want parks and we plan to preserve the wetlands, which is required by law. She said kids need a place to go and the Members worked hard for the people of the City, not for themselves.

Scott Odishoo, 2124 S. Term, said his daughter was hit by a car one year ago, but is okay. He said he has taken her to the park at Fire Station #2, along with his wife, and they have spent quality time together at the park. He said he would like to see the residents stay together on this issue, and thinks there is a need for a park system. He said the Commission has done a good job for the City.

Val Rose, 3097 S. Belsay Rd., said he has heard that some of the residents want a park and others do not. It is the responsibility of the Board to listen to the input of the people and do what is best for the City as a whole. Some residents would use a park more than others, but everyone must share and that means giving and taking.

Julie Hodgeson, 2087 McLean St., said there are no parks in the Bendle area. She said as a member of the Parks and Recreation Commission, consideration was taken in setting aside green areas for the community to enjoy. There are a lot of projects planned and by applying for a grant, it doesn't mean it will be approved by the State. She has no problem with leaving the Kelley Lake area as natural as possible.

Rebecca Waterson, 1149 Arapaho Dr., commented she also is a member of the Parks and Recreation Commission, however, she is here tonight as a parent. She believes she should be able to take her child to a park in her own community. She was hoping the parks would bring the people in the community together.

Recessed at 9:05 P.M.

Reconvened at 9:18 P.M.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION:

Mrs. Walls noted that if approved, we would only be making application for the grant.

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Mr. Martinbianco noted that on March 2, 1998, action was taken at the regular council meeting under items 28-31 to submit an application for year one. He said it is his understanding they are trying to make a determination whether we want to make an application for the grant. He recapped the agenda items from

the March 2nd meeting. He explained the Council agreed to transfer \$17,000.00 to the Capital Improvement Fund while getting \$50,000.00 back in year one. He asked if bond proceeds would be used because of the park location. He also questioned the acquisition of Davison Roadside Park.

Mr. Major said he hasn't been authorized by the Parks and Recreation Commission to do anything with the Davison Roadside Park.

Mrs. Zelenko said the funding would be discussed more in detail on March 25th at the Parks and Recreation Meeting.

Mr. Martinbianco spoke concerning the complaints about the access relative to the park site. He said the line of communication with the school districts is very important. He noted that he does not support a millage and doesn't want to be forced into asking for one further down the road.

Mr. Cheli explained that years 1 and 2 were for a basic level of recreation so the community could evaluate what level of recreation is needed. At that time, there may be consideration for additional funding sources, which was done through the two Capital Improvement schedules. Mr. Cheli said the survey is ongoing and has been distributed at Block Clubs so we know what the public is interested in. It is important that the Parks and Recreation meetings receive input and is attended by the residents.

Discussion was held concerning the possibility of the State not passing the entire amount of funding requested. If this should happen, they could opt to only give a portion of the amount requested.

Mr. Cheli said in his opinion, he doesn't see a problem with the application being approved. He then explained the process for grant approval. He said the State will perform onsite visitation and will make visits throughout the years to see how the park area is maintained and to make future determinations for any grants applied for by the City.

Mr. Cox said he understands there are two dates for filing. What is the benefit of filing in April vs. September.

Mr. Cheli stated there are a certain number of applications funded and in the first round there is more money available. If, by some chance the City doesn't get funding during the first round, they would automatically be considered in the second round, but there would be less money available. The State doesn't have a method of how many applicants will be approved. There are several communities that will be applying in September, which makes getting the funding more competitive because of less funds.

Mr. Cox said the task at hand is to determine whether we should submit the grant application. He said he personally likes the idea of a community park, such as school grounds, water tower park, etc. Genesee County has a very large park system and is available to all of the residents. He said he is concerned the City may be held liable should something happen at Kelley Lake. He said the Parks and Recreation Commission has done a great deal of planning and they want to keep the lines of communication open with the community. Should we continue to pursue the entrance way into the park area, this would give the community back \$51,000.00 in State tax to put in access to Kelley Lake. Mr. Cox said he supports applying for the grant but will not make any further commitments at this time.

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Mr. Martinbianco questioned the wetlands being dedicated to the City via restricted covenant.

Mr. Major said if the property is deeded to the City, it is to be used as a wetlands.

Mr. Hamilton said we have to honor the wetland areas because of State requirements.

Mr. Cross said he supports the Parks and Recreation Commission and they have done a terrific job. He wants parks for the citizens, but only where the people want them. However, he doesn't support the Kelley Lake grant application.

Mrs. Walls said there is a need for parks because there are people who don't have the money to do some of the other recreation items. She said she will be supporting the grant application request.

Mr. Centilli said he understands if the resolution isn't approved tonight, we may not get funding for Kelley Lake. Also, this grant will not get us any further than providing a couple of tables and access to the park, so parking will not be a problem on Genesee Road. Mr. Centilli offered an amendment to the resolution. (See Council Discussion Action)

Mr. Martinbianco asked if an amendment to the motion is approved, would it be inconsequential to the grant application.

Mr. Cheli replied this could be added to the needs statement that specify that a vehicle access is not proposed and it could be written to benefit the grant application.

Mr. Cross asked why the grant application is being amended.

Mrs. Zelenko said the amendment was to guarantee the residents on Howe and Munson there would be no public access off these roads.

Mrs. Walls said this would be in comparison to a change in an ordinance.

Mrs. Zelenko said if there is a change, it would have to come before the Council.

Mr. Cox was concerned about whether the \$68,000.00 would be enough to complete the road and parking area.

Mr. Centilli said we should build the access road and delete the soccer and ball fields and keep the nature in the park.

Mrs. Zelenko stated we also would be working with the schools and their facilities.

Mrs. Walls noted a meeting was held with some of the Pastors in Burton, and some of the churches have facilities such a ball fields, so there are places such as this to go.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION ACTION:

Moved by Centilli, seconded by Walls to amend the resolution on the agenda:

There is to be no public vehicle access off Munson and Howe Roads and Munson is only to be used as it is now for emergency vehicles and is to be kept graded. Motion carried 6-0.

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COUNCIL ACTION:

Walls moved and Centilli seconded the following motion:

1. Approve and authorize the formal grant application for Kelley Lake Regional Park Phase I, Year 1, with no public vehicle access off from Howe and Munson, except for the emergency and grading vehicles.

Motion carried 5-1 with Cross voting no.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:12 P.M.

Cheryl M. Ladd, CMC/AAE
Deputy City Clerk

CML