



PARKS AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

July 23, 2024

The Parks and Public Works Committee met for a Committee Meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Saugatuck City Hall

102 Butler St., Saugatuck, MI 49453.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Baldwin at 10:00 a.m.

Attendance:

Present: Chair Baldwin, Committee members Charak, Kimble, Hoffman, Thiel.

Absent: Roche.

Others Present: City Manager Cummins, DPW Superintendent Herbert, Deputy Clerk Williams.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Charak, second by Hoffman, to approve the agenda for August 27, 2024. Via voice vote, motion carried 4-0.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Kimble, second by Hoffman, to approve the July 23, 2024, regular meeting minutes as presented. Via voice vote, motion carried 4-0.

Public Comments (agenda items only): None.

Review/Discussion:

A. Partnership with Convention and Visitors Bureau for Additional Bike Racks:

The Commission discussed a possible partnership with the CVB for additional bike racks in the City of Saugatuck. City Manager Cummins provided a background on existing bike racks and the need for more, including artistic changes. Lisa Mize from the CVB presented various bike rack designs, including artistic ones. She also reached out to local metal artist Cynthia McKean for design ideas.

The existing bike racks are located at:

- Next to kiosk (in front of The Butler)
- Next to the bathrooms at Village Square
- Star of Saugatuck (private property)

- Ida Red's (private property)

Suggested locations for new bike racks:

- Next to the Rose Garden (artistic rack)
- Across from Coghlin Park, next to Scooters
- Across from the park on Main
- Wick's Park – (artistic rack)
- To the right of the Chain Ferry

The Committee members expressed support for the artistic bike racks and discussed the importance of durability and capacity. Charak suggested considering larger bike racks that can accommodate more bikes. Chair Baldwin is happy and grateful to have some involvement from the CVB and is looking forward to seeing what designs artist McKean comes up with.

B. Request from Saugatuck-Douglas History Center for Additional Historical Markers:

City Manager Cummins discussed the Saugatuck Douglas History Center's request for additional historical markers. The proposed locations for the new markers include the Chain Ferry and Village Square Park. Committee members expressed their support for the markers and discussed the importance of historical education. They also discussed a separate project for a playground marker more specific to children.

C. Department of Public Works Updates by DPW Superintendent Herbert:

1. **Oval Beach Concessions:** The season is coming to a close. They previously discussed an RFP for concessions. Herbert explained that DPW will continue running the concession stand for another year to collect data before sending out a new RFP.
2. **Concrete Work:** Herbert said that they plan to pour concrete pads for benches this fall at Village Square and Mount Baldhead Park. They will also be pouring a concrete pad at Oval Beach for a new Life Jacket Station. The Committee discussed the process for donations as they currently have 3 donors for benches.
3. **Tree Work:** Herbert mentioned that City Manager Cummins notified DPW of a tree grant opportunity from Consumers Energy called the Community Street and Boulevard tree planting grant. The intent of the grant is to help fund up to \$3000 for qualifying projects that successfully incorporate the delicate balance of tree planting and utility wires overhead. Herbert said that DPW submitted an application and put forth some details on which trees they would like to plant and in which location and sent in some photos of what the trees would look like in relation to the overhead utilities. They were approved for the grant and then City Council approved to sign the agreement. DPW will do the tree planting this fall.
4. **Recycling Bin Pilot:** DPW Superintendent Herbert reported on the successful implementation of the recycling pilot program. He had a meeting with Jack Brown, who is the municipal representative for Republic Services, and they discussed contamination.

Brown said that the City is within its limits for acceptable contamination. The Committee discussed the need for educational materials to improve the recycling content, but Herbert said that it isn't much of a need at this point since their contamination rates are pretty generous. He believes that due to the success of the program they can scale up in volume rather than down.

5. Road Resurfacing: Herbert said that City Council approved an award to Michigan Paving and Materials Company to do some mill and overlay road resurfacing work this fall. They are taking some of their worst roads that have really good or decent utilities underneath them, and they are skimming off the top inch and a half layer of asphalt and repaving with HMA paving equipment, new road resurfacing. Herbert gave a glimpse of some of locations that they will focus on:

- Lucy Street as you approach Holland Street, a section will be repaved.
- Francis Street, two different sections between Water Street and Butler Street that will get milled from curb to curb, the whole width of the road and resurfaced.
- Holland Street all the way up to just before Elizabeth St. Herbert noted that Elizabeth Street is in rough shape and is on their radar. However, the high school is still under construction for another year or so. They have another phase of their project that they are doing so when the City does start construction on Elizabeth Street, it is going to require water main replacement which will be a major cost for the City.
- Griffith Street from Culver Street to Mason Street that will be resurfaced from curb to curb.
- Mason Street, on top of the hill from Elizabeth Street to Grand Street.

6. Others:

- Herbert mentioned that Cody Hardy resigned from Public Works and accepted a position in the private sector. Public Works is conducting interviews this week to fill that position.
- City Manager Cummins gave a brief update on the basketball and tennis courts at Village Square. There was a donor that had come forth with an interest in helping the city resurface the basketball court and the tennis courts. They sought feedback from the Parks and Public Works Committee and there was an interest in making the courts multi-purpose, and support for resurfacing and painting new lines on the courts, maybe some new fencing, and there was talk of some new bleachers. Cummins reached out to the donor representative, and they were interested and supportive of the multi-purpose courts. He then reached out to their engineers to get an initial engineering proposal on what the cost may be to put this all together and had quite the sticker shock with the price coming in at a quarter million dollars. Apparently, there are challenges with these types of courts and making sure that they drain properly along with everything else. This amount is more than the donor was offering initially. The engineers were going to look at the condition and

evaluate it a little more closely and then circle back to Cummins. They notified him of a potential grant opportunity, but it could take a while to come to fruition if they were to put it and get the funding. At this point, they are waiting on further evaluation to see what kind of shape the courts are in. If they are in good shape, they would just need painting and refreshing.

D. Update on Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area:

City Manager Cummins explained that when the Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area was sold to the city, they created a Master Plan. There were some funds set aside at the Holland Zeeland Community Foundation that was an endowment fund to help with future maintenance and future needs that the Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area may have. In order to access those funds, the endowment agreement states that the city has to make sure that the plan is updated every five years. They have been looking at the plan and history and it refers to having a management board, which no longer exists. They spoke to several people and combed through historical records to try to find out why the management board that did exist went away, and who was supposed to have that oversight going forward. Cummins referred to the City's legal team to look at the historical documents and what they learned is that because the management board doesn't currently exist, that they could probably have the City Council approve updating the plan, but to comply with the existing plan and maintain the spirit of what was being created, they certainly would want to include the Land Conservancy of West Michigan in that process, or at least get their input. He reached out to The Land Conservancy of West Michigan and suggested that path to them, and they were agreeable to it and more than happy to be involved or provide some input into updating that plan. He spoke with Chair Baldwin, and they don't think that the plan needs a ton of updates. He thinks it is actually a very solid plan that is still applicable today, so it will be more clean-up language. The Land Conservancy recommended updating the species list and inventory. He has not had time to read through the correspondence or his response email yet, of some options and ways to handle that. Cummins thinks that there is a path forward to at least update the plan and get it approved by City Council so that they can then access those funds for whatever needs the Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area has. A management board is not required, but they could form one if needed. City Council could send it to Parks and Public Works to manage, or they could manage it themselves.

E. Study Group Updates:

1. Invasive Species:

Committee member Hoffman said that he will meet with DPW Superintendent Herbert soon to identify problem areas and put up markers on what people should look for at the airport property and any other natural public areas. Kimble mentioned the idea of adding information for invasives on the city website. She thinks that it would be worth their time to at least work on getting the loosestrife off of the shoreline and promoting the natives. Herbert said that the tricky thing about invasives is that there are so many of them. He noted an article that he read that there is a balsam fir adelgid similar to a hemlock wooly adelgid that is already

here and said that we may have other species of adelgids coming. Hoffman said that it becomes overwhelming because there are so many of them. Herbert added that we have limited resources, and the county does have available resources to determine which are the most destructive or difficult to treat or expensive to treat and go from there. Cummins said they have been discussing which invasives are most concerning at this point to put their resources towards. City Council set aside some funds for treating invasive species but most of that money is going to treating the waterways and the milfoil that is out there. Baldwin mentioned that part of the Rotary Club's mission is for environmental protection and things if the Committee came forward with a comprehensive plan about what they want to treat, where it is located, and what the cost would be they may be open to help. Baldwin also mentioned that Committee member Roche was organizing the middle school fundraiser, which each class does a community service project. She and the eighth graders are going to be working on invasives at the airport property. They are going to be pulling spotted knapweed and autumn olive in the parking area, as well as the heads of the first two trails. This will be held on September 20th, from 9am-11am. She said that she is volunteering, and Committee member Thiel will be signing up, and she encouraged anyone else that wants to help with the eighth graders to sign-up.

2. Airport Property:

City Manager Cummins said that the last update that he had from the Outdoor Discovery Center was that they were working on drafting the conservation easement language and doing the survey work of the proposed conservation easement boundaries. They are waiting on the initial drafts, then will be reviewed by City Council and have some discussion with them before they ultimately make a decision on that portion, They have had some questions from some thinking that the conservation easement was already signed or already in place, which is not the case. They need the actual easement language and official boundaries before that is complete.

3. Blue Star Multimodal Path (Lake Street):

Committee member Kimble provided an update on the Blue Star Trail including the need for a tribal review. There was discussion on the potential impact of the trail on local ecosystems and the importance of tribal consultation. Kimble also mentioned the Blue Star Gala, a major fundraiser for the trail, had raised a little over a \$100,000 this year. She said that the Lakeshore Harvest ride would take place on September 14 and encouraged anyone interested to join in on the fun. Committee members expressed support for the project and expressed the importance of community input.

4. Village Square Playground:

City Manager Cummins said that benches are coming soon. They have to present the plans to the Historic District Commission at their October 3 meeting and get their approval. The concrete pads for the benches will be poured in October and then the benches will be installed.

5. Park Street, Mt. Baldhead Improvements, & AT&T status:

City Manager Cummins said that he included the engineer's report regarding the Mount Baldhead improvements so that the committee could take a look at where they are with the project. Herbert said that they haven't locked in a time frame yet, but that they are pushing for fall, but they are at the mercy of contractors so they can't always guarantee that. He said that the engineer was originally pushing for next fall and Cummins response was that City Council budgeted the funds this year and they really need to move forward on it this year. The platform may take a little longer due to permitting. Due to it being in the Critical Dunes areas, they are subject to EGLE's process and have to follow those rules or laws as well.

Cummins said that they reviewed some of the updated plans for AT&T at last Wednesday's Council Workshop meeting. Similar to the Blue Star Trail, they also have to have the State Historic Preservation Office approvals and tribal consultation for the Mount Baldhead site and putting a cellular antenna in the radome. He said that the tribes have listed a number of concerns and questions that they have, and AT&T has been working through those to address the concerns on their front end before they get to a more formal mitigation type process. One of the tribal concerns is with the amount of digging and ground disturbance in the area. AT&T is proposing to place the conduit above ground, but under the steps, so that they don't have to bore under the dune and potentially disturb the ground, but then still place the conduit under the steps. Cummins said that they reviewed the details with Council and the consensus from them was that they were okay moving forward with that set of plans. AT&T was working on finalizing their latest response back to the State Historic Preservation Office and the tribes to get some further feedback. They are still working on it as it is a very lengthy process. He said that they also want to be sensitive and respectful to the tribal concerns as well because it does have cultural significance to their history.

6. Maple Street:

City Manager Cummins discussed the graphic survey work for Maple Street improvements, including water main replacement and road restoration. There are plans for a community engagement forum on September 17th for the residents of Maple Street so the engineers can gather feedback on the project and discuss details of the project. Committee members expressed the importance of public input and the need for a comprehensive plan.

Public Comments (Limit 3 mins): None.

Correspondence:

1. William Lint.

Member Closing Comments:

- Hoffman – He is happy to hear about the trail and thinks they had a good meeting. He will meet with DPW Superintendent Herbert regarding invasives.

- Thiel – She is happy for the opportunity.
- Charak – He is excited to work with the kids on their service project at the airport. He worked with them last year at Mount Baldhead and said that the students had lots of questions and were really engaged. He thinks the Committee is doing good work.
- Kimble - She thinks that they had an excellent meeting. She was excited to hear some of Bryan's thoughts and told him she would be happy to help him or Keith to push forward on the invasives. She said that you can always think about the opposite of invasives is natives and what they can do to promote those.
- Chair Baldwin – She thanked DPW for their excellent work this summer. She thanked the PPW Committee for all of their efforts and Committee member Roche for helping to facilitate the eighth-grade project, she is excited and ready to volunteer. Baldwin attended the Blue Star Gala, and said it was a really fun event and she was enthused to hear that they raised \$100,000.

Adjournment:

Motion by Charak, second by Hoffman, to approve adjournment of the meeting. Via voice vote, motion carried 4-0. Chair Baldwin adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Williams, City Deputy Clerk & DPW Administrative Assistant