

**PARK BOARD**  
**ST. JOHN, INDIANA**  
**April 9, 1996**

**Document Title**           PARK BOARD OF ST. JOHN, INDIANA  
**Document No.**  
**Approval Date**           April 9, 1996  
**Archive Date**  
**Published In**  
**Document Type**           Park Board Minutes

The Park Board of the Town of St. John met on this date with the following members present:

Attendee 1, Joan Millis	Attendee 4,
Attendee 2, Mary Anne Koke	Attendee 5, Fred Kish, Council Liaison
Attendee 3, Paul Haller	Attendee 6,

The following members absent:

Absent 1, Shirley Hawkins	Absent 4
Absent 2,	Absent 5
Absent 3,	Absent 6

The April 9<sup>th</sup> meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m. with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**RECORDING SECRETARY**

President Joan Millis introduced Norma Yaeger, the new recording secretary for the Parks and Recreation Department.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion made by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller to approve the minutes of the March 12<sup>th</sup> meeting as printed. Passed unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS**

St. John Boy Scout Troop 550 – Joan Millis indicated she had talked with Scoutmaster Chip Williams regarding the Scout's project for White Oak Manor. Their work on the steps has been postponed to fall until the developer can grade and seed the area. The troop will work on park signs.

Sun Meadows Park Wetland – Joan Millis indicated she is checking for someone to do excavation. The item will remain on the agenda.

Five Year Master Plan Survey – Joan Millis had identified two organizations that could update the survey: NIRPC (Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission) for \$8,000.00 and Storrow & Kinsella Partnership for \$8,500.00. She distributed copies of the services that Storrow & Kinsella could provide, as NIRPC would not be available to conduct the survey until next year. A grant from Department of Natural Resources is available if a draft of the survey can be completed by June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Joan Millis, Donche Andonov and John Taylor conducted a tour of the Town's parks for Storrow; it was noted that this firm had done the Lake County Parks and Recreation Open Space and the Evansville Pigeon Creek Greenway passage.

- Motion made by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to engage Storrow & Kinsella Partnership in drawing up a 5-year master plan survey for the parks of St. John for the amount of \$8,500.00. Passed unanimously.

Central Park – Joan Millis indicated the appraisals had not been received. The agenda item was tabled until the next meeting.

Kilkenny Estates Parkland Dedication – The subject was not reviewed at the Plan Commission's last meeting so there is no update available. The agenda item was tabled until the next meeting.

Ventura Estates Park / Additional Parkland – Joan Millis noted that at the last meeting, Mr. Arzumanian wanted to give Lots 91, 92 and 93 as part of the Ventura Estates Park. Ms. Millis noted that the land is still in trust. The Park Board does not have possession of the dedicated parkland for the original parkland for Ventura Estates.

- Motion made by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, that until the time the St. John Park Board possesses the deed for the land originally set aside in Ventura Estates, the Park Board will not accept any further lots. The contribution will be taken under advisement when that deed is received. Passed unanimously.

Homestead Park Well – Austgen Electric has not provided costs for getting the well going for the retention pond. It is thought that the electrical box needs to be reconnected.

## NEW BUSINESS

Park Board Meeting Date Change – Joan Millis announced that the Park Board will be changing the monthly meeting date.

- Motion made by Paul Haller, seconded by Mary Anne Koke, to move the meeting date from the second Tuesday of each month to the first Tuesday of each month, beginning with the June 4, 1996 meeting. Passed unanimously.

Starwood Estates – David Austgen, an attorney representing Mr. Hoffman, discussed the parkland dedication of the proposed 18-acre Starwood Estates development, noting that it had been authorized by Mr. Hoffman to offer payment in lieu of land not to exceed \$15,000.00.

Mr. Austgen then outlined the factors behind the amount, which is \$7,400.00 less than the \$22,400.00 determined by the Park Board's formula for development and home size:

- The lot sizes (20,000 square feet) and proposed R-1 homes, i.e., a high quality subdivision for the Town of St. John;
- The land contours, wetlands and natural features;
- The subsequent reduction of the land yield because of the contours;
- The small park (.64 acres) which results from the formula calculations according to the Subdivision Control Ordinance;
- The practical concerns over a small park's usability and maintenance;
- The Park Board's interest in acquiring land for a Central Park.

He noted that the site plan and lot layout are still conceptual; the developer needs direction from the Park Board to continue with the engineering of the development. The topographical materials are not yet available, retention is still uncertain. In the midsection of the easterly portion, a parcel will probably be delineated as wetlands. The Plan Commission has suggested a 30' dedication on the northwest portion for the future extension of 87<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Monfort would be extended south through subdivision.

Mary Anne Koke inquired whether the proposed parkland dedication would be wetlands, this is not the case. Mr. Austgen indicated it would be useable parkland. She further inquired how the Park Board could express a preference for land or payment without knowing which lots would be dedicated.

Mary Anne Koke inquired why the developer was offering such a substantial reduction. Mr. Austgen indicated there would be significant loss of yield; in order to preserve a premium R-1 subdivision and large lot sizes, the situation is "quid pro quo": a premium development versus the Board's need for cash. Ms. Koke noted that a development of this nature statistically would have 2.6 children per household who would not have a park to play in. The development is not far from neighboring parks in Schillton Hills and Sun Meadows, however, these are somewhat difficult to access from this development. Joan Millis suggested that the Board take the offer under advisement.

Mr. Haller inquired whether the dollar amount was negotiable. Mr. Austgen indicated \$15,000.00 was the maximum he was authorized to offer.

Mr. Wickland noted that the ordinance calls for useable land, however, smaller parks are less desirable. Funds toward the Central Park proposal make sense. The developer prefers to make a cash contribution because of the items indicated in the ordinance (topography, location, size and shape of the layout, feasibility of the dedication); he could offer land without any further contribution.

Mr. Haller indicated his preference for the cash offer, as there is no need for another small park and because of the current financial obligations of the Park Board. Mr. Wickland noted that the Park Board could call a special meeting, or reconvene this

meeting, to further discuss this proposal. Mary Anne Koke expressed her preference for serving the approximately 65 children who will probably live in this subdivision.

- Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Mary Anne Koke, to take the proposal before the Plan Commission for further advise, and to respond to Mr. Austgen and his client as soon as possible. No vote was taken.

Mr. Austgen noted that his client needs direction from the Park Board to provide technical data to the engineers, and for subsequent appearances at the Plan Commission. He asked for prompt response, preferably before the Plan Commission study session on April 17<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Wickland suggested that the Park Board members taken some time to review the proposal, to re-familiarize themselves with the land, and to be ready to discuss the proposal at the soonest possible date to make a recommendation to the Plan Commission. Joan Millis inquired whether the Park Board could call an executive session for land litigation; this was deemed not applicable. The Park Board members agreed to meet again on Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. to continue discussion of this agenda item.

## REPORTS

Joan Millis noted that Public Works has rolled all the parks, they are getting bids on seeding.

Prairie West – She is checking on lumber for Prairie West to gate off an area from the geese. Building materials are needed to create four gates between the pillars.

- Motion made by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to approve expenditure of up to \$150.00 for purchase of sufficient lumber, lattice and hardware for construction of gates and fencing around the gazebo in Prairie West. Passed unanimously.

Larimer Park – Joan Millis noted that the Larimer Park Pond has been re-dredged. The pole with a dawn to dusk light used to have a meter to provide light for the pavilion. A lockable meter could be obtained at no charge; the charge for electricity would average \$6.00 to \$7.00 per month, the Town owners the pole and the light. The rental charge would be increased to cover the additional charge for lighting the pavilion.

- Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Mary Anne Koke, to approve electricity at Larimer Park for the pavilion, not to exceed \$8.00 per month. Passed unanimously.

Paul Haller inquired about the request for rock for Larimer Park, whether this was for parking or the banks; it was noted that that was not the Park Board's responsibility, and the area had been seeded.

Boy Scouts – Joan Millis noted that the Munster Troop of Eagle Scouts was interested in doing signs for Patnoe and Sun Meadows Parks, and the bridge to connect the upper and lower parts of Sun Meadows. The scouts will prepare drawings, as they did for Prairie West and Schillton Hills. Joan Millis will arrange to get permits and waive the fees.

Paul Haller inquired whether the Town's insurance covered the scouts' activities. David Wickland noted that the Local Council of Scouts, each troop, and the Town each has insurance. It was suggested that Joan Millis contact Carroll Austin to confirm the Town's coverage.

- Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to grant approval to the Munster Scout Troop #289 to begin drawing up plans for work on Sun Meadows and Patnoe Parks. Passed unanimously.

Girls Softball – Joan Millis noted that the Girls Softball League is asking for a donation of \$250.00 to sponsor their league. The Park Board supported a boys baseball team earlier this year.

- Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to sponsor one girls softball league for \$250.00. Passed unanimously.

Fitness Program – Joan Millis noted that \$581.50 was taken in for March.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Joan Millis presented the following bills for payment:

#755	St. John Girls Softball	\$250.00
#756	McShane – copy paper	\$29.95
#757	Bruce's Septic – porta potties	\$395.00
\$758	Trophy Shop – ribbons	\$21.60
#759	Liz Feeney – aerobics instructor	\$67.00
#760	Kevin Gates – basketball instructor	\$30.00
#761	Pam Zych – Fit for Kids	\$217.00
#762	Pam Zych – aerobics	\$24.00
#763	Pam Zych – volleyball	\$60.00
#764	Nipsco – dusk to dawn light	\$17.54

- Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Mary Anne Koke to accept all bills as submitted to the Park Board. Passed unanimously.

ANY AND ALL

Starwood Estates – Fred Kish, liaison on the Park Board, expressed his concern for David Austgen's pressure on the Board to make a decision whether to accept the land or the payment in lieu of land. He felt the board should maintain the option of negotiation.

Joe Hero felt the Board should look at the value of a prime lot of the Starwood Estates development. He suggested the Board review the land, get an informal appraisal, and take the time to make a reasoned decision. He felt the Board could accept the land and choose to sell it for appreciated value at a later time.

Homestead Village – Dorothy Ash inquired whether there would be a park at Homestead Acres, off 103<sup>rd</sup> Court. She noted that the land had been leveled and the parking lot added. Joan Millis noted that the land had not been deeded to the Town, when it is, the

Park Board can determine what to do with it. It will be deeded with another piece of the highline all the way to Highway 41. There is a formula that calls for increasing amounts of land as the amount of development is completed; as construction proceeds sufficiently, the total parkland will be dedicated. The location of the park was determined before the building started.

48 Hour Rule – David Wickland responded to a question about the 48-hour meeting notice rule. He read the pertinent law that stated that “the 48-hour rule is not applicable to reconvened meetings when the announcement of the date, time and place of the reconvened meeting is made at the original meeting and record in minutes thereof, and there is no change in the agenda.” He noted that this situation meets those conditions.

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church – Joan Millis read a letter from Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church Youth Group offering to plant Austrian pine and Colorado blue spruce trees on 93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue west of Highway 41 at the Prairie West shelter. Drawings of the proposed plantings were provided, with the work to be completed by May 31<sup>st</sup>. Funds are being provided by Aid Association of Lutherans. Advice was sought on the placement and future size of the suggested trees.

- Motion made by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to accept the generous offer of the tree planting by the Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church Youth Group, conditional on advisement of placement. Passed unanimously.

Central Park – Paul Haller inquired whether a meeting was scheduled for sometime this month regarding the proposed Central Park. This public information meeting is scheduled for April 29<sup>th</sup> at Lake Central High School Auditorium at 6:30 p.m.

Starwood Estates – David Wickland noted that the Park Board should not feel pressured to make a decision; he will research whether the land dedicated for the park can be hold at a later time. Cash, however, can be used for park purposes. He noted that on page 52 of the ordinance, fair market land value was set at \$35,000.00 per acre.

Joe Hero inquired whether the land could be given to the Town to be leased tot he Park Board for park purposes.

#### NOTICE OF RECESS

Joan Millis announced at 8:15 p.m. that this meting was recessed until Wednesday, April 10, 1996 at 6:30 p.m. in the St. John Municipal Building for consideration of the Starwood Estates, as shown on the agenda of this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

By: /s/ Norma R. Yaeger  
Recording Secretary