

PARK BOARD
ST. JOHN, INDIANA
February 4, 1997

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

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

The following members absent:

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

CALL TO ORDER

The February 4th meeting was called to order with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to approve the minutes of January 7th. Passed.

OLD BUSINESS

[Prairie West Fountain](#)

Joan Millis explained that the Prairie West fountain is under advisement by Kenn Kraus. Information is expected from him for the next meeting.

[Central Park](#)

Joan Millis presented the preliminary plans for review by members of the Park Board. The Sanitary Water Board will be reviewing the plans later this week. St. John Youth Baseball, Girls Softballs, and the Soccer Leagues are providing input on the need for ball fields. It appears the road may be laid out too close to the house; this will be reviewed. The detention basin shown on the plan may be located elsewhere. A groundbreaking ceremony is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 8th.

Five-Year Master Plan

Meg Storrow and John Kinsella distributed draft copies of “Parks 2000, 1996 – 2000, Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan for the Town of St. John Department of Parks and Recreation.” These copies are for comment and review prior to release of the preliminary version for public review and comment for 30 days, as required by Department of Natural Resources. Ms. Storrow suggested that copies be placed in the public library, the Parks office and other places accessible to the public. Any changes will be incorporated for the final release.

Ms. Storrow noted that this is the first official plan for the parks of St. John to be accepted by Department of Natural Resources and released publicly; she reviewed the goals used to develop the Five-Year Plan:

Make available sufficient open spaces in relation to the population throughout the Town;

- Acquire and develop community scaled park sites for a variety of recreational experiences;
- Consider recreational opportunities not currently available, and improve current programs;
- Encourage outdoor recreational programs for environmental awareness and interaction (currently a weak area);
- Provide interpretive programs on the community’s history;
- Provide cultural resources and programs;
- Provide a positive, enjoyable and safe experience in the parks;
- Maintain, staff, and fund new programs and facilities;
- Develop innovative funding sources and creative partnerships with public and private sector agencies and groups;
- Promote public awareness and identification for St. John Parks;
- Advocate initiatives to support parks at the local, state, and federal levels.

Other sections present the context and background for the plan; review of the constituency, needs, trends, and perceptions; evaluation of the park system’s management, summaries of existing parks (except undeveloped parks), facilities,

programs, and accessibility; recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and the action plan for each park with dollar values.

John Kinsella reviewed the elements of the master plan, including projected growth on the east side of Town and barriers (railroads) and linkages (utility corridor easements). He noted that looped connections along the water systems give the impression of a larger system. Walking and bicycle paths can be developed along rail lines to connect new and existing neighborhoods. Thoroughfare improvements also may provide opportunities for governmental funding for recreational areas. Mr. Kinsella noted that updates to the maps can be accomplished by computer overlay of existing Town maps.

Ms. Storrow recommended improvements to existing parks before acquiring additional land. However, appropriate parcels should be optioned or secured for later purchase. Eileen Butcher inquired about the grants available; Ms. Storrow offered to provide information on urban forestry, Department of Transportation and Trails, Land and Water, Hometown Indiana, etc.

Impact Fees

Jim Klausmeier of Pflum Klausmeier Gehrum Consultants reviewed the legislation, which enabled communities to utilize impact fees to pay for the services recommended in the parks plan. The mandated procedure evaluates what it costs to serve new development, then extracts the costs, in advance. The calculations are made on the advice of a local Impact Fee Advisory Committee (40% developers and/or real estate; Park Board, Plan Commission and Town Council representation). This group earlier this evening endorsed the plan known as “Infrastructure Improvement Plan for Park and Recreation Facilities, St. John, Indiana.”

Mr. Klausmeier reviewed the calculations shown on page 7 of the plan. New fees can only be used to deal with the increment of demand from new residents. The process involves determining the value of the developed parks' land and improvements (\$1,674,291.00) and the undeveloped parks' land (\$457,500.00) then adds the cash balance of development funds (\$49,367.00) for a total asset value of \$2,181,158.00. This number, divided by the number of residential dwellings served (2,558), equals \$853.00 (assets/dwelling). Subtraction of taxes already serving the parks (\$130.00/dwelling) reduces the proposed impact fee to \$723.00 for each new dwelling unit to be collected when a building permit is issued.

The Impact Fee Advisory Committee noted that the Town expects new cash revenues which could reduce the proposed fee of \$723.00. If new construction continues to add an average of 200 units per year over the next 10 years, St. John could realize about \$1.45 million in new revenues. Mr. Klausmeier noted that this amount of income would almost fund the improvements recommended in the 5-year plan.

To enact the impact fee ordinance, the Town needs to adopt the Vision Plan and the Infrastructure Improvement Plan as amendments to the Town Comprehensive Plan on recommendation from the Plan Commission. The Town Council would enact an ordinance to incorporate a fee. According to the law, following the enactment of the ordinance, a 6-month waiting period must be observed to recognize the developments already underway.

Mr. Klausmeier noted that the development community is generally apprehensive about impact fees, but become supportive when they learn the procedures and know what's expected of them in advance. A list of cash donations from recent developments shows fees averaging \$501.00 per dwelling, but ranging from \$250.00 to \$975.00.

The initial Impact Fee Advisory Committee will dissolve when the plan is adopted and enacted. In its place, a new Impact Fee Review Board (a registered engineer, a certified public accountant, and licensed real estate broker, with access to the Town Attorney) will be established to hear appeals. The group will help determine the amounts of credits a developer might earn in lieu of cash, e.g., donation of land. Fees collected must be kept in a dedicated account.

Mary Anne Koke inquired about the annual review of the plan; this is recommended in the legislation.

- Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Mary Anne Koke, to advance the 5-year master plan (with the noted corrections) and the Infrastructure Improvement Plan to the Plan Commission. Passed unanimously.

Eileen Butcher inquired about funding sources for private and public partnerships. Ms. Storrow recommended discussions with private investors, public schools, utility companies, the YMCA, transportation departments, and NIRPC to strengthen community ties, involved more people and groups, and stretch available dollars.

NEW BUSINESS

[St. John Boys Youth Baseball Sponsorship](#)

Joan Millis presented a request to again sponsor a team.

- Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Eileen Butcher, to continue sponsorship of the T-ball team at \$225.00. Passed unanimously.

[Warning Signs Around Ponds](#)

Joan Millis presented a letter from Indiana Insurance recommending the posting of signs around the ponds in Homestead, Prairie West and Patnoe Parks. (Joan Millis noted that Patnoe should have been listed as Louis). The signs should indicate that swimming, wading, boating, ice fishing and skating are not permitted, along with any other statements recommended by town officials. Following receipt of the letter, 45 days were allowed in which to take action. The signs were ordered and have been received but not yet installed by Public Works. Four signs were ordered for each pond, for a total of \$228.80.

[Rueth Development](#)

Joan Millis displayed a copy of the preliminary plan showing another park at Heron Lake near Ventura Estates. She encouraged the members to visit and walk the area. A detention area and wetland are also nearby.

REPORTS

Programs

Joan Millis noted that aerobics and basketball both have experienced growth in attendance.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Joan Millis presented the following bills for payment:
(Asterisked items will be paid from the Park Development Fund)

186*	Milo F. Vale	\$1,750.00	Central Park appraisal
185	CD Technologies	\$126.00	Inventory control programming
184	Austgen Electric	\$126.00	Well repair, labor
183	Nipsco	\$152.39	Dusk/dawn lights – 2 parks
182	Bekan Insurance	\$19..88	Central park property insurance
181	Carl Decker	\$30.00	Basketball
180	Carl Decker	\$40.00	Basketball
179	Fitfully Yours	\$210.00	Aerobics
178	American Signs	\$228.80	Park signs
177	Ruim Equipment	\$12.42	Mower repair
176	Girls Softball	\$250.00	
175	Norma Yaeger	\$60.00	Recording secretary

- Motion by Mary Anne Koke, seconded by Paul Haller, to approve and pay the bills as presented. Passed unanimously.

ANY AND ALL

Joan Millis indicated that there were about a dozen nominations at Kolling School for the re-naming of Central Park. She recommended that the students be given another 30 days and that another flyer be posted at the schools.

Joan Millis requested Mary Anne Koke solicit bids for the porta-potties to review at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Paul Haller, seconded by Eileen Butcher to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

By: /s/ Norma R. Yaeger
Recording Secretary