



**Open Space & Visual Environment Commission
Tuesday, November 22, 2011, 5:30 p.m.
City Hall Conference Room #2
85 South Main Street, Oberlin, Ohio**

Members Present: Wes Burgess (Chair), Carol Spiros (Vice-Chair), Aaron Mucciolo, David Sonner, Gina Makris

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Sheri Runals, Staff Support; Jeff Baumann, Staff Support; Kate Pilacky, Council Liaison; Harry Spencer, 374 N. Prospect St.

Others Absent: None

Chair Burgess called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – October 25, 2011

Motion by Mucciolo to approve the October 25, 2011 minutes as presented. Spiros seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Spring St. Park/Zion Village Garden

Baumann stated that a village garden exists on the west side of the southerly extension of Spring St., south of Groveland St., on property that is owned by LMHA. There appears to be a gravel drive, which is actually a street right-of-way which extends to the bikepath, and on the other side there had been a house. The house was torn down a couple years ago. The street extension ends at the bikepath. As you walk toward the bikepath, the gardens are on the right and the eastern part of Spring Street Park is on the left. Several years ago we revisited our maintenance of the floodplain part of that area and allowed it to become a meadow. For the last several years we have only been mowing around the perimeter of that area to keep the Japanese Knotweed down. Immediately across from the garden there had been an area in which the excavated spoils from the construction of the playground at Spring Street Park had been dumped. It had been a very uneven terrain. Due to its appearance and because of its isolated location, it had become a dumping ground. When the waterline was constructed on Groveland Street, the contractor leveled the site off. Wildflowers were planted in that area and white pines were planted during one of the Arbor Day celebrations. The Zion Village Garden has come into existence since this area was cleaned up, grated out, and planted as a wildflower meadow with a few trees. As the garden has developed, the folks that run the garden wanted to have an open house and wanted more parking available. They wanted to use the area of the wildflower meadow as a parking lot. We are seeking a compromise in which we would put some type of demarcation between the area that would be a parking area and the area that would be maintained as a meadow. We would try to meet their needs without undo cost to the city and still maintain it in a natural way. He was running this past the commission to see if they had any questions or concerns. The only parking right now is on Groveland St. in front of the LMHA properties. The commission endorsed the installation of a small parking lot with 'dawn to dusk' signage and gravel.

Wetland Walking Trail Proposal

Harry Spencer of 374 North Prospect St. presented a proposal that the City create a wetland walking trail from the end of Hollywood St., north to the Maple St. right-of-way, west to the Ramsey right-of-way and south past the City's west water tower to West Lorain St.

After review and discussion, the following recommendation was made by David Sonner and seconded by Aaron Mucciolo:

"The Open Space and Visual Environment Commission recommends to City Council that City Council authorize and direct the City Administration to examine the possibility of establishing a wetland walking trail to preserve open space and use as a nature hiking trail."

The motion passed 5-0.

December Meeting

The commission was in favor of cancelling the December meeting.

Appointment to the Design Review Subcommittee

Burgess announced that several members' terms will be expiring and Mucciolo will be leaving since he was elected to city council. The commission needs to appoint someone new to the Design Review Sub-Committee. This appointment needs to be done at the last meeting of the year. Motion by Sonner to appoint Spiros. Pilacky stated that whoever is appointed must have a professional background as far as planning, architecture, design, etc. Spiros stated that she has a BA in art. Makris seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Other Business

Burgess stated that it is the responsibility of the chair and vice-chair to submit a year-end report. Submissions should be emailed to Wes and Carol.

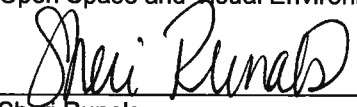
Pilacky stated that she walked the business park with the resident that brought up a previous open space concern. The resident was mainly concerned about the parcel between the high school and the lot owned by Ron Pierre. It would be nice to have a trail from Kendal along the creek area to Lorain St. People would be able to ride a bike safely from Kendal to the grocery store. Pilacky mentioned this to the City Manager. The topic may come up again next year.

Mucciolo appreciated the opportunity to serve on the commission the last two years. He looks forward to hearing what comes from the commission.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the commission, the meeting was adjourned. Motion by Sonner; seconded by Spiros.


_____, Chair
Open Space and Visual Environment Commission



Sheri Runals
Staff Support

Approved: 1, 24, 12