

Parks Commission

Special Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 15, 2015
6:00 p.m., DPW, 1199 8th Avenue



City of South Haven

1. Call to Order by Warren Toneman at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Cobbs, McAlear, Moore, Toneman, White
Absent: Fitzgibbon, Montgomery-Reinert

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Moore, second by McAlear to approve the September 15, 2015 Special Meeting Agenda as presented.

All in favor. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes for the Record – August 11, 2015

Motion by, Moore second by White to approve the August 11, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes as written.

All in favor. Motion carried.

5. Public Comments and Inquiries Concerning Items not on the Agenda

None at this time.

REPORTS

6. Beach Flag Numbering

Larry Halberstadt spoke to the Commission about this matter and answered questions posed by the members. The official beach season runs from May 15 – September 15. Safety flags are only operated during that time period. Updated flags and flag pole numbers will be in place for the next beach season.

NEW BUSINESS

7. Commission will be requested to review the proposed Water Street Streetscape Improvements Plan and Hillside Maintenance Plan.

Pat Cornelisse addressed to the Commission regarding this plan and answered questions posed to her by the members. The purpose of the project is to provide aesthetic improvements and pedestrian improvements along the south side of Water Street from South Beach to Kalamazoo Street.

Cornelisse noted that some parts are well maintained and other parts need work. She also stated that landscaping needs to be maintained. Thus, the plan is to limit the formal landscaped areas and improve the remainder of the hillside with plantings that require less formal maintenance.

Cornelisse proceeded to describe the improvements on a block by block basis.

Between South Beach and St. Joseph Street, improvements will include a 7 foot wide sidewalk adjacent to the parking spaces on the south side. A low retaining wall will be required at the back of sidewalk for a portion of the block. Existing dune grass should be left in place and supplemented with new dune grass. Selective tree trimming and removal will occur to eliminate unwanted species and dead wood. Stumps will be left in place, ground down and covered. Leaving the root system in place will assist with stabilization of the hillside.

Between St. Joseph Street and Maple Street, the existing WPA wall will remain. The new sidewalk will extend to the end of the parking spaces. New lighting will be added along the WPA wall.

The block from Maple Street to Kalamazoo Street needs the most work. A split rail fence along the existing retaining wall needs replacement. Closer to the South Marina there is a steep slope that is showing signs of erosion and bank failure. This is exacerbated by pedestrians traversing the hillside from Eagle and Indiana Streets. The plan is to construct a new concrete stairway from the intersection of Eagle and Indiana down to Water Street. The stairway will be built into the hillside to serve as a retaining wall for the slope. The dumpster enclosure at the base of the hill will be reworked. In addition, several additional parking spaces for the South Marina will be created along Maple Street. Other improvements in this block include short retaining walls near the base of the slope and selective tree trimming and removal as described previously.

Public Comments were received as follows:

Jodi Carlson, 314 Indiana Av, addressed the Commission and the speaker about the streetscape. She is concerned about smokers and restaurant workers who congregate at the corner of Eagle and Indiana.

Roger Ward, 314 Eagle Street, addressed the Commission and said that the City needs to address the visibility of that corner. It is an eyesore and blocks his view. He says that there are restaurant workers who come down there to hang out. He is concerned that if you make it (the stair structure) too much of a nice place it will draw too many people there. He wants

the harbor to be visible from his front porch. He'd like to know where this project fits in the establish priorities because this is a major concern to him.

Commissioner Comments:

McAlear – The homeowners concerns should be addressed but the whole project is a good idea.

White – When we have tourists in that area all summer long, we need to have that area fixed.

Although a formal motion was not considered, the Commissioners in attendance agreed unanimously that the Water Street Improvement plan should be implemented.

8. Commission will be requested to begin review of the City Gift Policy.

Commissioners agreed that the City of Grand Haven Donation Policy was the type of comprehensive document that they desire to see adopted in South Haven. Halberstadt was directed to develop a new South Haven policy modelled on the Grand Haven policy.

McAlear indicated that a master plan of park improvements should be developed and that staff could deal with smaller donation requests without the need for Commission approval of every donation.

Halberstadt noted that a list of common site furniture could be developed and approved by the Parks Commission. Staff could establish pricing for the installation and maintenance of the improvements. This would hopefully encourage donations in addition to benches.

9. Commissioner Comments

White: No comment

Cobbs: No comment

McAlear: No comment

Moore: Any structure built by the city should be inclusive for all citizens.

Toneman: Liked the stair structure and that the proposed retaining walls were very good ideas.

10. Adjourn

Motion by Moore, second by White to adjourn at 7:00 p.m.

All in favor. Motion carried.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



Kate Hosier
Deputy City Clerk