

MINUTES
BROOKINGS PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
City of Brookings 898 Elk Drive, Brookings
October 28, 2004

Call to Order

Chair Boynton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Tony Parrish.

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Dave Gordon, April Gothard, Bill Boynton, Dori Blodgett, and Tony Parrish.

Commissioners Absent: Pat Sherman, and Daryn Farmer.

Ex Officio Commissioner: Paul Cleary.

Staff Present: City Manager Leroy Blodgett, and Cathie Mahon, Secretary.

Media: Brian Bullock for *The Pilot*.

There were approximately 10 people in the audience.

Minutes

Commissioner Dave Gordon moved the approval of the minutes from the September 23, 2004, meeting. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes as written.

PUBLIC APPEARANCES

Bankus Park:

Greg Holthoff, Environmental Project Manager for ODOT, distributed a handout of his report on the analysis of Bankus Fountain and its impact on the Downtown Brookings Highway 101 Traffic Solutions Project. He explained while doing an environment assessment study the location of the Bankus Fountain became an issue and has slowed down the process. According to the NEPA (National Environment Policy Act) an Environment Assessment study must be completed according to federal regulations. He stated the purpose of the study is to define traffic problems, assess the impact of solutions, followed by public disclosure and decision-making. NEPA has a multitude of federal environment regulations which all ODOT projects must follow. Part of those regulations is Section 4(f) which states federal transportation projects must "protect publicly owned parks, recreation areas, etc." He outlined the purpose of the Section 4(f) regulation, and how it applies to Bankus Fountain.

Elmer Bankus Fountain is part of the City of the Brookings park system and the City must decide several issues concerning the fountain with a solution that will have minimal impact on the park. The problem is the Fountain will be impacted because it is located on the northeast corner of Highway 101 and Fifth Street, one of the busiest intersections in the city, and one that is part of the Highway 101 project.

Holthoff outlined two of the alternatives for the project.

- Alternative #6 bypassing Railroad would have no impact.
- Both Alternatives 4 and 5 could be modified to avoid the park.

- Alternative 4 could be used to avoid the park but the high cost (\$17 to \$19 million) may not be feasible.
- Alternative 5 could be re-designed to avoid the park. The modifications would greatly affect businesses at 4-corner intersection: Fred Meyer, Taco Bell, KFC, and Washington Mutual Bank. This plan would reduce their frontage parking. Modifications would cost approximately \$1 million.

Holthoff concluded that Alternative 4 has the least harm to Elmer Bankus Fountain, both alternatives could be re-designed to bypass the park, and Alternative 5 may cost the least, but would have expensive impact to the businesses. He stated one option would be to rebuild the fountain in its present location, but farther north of Chetco Avenue. The second option would be to relocate the fountain east of Fifth Street.

He emphasized until Section 4(f) is satisfied, plans cannot be finalized until a decision has been reached whether to rebuild, relocate, or do nothing. Gary posed 4 questions for the Commission:

1. What is the true use and value of the park to the citizenry?
2. How do the citizens feel about moving the park?
3. What is the process of moving the park?
4. Is the city in agreement with the possibility of moving the park?

City Manager Blodgett commented he was in favor of keeping the park. He related a little history stating the Bankus family deeded the property to the city to be used for streets or parks. He stated there was nothing in the deed that specified a fountain must be in the park.

Chair Boynton read a memo from Dave Lentz, Parks and Recreation Supervisor. He stated the fountain has several leaks and is in dire need of serious repair. Lentz suggested removing the fountain and rebuilding it farther north of the park utilizing the old rock.

Holthoff discussed the steps required before he can finalize his report. He said if a decision can be made, with a letter addressing the decision, he would be able to release the assessment report within the required 40 day time limit mandated in the regulations. He also emphasized he was not asking for a decision immediately, but to have the Commission move forward in a timely manner to resolve the problem.

Discussion ensued. Ideas were discussed ranging from whether to remove the fountain, move the fountain back from the roadway, or relocate it across the street along the north side of Chetco Avenue as this property is part of the Bankus property deeded to the city. Chair Boynton stated he thought revamping the fountain was a good idea and while redesigning it, do it in a fashion that would satisfy the required perimeters. City Manager Blodgett stated his real concern was the fact the land belongs to the city and is defined a park. If we are going to change the existing configuration of the park, research needs to be done to find out if there are any Bankus heirs who might want to have some input and any citizens who might have a vested interest in it.

Blodgett concluded the city could declare Bankus Park no longer a park, which would satisfy the land needed for both Alternative #4 and #5. If it is removed from the park system, that would take care of Section 4(f) which would take care of the issue of "avoidance" with the transportation project.

Commissioner Gordon moved the Commission consider removing or relocating all or a portion of Bankus Fountain from the park, to allow modification to the Fifth Street and Chetco Avenue intersection, and to have staff research and bring information to the Commission regarding the Bankus deed, and to schedule a public hearing to receive public input. The motion was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Dori Blodgett made a motion to have the public meeting on December 2, 2004, at 7:00 p.m., followed by a regular meeting on December 16, 2004. The motion was unanimously approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Stout Park: Commissioner Parrish circulated photographs to explain his concern about spraying at the park. He added there is a continual litter problem from Chetco and Oak streets to the schools.

City Manager Blodgett circulated several trash container examples for the commission to discuss and review what type would best fit at Stout Park. It was decided the *Upscale* 38-gallon Waste Container was the best choice. It was decided to order 6 containers. Blodgett explained the Stout fund is required to have \$15,000 in its account; there is currently approximately \$19,000. The money for the containers will come from the Stout Trust Fund.

Chetco Point Park:

Chair Boynton read a report from Commissioner Pat Sherman regarding possible student art, science, and leadership groups from the schools participating in the Waste Water Treatment Plant project to decorate the bare walls. She is working with Ed Wait, Economic and Urban Development Director, who is putting together a packet of information on the park.

Bud Cross Park and Softball Fields:

Commissioner Gordon had no report.

Kidtown: Commissioner Dori Blodgett reported the park continues to look wonderful. When she recently drove by the park, she noticed the swings were being worked on by Park and Recreation personnel.

Easy Manor Park: Commissioner Gothard reported she is attempting to think about some ideas for raising money for the park upgrades. One thought is to have an open house as an opportunity to get public opinion for what they would like to see happen at the park.

Azalea Park Fountain:

The annual meeting will be held November 11. The Foundation would like the Commission to formulate a master plan for the park.

STAFF ANOUNCEMENTS/CONCERNS/FOLLOW-UP

Financial Report: No Discussion.

City Managers Report

City Manager Blodgett mentioned the new ban on commercial burning. The City is required to abide the ban which presents the problem of what the City should do with their brush. An alternative is purchasing a chipper.

Chair Boynton mentioned two commissioners terms will expire in February 2005.

With no further business before the Commission, Commissioner Gordon moved the meeting be adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Cathie Mahon
Recording Secretary

Approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission

DECEMBER 16, 2004 date)