

Village of Chagrin Falls Parks Commission June 1, 2015

Members present: deConingh, King, Lutz, White

Also present: Ben Himes, Rob Jamieson, John Brockway

The meeting was convened in the Village Hall Council Chambers at 8:33am.

MINUTES

Karla made a motion to approve the April 28, 2015 meeting minutes. Anne seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

RIVERSIDE PARK

The Tree Commission would like approval to use of an air knife right after Art by the Falls to check for girdled crab apple trees along brick walkway. This process blows out dirt along the base of the trees so roots are exposed and checked for issues. Janna made motion to approve, Anne seconded. Permission was granted.

Jonathon Setliff from Jaycees represented an application by the Jaycees for "Symphony under the Stars" event on Saturday, August 15 at 7:00 PM. The event will benefit local food banks. They expect approximately 500 people to attend. The Jaycees would like to hang a banner along South Franklin to advertise the event. Ben stated Council must approve the banner. Rob stated he felt the grounds should be in good condition by then. Karla made a motion to approve application, Janna seconded. The application was approved.

The CVECA (Chagrin Valley Early Childhood Association) has requested use of the park for a lemonade stand on Sunday, July 24. Given the possible tender condition of the grounds, the Parks Commission specified they stay on the hard service of the oval. Janna made a motion to approve application for Sunday, July 24 with specification they stay on oval, Anne seconded. The application was approved.

On Saturday, May 2 a group of University School students were seen having a fundraiser in the park. Recently, there seems to be a number of “pop-up” (un-sanctioned) fundraisers. Ben will discuss with the Police Chief. A possible solution is giving out “permits” for approved events. The police can then have a method of verifying their permission.

Discussion of expansion of the municipal parking lot on East Orange St.; conceptual plans are available. There were a large number of residents in attendance to join in the discussion.

When the Village originally purchased the land on East Orange it was a paved parcel and was ultimately to be used for parking.

Ben shared that Heinen’s would like to come to the Village. Their concern however is the lack of parking. Heinen’s recently sent a letter to the Mayor stating the parking situation must be resolved. CT Consultants drew up plans for 43 additional spots within Riverside Park. Spots will be a pay to park with a couple of options: there would be a kiosk where you pay and then put receipt slip on dash or just simply pay a fixed price for each individual space.

Donna Murphy, who owns the plaza, has been working with Heinen’s and stated the parking is the biggest hurdle in closing the deal. It is difficult for Heinen’s to make the enormous financial commitment when they come to the Village and cannot even find a place to park. They are concerned for their employees and customers. There is a contract, Heinen’s has hired an architect, and made a verbal commitment, the parking is the last issue. Donna added better signage and layout are also being considered for the plaza itself. Heinen’s does not want to designate the parking for just their use; they do want to share, but additional spots must be added to Village. Donna stated she has a lot of M Italian and Jekyll’s employees parking there. Illegal parking in plaza is due to people working in town. There is a lack of all-day parking for employees.

Years ago, the Village approached Dr. Hergenroeder about using his parking lot during the weekend and evenings. He was open to the idea but this option was never pursued. Ben stated this could be revisited. Problem is it is difficult to manage when businesses are being used for parking.

Anne expressed she is not in favor of using the park space for parking. She stated she thinks it should remain a park, saying “we have so little green space in Chagrin Falls”.

Patti Baker and Anne both read from the P & I zoning. Their interpretation is that the land should be used for park use, if anything.

Questions: will Jaycees be able to still construct their tents?

Janna stated she felt the Village does have ample green space. She feels she has been a good steward of parks. Adding 43 organized spaces is a helpful and reasonable compromise. Making this decision is not easy...some concessions need to be made.

Tod echoed Janna’s thoughts with his support of the additional parking spots. He feels there is a fair amount of green space in the Village and the addition of a grocery store is essential to the long-term success of the Village. He felt the additional spots help the commerce of the Village. Tod stated he does not believe the conversion to parking would impact Blossom. The Jaycees big top in more centrally located in the park and only rides would be located in the parking area.

Karla agreed with Janna and Tod in their support of the additional parking on East Orange. She acknowledged how important the parks are to the Village. They help to create the ambiance people love about the town, but equally important to the stability of the Village is a grocery store. The lack of parking in the Village has been deliberated for years...something must be done (at least in the short-term) to accommodate Heinen’s. The parcel of land on East Orange was pavement when it was originally purchased and it was purchased with the intent of using it for parking. This is a fair and necessary compromise. There may be other long-term solutions but these take time and money. Reality is residents have not supported additional funds for roads, there is no evidence to suggest voters will be willing to pay for a parking garage.

Anne suggested removing the loop at the end that extends into the park. This was agreed to by everyone.

Diane Nazelli...as business owner we had to pay for parking...I think there needs to be a lot of creative thinking not taking park space. Armory shuttle, for example, or a parking garage...no long-range

thinking, just reactive. Village has contributed to the problem with all the variances allowed. Also asked any commission member who has a business in Village to recuse themselves. As a business owner, Janna agreed. Final thoughts from Diane...“Before you make that a parking lot, I want to see a lot more creative work is done”.

Beth Skeel...before park space taken please consider other options. Janna stated other options are being considered but time is of the essence and there is the issue of funding. The voters have not supported additional expenses (ie roads).

Ted deConingh ...looking at all the other options is key. Wait until school board meets this evening with regard to the CFIS. This is prime land within the Village that perhaps could used to solve the parking problem.

Rick Bauman...has Heinen’s made parking the ultimate factor in the contract? Ben stated they have made it verbally clear they want the Village to “solve the parking problem”.

Ben stated that eventually, all municipal parking will be pay to park.

Donna stated all previous grocery stores in the plaza have had this problem. She has spoken with two other grocery stores who have expressed an interest but upon visiting have walked away due to the parking problem.

Janine Bauman does not support using land for parking. She will continue to vote down any additional taxes to put a band-aid on issues when there is no long-term plan for the Village.

Janna suggested anyone who has ideas with regard to parking or the way the Village addresses problems should bring their thoughts to Council. She appreciates everyone’s input.

Patti Baker suggested making plaza parking designated for plaza businesses only.

Cliff Nazelli...maybe a solution is to go to Heinen’s and explain the lot is full now because we are not currently enforcing, we are working on solutions, but know we will address the enforcement in the future.

Diane Nazelli...the businesses are not being charged for use of the Village...parking, snow plow etc. These are common area maintenance

charges and it is time to charge the businesses. We cannot have it all. There are some quick fixes that would satisfy Heinen's in the short-term.

Janine Bauman...what will happen if Ivex gets developed? Will we keep taking away park land?

Mike Carlton...taking park space is a way for the Village to take the easy way out in solving the parking problem.

Anne stated we could not vote on this issue given the issues raised. The issue will be raised to the Parking Commission.

The Mayor stated that in Chagrin Falls a parking garage is not self-sufficient and would require a subsidy. He stated they did receive an estimate of \$20M for adding an upper deck of 100 spaces to the municipal lot. He said he will go back to them for further discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:03am.

NEXT MEETING:

June 30, 2015 at 8:30am in Village Hall Council Chambers.

Anne deConingh, Chairman

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