

City of Colville

PLANNING COMMISSION

September 9, 2009

7:00 P.M. – City Hall

MINUTES

The Colville Planning Commission met for a regular meeting on Wednesday, September 9, 2009, in the Council Room at City Hall. Chairperson Jody Hoffman called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. with a quorum present.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Alan Bedford, Russ Larsen, Jody Hoffman, and Tracy Ferrell. MEMBERS ABSENT: Dee Hokom and Pearl Mance. One vacancy exists. STAFF PRESENT: Assistant Planner Melinda Lee, Park Superintendent Todd Booth, Recreation Coordinator Deborah Rarrick, and Recording Secretary Susan Davis. OTHERS PRESENT: Tom O'Brien, Liz Shaw, Mike Trail, George Heath, and Holly O'Connell.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting of August 26, 2009 had been distributed to each member prior to the meeting. Alan Bedford moved and Tracy Ferrell seconded the motion to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried. Jody Hoffman abstained.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP – COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

- Chapter 6 – Parks & Recreation Element

Chairperson Jody Hoffman explained that the purpose of the public workshop is to discuss Chapter 6 – Parks & Recreation Element as a part of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan Update. The draft document had been distributed to each Commission member prior to the meeting and made available to the public (copy on file). The public was encouraged to participate in discussion during public workshops and at future public hearings.

Assistant Planner Melinda Lee explained that Chapter 6 is being proposed as a new element to the Comprehensive Plan, which could help the City in providing for future parks and recreation facilities. If potential park sites can be identified and included as part of a plan, it makes it much easier to incorporate them into future projects or possibly to acquire space in different areas. Melinda suggested that some neighborhood parks could also be incorporated into a bicycle/pedestrian plan in the Transportation Element, which would tie the two plans together. A Parks & Recreation Element could also help the City when seeking funding for different projects.

Melinda distributed revisions to Table 6.1 identifying park areas by number and updating the acreage for Heritage Court. Population/Park LOS comparison figures in Table 6.2 were updated as well. Figure 6.1 was distributed identifying the locations of Colville City Parks by number to correspond with Table 6.1. (Copies on file).

Melinda noted that the sentence under “Vision” on Page 1 was changed to read “The Colville Park Department and Recreation Department have adopted this mission statement:” recognizing that they are

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separate departments. She reviewed other minor text revisions that were made for clarification or additional information after distribution of the draft document.

Liz Shaw questioned whether there are any provisions in the element to encourage the maintenance of existing facilities. Ms. Shaw encouraged the City to try to address repair and maintenance of the existing tennis courts at the City Park. She felt they are an integral and important part of the whole park system, which provides diverse recreational opportunities for users. Melinda reviewed some of the proposed goals and policies that could relate to existing facilities.

Tom O'Brien also expressed support for the maintenance of the tennis courts at the City Park. He felt usage would increase if the courts were in better shape. Tom stated that girls' tennis is the second largest sports program in the Colville School District. The tennis coaches are also working with area youth as well. Recognizing that funding is always an issue, he suggested that funding opportunities, including grants and partnerships, might be available over the long term for maintenance or for new facilities.

Park Superintendent Todd Booth explained in the past, due to budget constraints, the Park Board partially funded the four tennis courts at the high school. The Board discussed removing the courts at the City Park and developing additional parking, which was never done. It was Todd's opinion that the three tennis courts at the City Park would need to be totally upgraded, which is beyond the City's budget. He pointed out the current courts, which were resurfaced over 20 years ago, are difficult to maintain due to the poor soil conditions.

George Heath explained that as a tennis player he supported the tennis courts at the City Park because it is a nice central location. He stated that it would be difficult to give up that location especially at a time when tennis is a growing activity. He recommended before that site is abandoned that research be done to identify all of the possibilities.

Mike Trail expressed support for the tennis courts at the City Park as well for its location. He advised that the tennis community is growing. As the girls' tennis coach he has seen an increased interest in the program. Mike felt at least two courts would provide an adequate opportunity for users. He and George Heath suggested that the tennis community would be willing to support a plan and contribute as much as possible to meet the growing demand for adequate facilities. Mike felt there might be more community support for a multi-purpose indoor sports complex if it included as many sports as possible, such as basketball, volleyball, and tennis courts, portable batting cages, and a community center, etc.

The Planning Commission was receptive to trying to address tennis courts in the element. Al Bedford suggested that language be included to encourage updating the tennis courts; adding that moving to another location should be a second choice. Staff felt some text could be added to incorporate the public's comments. Staff will also review the Capital Facilities Plan to see if tennis courts are listed as a future capital project.

Tracy Ferrell felt more emphasis should be put on tying pedestrian/bicycle trails in with the existing parks. She suggested that even some signage would help encourage better utilization of City parks.

Liz Shaw suggested including the Get Fit Colville trails map in the City's plan. Melinda advised that Dee Hokom provided copies of the map for review and consideration.

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Melinda advised that all of the comments would be considered and a final draft of the Park & Recreation Element prepared for discussion at future public hearings. It was a consensus that further discussion on this element is not necessary at this time. There were no objections to canceling the September 23rd meeting.

Recreation Coordinator Deborah Rarrick thanked staff for helping to draft the new element. She advised that grant funding opportunities have been lost in the past because the City could not meet the planning criteria. Todd Booth indicated that he would welcome partnerships because the City doesn't have the resources to achieve all of the identified goals. He felt including projects like the tennis courts in the City's plans could help when seeking funding.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Transportation Element.

Melinda Lee advised that as a result of researching the 3rd Avenue sidewalk maintenance issue, it was discovered that Highway 20 from a point near Colville Valley Concrete east to Aladdin Road is outside the city limits. City ordinances are not enforceable in the county. It was felt that it might be appropriate to voice concerns to the State Department of Transportation and the County.

NEW BUSINESS: There was no New Business to be presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: There were no public comments at this time.

REPORTS

Melinda advised that she is trying to coordinate the formation of the subcommittee to identify different pedestrian/bicycle routes for a plan. She proposed to call it the Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety Plan to avoid confusion with other organized groups. Different organizations, agencies, and individuals with interest have been contacted and some responses have been received. Melinda indicated that the first meeting could possibly be held on September 29th or 30th.

Melinda reported that the Building & Planning Department has received numerous nuisance complaints this year. Although most have been about overgrown vegetation, some complaints have been about junk vehicles on streets. The Police Department has been very helpful with the junk vehicle complaints, which has made it easier for the Building & Planning Department to seek and achieve abatement.

Holly O'Connell asked if the City has any way of dealing with the increasing deer population in town. Melinda advised that the issue has been brought before the City Council on several occasions. At this time, she was not aware that any solution had been reached. She noted that the Nuisance Ordinance does not address the deer problem.

ADJOURNMENT

As there was no further business, Alan Bedford moved that the meeting be adjourned. Tracy Ferrell seconded. Voice vote showed all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 P.M.