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April 5, 2010

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
ON PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

The Committee on Parks and Open Space held a meeting on April 5, 2010, with Chairman Rebekah Gewirtz presiding and Committee Members Aldermen Maryann Heuston and Sean O'Donovan also present and voting. Also present were Administrative Assistant Matt Dias, Transportation Director Michael Lambert, Director of Community Relations Carlene Campbell and interested members of the public.

189040 - Off Leash Recreation Areas and cost estimate for a dog park at Dilboy Field:

Ms. Campbell stated that the proposed site at Dilboy was visited on April 5th with Alderman Trane in attendance. The site is enclosed and is CDBG eligible, however a case must be made to HUD that the facility is needed since there is a lack of same in the area. If approved by HUD, it could be completely funded with a CDBG. An analysis places the cost of creating this facility at roughly \$225,000 plus \$25,000 for soil testing, due to its proximity to the river. Additional cost could be incurred if the soil needs to be removed. Chairman Gewirtz stated that there are so many advantages to this site due to the size of the parking lot. Lisa McFarron of SomDog told the members that she would research other dog parks around the country that are near water.

188881 - amendments to the 2008-2013 Open Space & Recreation Plan:

Mr. Lambert told the members that extending the effective date of the plan by 2 years would benefit the city because additional grants could be sought. Chairman Gewirtz expressed her concern due to the fact that bigger projects were added to the plan and she asked what the process is to amend the document if something is needed. Mr. Lambert explained the process and said that the plan is overdue and that if the extension is not completed, filing deadline could be missed. Mr. Lambert explained how adding detail would impact state approval and he explained how a change would be completed and what would prompt a public hearing. Alderman Heuston is comfortable passing this item, however she would like to have an amendment submitted to add the proposed Dilboy dog park. Alderman O'Donovan stated that he is pleased with the ability to apply for CDBG funds.

Other business:

Mr. Rocco DiRenzo suggested that the city install a parking meter in front of his building, where there is a laundromat, because the lack of a meter is having a negative effect on the business. Chairman Gewirtz and Alderman Heuston suggested that Mr. DiRenzo speak to Alderman Taylor, since this is a Ward 3 issue.

The committee discussed matters before it and took action on the following item:

188881: Communication from Mayor - Requesting approval of amendments to the 2008-2013 Open Space & Recreation Plan, to extend the effective date of the Plan to 2015.

RECOMMENDATION: Should be approved

VOTE: Unanimous, 3 - 0 in favor

Alderman Rebekah L. Gewirtz, Chairman
Committee on Parks and Open Space