



Grosse Pointe Park Beautification Commission

Special Meeting January 7, 2026 - Minutes

Discussion about Proposal for Trail and Meadow Amenity
Presented by Jim Creighton and Kelly Koniacki

I. Call to Order: 7:06 pm

II. Roll Call: Lindsay Winn, Chris Danel, Kelly Koniacki, Jim Creighton, Pat Deck, Barb Miller, Ann Billiu, Sharon Pierce, Cheryl Gauss, Lisa Kyle, Brent Dreaver, Tom Jenny

Absent: Shellie Hanson excused Sharon Pierce excused

III. Project Overview: Commissioners Creighton and Koniacki presented information on the meadow amenity using the presentation they made to the recreation commission.

IV. Discussion and Questions:

1. What does "consult" mean? The consultation will take place at our request, not the State of Michigan.
2. Maintenance: Commissioner concerned with maintenance or "no maintenance". Voiced concerns that the meadow may end up looking like the boardwalk with the invasive weeds.
3. Another concern is watering. Beds need to be watered for the first two years to survive.

Response: It is true that no garden is maintenance free. The good thing about native plants is their root system. Seeding is different than planting plugs and requires less water

4. Have you consulted with other cities that have completed these projects?
yes. Kelly has visited Callahan Park (2 acres) for the first DBA project. There were over 200 birds observed in this habitat. Jim has also visited several sites.

5. Detroit has installed 24 meadows. A commissioner wondered if there is a difference between abandoned lots and public parks.
5. Cost? Who is preparing? Are they just spraying?
6. Who will Mow? DPW is not going to mow (according to her understanding).

RESPONSE: They will site prep by treating the ground and removing the thatch. Kelly was uncertain who will remove the thatch

7. We have so many other issues that need resolving: Invasive thistle, etc.

RESPONSE: volunteers will be doing the mowing. He agrees that other areas need to be addressed in the park and can be done concurrently. The contractor that currently mows the grass could be mowing this meadow. There isn't much to do the first year or two; it would just mean mowing slightly more often if the city doesn't have the prescribed equipment.

8. Has Parks and Rec agreed or approved this? RESPONSE: No. Not yet.

9. Parks and rec are involved, and rec commission City Gardener should be involved as well.

RESPONSE: That is a great idea

10. What are the estimated costs after 10 years? RESPONSE: Just mowing.

Approved as submitted

11. How do we tackle accessibility? RESPONSE: It is not ADA approved but is accessible. It is sloped but could possibly use material so that wheelchairs could go on the path as well.

Councilman Dreaver mentioned that we are looking at accessibility long term in the park as a whole

12. Have you explored the possibility of a different location for the meadow? Yes- Essex but it would change the look of the park. The area recommended is the least used area and would not significantly change the look of the park.

13. Have you considered planting a trial garden to show the community what it might look like?

RESPONSE: It can be mowed over and abandoned at any point. doing a smaller garden wouldn't really be an option.

14. Having the a Federal Agency: (Department of Fish and Wildlife) controlling a private park makes some citizens wary.... Do we need this oversight? Are we selling our souls for \$1000? Losing local control. There was an issue with the Farms when DNR got involved and prevented the city from mowing and now it is all overgrown

RESPONSE: Nick already is looking at the agreement to make sure that the city contains complete control of the park. They supply the materials and consult only. He has a legal agreement with the city.

15.Funding: There is another donor who would be willing to fund it all. All Expenses.

16. Dreaver Comment: The city manager really likes this site due to the hardness of the soil, and it might retain more moisture and help with bugs etc.

17.Are the seeds differentiated to each site (wet vs dry)?

RESPONSE: Yes.

18. Commissioner thanked the commissioners for their efforts that went into this project

19. How likely will it be to get this project rolling with all the departments agreeing?

RESPONSE: Kelly said that the situation is fluid but that we do not know.

Next Step: meeting with the recreation commission

Kelly and Jim can give an update at our next meeting in February. Lisa will add it to the agenda.

Public Comment:

Lisa read 4 emails from the public to the commissioners in support of the project from Bruce Hubbell, Linda McKenzie, Laura Gleason and Tory Conklin.

Tina Ziemba: read a prepared statement that had concerns for a project this large and outside oversight should be approved only after broad community input. Discussion regarding who sent letters of support.

Councilman Pat Gleason: As acting representative to recreation commission: The majority of the members were excited about it but do realize the size of the undertaking. They are in the midst of developing their 5-year plan and hope to streamline proposals and they look forward to them coming back to speak with them.

Mayor Michelle Hodges: Thanked the commissioners for their service and hard work.

Adjournment: Motion made by Cheryl Gauss seconded by Barb Miller Adjourned at 8:30 pm

Respectfully submitted by Armen Gulian

Approved as submitted