

Ortonville Park Plan Workgroup

May 25, 2016 – 4:30 p.m. at the Ortonville Public Library's Media Center

Since the City had not received the hard copies of the student presentations before this meeting, the focus was to have a brief review and discussion of the information that has been received: (Soils Report and Survey Information)

1. Reviewed the "Brief Analysis of the Ortonville Parks – Soils, vegetation, etc."
 - The report provided brief information on issues that should be addressed soon. (i.e. Riverside Park campground where many of the cottonwoods have structural defects that compromise their integrity. Several have cavities near the soil line and the largest has several trunks with long splits and cavities. These trees represent a risk to campers and the trees should be evaluated to determine which ones should be removed... removal of the buckthorn and other invasive species, etc.) **See Report.**
 - The Group discussed the summary which encompasses four parks – Riverside Park campground, Lakeside Park, Central Park, Nelson Park – noting that these centrally located parks could be linked.
2. Student Presentation discussion. Those in attendance discussed the presentations that resonated with them.
 - Mayor Berkner advised that the Engineer was recently in Ortonville and they were reviewing sidewalks and how they could be connected and in some cases expanded to include parks such as Neilson and Central Park.
 - How could the sidewalk and park connections be incorporated into a Safe Routes to School project?
 - Some of the Buckthorn clean-up could be accomplished with the assistance of the Guards when they are looking for community projects in the fall.
 - The trails presentation was discussed at length. Working with walkers and/or bikers to map out their favorite routes and provide references on the distances. Make the routes different skill levels (using hills, etc.). Possibly use Fitbit mileage – referencing the number of steps. Using way finding markers along the routes
 - Providing Park information and locations on an on-line map.
 - Consistent signage throughout the City for parks.
 - A downsized Border Walk (from student presentation)
 - Liz Rackl shared a public art opportunity. Design benches that would be placed within the parks with images to use as rubbings that when all rubbings/benches were utilized it made one picture. (see attached) – great family activity.
 - The recent Appleton play that utilized several locations within the community as their stage would be a good activity to consider for the future. Place Based Productions.
 - Installing safety lighting around the golf course for nighttime walking.
 - Sidewalks near the hospital that would connect to other sidewalks to create a route.
 - The growing birder groups – how can we incorporate plantings that would encourage more birds and promote to encourage more birders to come to the area.
 - Discussed Brent Olson's idea to create a natural swimming area next to the pier
 - Highlighting the history component to the parks.
 - Discussed re-activating the Historic Preservation Board and how to utilize current City Committees
 - Sculptures along the road from the museum down to Main Street

- Mini Library boxes along the walkways/routes.
 - Use QR Codes to expand both the information of the area piece but also to add games/fun along the walkways.
 - Amphitheater in Central Park
3. Summary Discussion
- Mayor noted that there could be a 5-year plan park budget
 - Consensus was to identify smaller projects that could be done easily and possibly with little expense (signage/walkways identifications, mapping & identifying parks on-line, QR code info on interesting points on Big Stone Lake)
4. Focus for the next meeting:
- 2016 doable list (June 2016 through June 2017)
 - Who will be facilitating the meetings
 - Park Survey – each person bring three to five recommendations based on information that has been received through the Park Survey.

Set next Park Plan Workgroup meeting after receiving the final student presentations.