

**MINUTES**  
**DeKalb Park District**  
**Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners**  
**August 7, 2017**  
**Hopkins Park Community Center**  
**1403 Sycamore Road, DeKalb, IL**

**Public Meeting**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**I. Meeting Called To Order, Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance**

President Phil Young called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Board members present:** President Phil Young, Commissioner Dean Holliday, Commissioner Keith Nyquist, Commissioner Dag Grada and Commissioner Patricia Perkins.

**Staff Members Present:** Executive Director Amy Doll, Superintendent of Parks & Development Mat Emken, Superintendent of Finance & Administration Heather Collins, Superintendent of Marketing & Golf Operations Scott deOliveira, and Accounting & Administrative Assistant Emily Bidstrup.

**II. Action on the Agenda**

Commissioner Holliday made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Grada. Motion carried by voice vote.

**III. Public Comments**

None

**IV. Discussion of Annie Glidden North Neighborhood Plan**

Jo Ellen Charlton, City of DeKalb Community Development Director, presented information on the development of the Annie Glidden North Revitalization Plan and stated she would take both positive and negative information from the Board back to the Council. She mentioned contributing factors to the declining area which include low enrollment at NIU, overcrowding in what used to be student and/or faculty housing, and the mixing of students and families in relation to crime. Ms. Charlton mentioned the need to involve stakeholders to gain consensus on issues and solutions and stated that an understanding of what services are needed in the area will deter crime. She reported that Camiros, a consulting firm being recommended to work on the project, had compiled a list of issues that are considered early action projects and that can be implemented soon.

Commissioner Nyquist asked for clarification on the statement that 29% of the housing choice vouchers are being used in the area. Commissioner Holliday asked how many residents living in the area are originally from DeKalb County.

Ms. Charlton stated that DeKalb doesn't have a really good plan on how to market this area to businesses and promote it to developers, so a solid plan needs to be in place. She mentioned the firm PLACE will be in charge of market research and NIU Center for Governmental Studies will be using their knowledge of the community to help as well. With a plan in place, projects can get put higher on the grant list which would help the City have a better chance at receiving funding. Ms. Charlton advised that faith based organizations, the school district, the hospital, existing property owners and students are just some of the stakeholders being asked to give input. She stated that the property tax rate can only come down if development is stimulated.

Commissioner Holliday stated that people have asked him why a consultant is needed for the project when City staffers are paid pretty well. Ms. Charlton advised that City staffers have been given projects related to the revitalization but there simply isn't enough time and drawing on the experience of a firm is beneficial. Commissioner Holliday pointed out the number of vacant store fronts in downtown Sycamore vs. downtown DeKalb. He also asked whether saying the residents of the Annie Glidden North Neighborhood are normally low income and on subsidized housing would be a fair statement.

President Young stated his belief that the difference between DeKalb and Sycamore is the over saturation of apartments in DeKalb. He mentioned that through his work at NIU, he hears that students don't want to walk through certain parts of the focus area anymore. He advised that the Park District is very interested in what is going to happen to the area because whatever happens will affect the parks. He stated his concern with the possibility of having to fund proposed projects on Park District owned land without prior communications and consent from the District. Since the Park District is directly affected by the plan, he stressed the importance of keeping the District staff and board in the loop. He wished the Park District would have been involved sooner and not at the end when the City is about to select a consultant. He stated he does not like the term "stakeholders" since it assumes the District is immediately on board with the plans when often we are not informed about other government operations until the last minute. He asked how differences would be settled if there were any. Ms. Charlton advised that it is late in the RFP process but early in the plan development process. He also stated that he was not happy about having to call a special meeting because City staff did not inform District staff sooner about the plan. This did not give the Board much time to discuss this in an open meeting.

Commissioner Holliday asked what happens if the firm came back with a bunch of recommendations and the Council decides against them. He mentioned he has lived in DeKalb his whole life, and he likes it, but the city is currently over saturated with rentals and more are coming. Commissioner Perkins asked who initiated the project and asked for Ms. Charlton to point to the eastern boarder of the focus area on the map. Commissioner Perkins asked how the City would go about re-zoning the area and asked if the Park District would have a seat at the table during the City Council Meeting. Commissioner Perkins mentioned she was anxious about a quick action plan because there might not be enough thought put into it.

Commissioner Nyquist agreed with President Young's comments in regards to the fact that the District was brought into the project so late. He stated his concern over

the fact that the company could come back saying property owners are refusing to give up their property and then look to the Park District to use their land. He would not want to see any recommendations coming from the council that have the ability to take land from the Park District. He stated he hopes the Park District is not just a stakeholder but would like to see staff have the option for input and does not want the force of law telling the Park District what can and can't be done. Ms. Charlton stated that she can't imagine park land would be taken away and that the City isn't going to force anything down the Park District's throat. Commissioner Nyquist disagreed based on what has happened in the past with the Ellwood House property.

President Young asked if Camiros had any experience working with Park Districts. He agreed with Commissioner Perkins & Commissioner Nyquist that it is important there is representation at the planning meetings and would like someone from the Park District to have input. He stated his biggest concern is having a say in the plan. He asked why certain parts were included in the focus area, including the DeKalb County Health Department.

**V. Action on Resolution 17-06: Supporting the Development of a Plan for the Annie Glidden North Neighborhood**

Commissioner Nyquist made a motion to Approve Resolution 17-06: Supporting the Development of a Plan for the Annie Glidden North Neighborhood, seconded by Commissioner Grada.

President Young advised that the Resolution had been reviewed and approved by the District's legal team and if any changes were needed it can be voted on to amend. Commissioner Nyquist stated the resolution is general enough since it does not say the Park District is endorsing a specific plan, just that it's supporting a plan. He supported the resolution as it was written. Commissioner Grada stated that something needs to be done to the Annie Glidden North Neighborhood and he was in favor of what the resolution states. Commissioner Perkins stated her support of the resolution because she believes the Park District needs to be at the table during City Council meetings. President Young pointed out certain bullet points on the resolution that he agreed with and asked the Board if everyone was okay with the wording.

Motion carried by roll call vote. Aye: Young, Grada, Nyquist, Perkins, Holliday. Nay: None. Absent: None. (5-0-0)

**VI. Adjourn Public Meeting**

Commissioner Nyquist made a motion to adjourn the public meeting, seconded by Commissioner Holliday. Motion carried by voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.