



Minutes - Final

Parks and Recreation Committee

Wednesday, August 24, 2016

5:00 PM

Roll Call: Chairperson Mota, Affa, O'Connell

[15-1048](#)

Discussion: Biking at Trexler Park

Current park regulations (below) allow biking on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday in Trexler Park. Should this restriction be lifted allowing biking in the park every day of the week?

It shall be unlawful for any person in a public park or recreation area to:

B. Drive or operate any vehicle, with the exception of bicycles on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, beyond the access roads leading to parking areas within Trexler Park, provided that children under the supervision of an adult may ride tricycles or bicycles with training wheels.

Attachments: [4 Parks Hamilton Street](#)

[08-24-16 Bicycling in Trexler Park- Recommendation](#)

[Trexler Park- Bike lanes](#)

Ms. Lindsay Taylor stated that Trexler Memorial Park is considered to be a passive park according to Article 951 - Park Regulations. A passive park use generally refers less structured recreational activities that require little to no specialized parkland development or management. Bicycling is considered to be an acceptable activity in a passive. In Trexler Park bicycles are permitted three days a week on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays during park hours. Restrictions were implemented after an accident between a bicycle and a pedestrian. Staff looked at this and our recommendation is that Trexler Park will be open seven days a week. The path is 16 feet wide and can accommodate bicycles, multiple users, pedestrians and runners. A clear cut policy will be better from everybody. Pave paths in the city parks is much narrower than the path at Trexler. We don't think that there will be more of an issue then it would be in any other park. By allowing it three days a week it nullifies a safety issue.

Ms. Cynthia Mota thanked Ms. Taylor and asked about the enforcement.

Ms. Lindsay Taylor stated that they found across the country when you have alternate hours, days, etc. It confusing people. We believe if it is black and white, with a set of rules and consistent. It would be easier to understand and enforced.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked any questions from the dais.

Mr. Ray O'Connell stated that he would like to hear from the public before he makes any comments.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked any questions from the public.

Mr. Dick Button, 122 S. 16th Street, stated he is concerned and questioned why does the city need a change. The three days a week doesn't make sense for a pedestrian perspective. There are people like me that would like for bikes to be banned in the parks entirely. I walk in the park three to four times a week. The vast amount of people using the park is pedestrians, not bicyclists. Why do bicycles need to be in the park where the pedestrians are? He urged City Council not to expand the use of the park.

Ms. Cynthia Mota thanked Mr. Button for his comments.

Mr. Brian Sherry, 2727 W Gordon Street, stated that he is licensed by the League of Bicyclist as a Bicycle Instructor. He thinks it is absurd to ban any one group from the park.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked what is the speed limit.

Ms. Lindsay Taylor stated 15 miles per hour. It is not intended for bicycles to exercise or race. It is rather a low speed.

Mr. Ken Laudenslager, 721 W. Cumberland Street, stated that he is a proponent to having biking out there seven days a week. He likes to take his grandchildren out there. They like riding in the park. The fatality happened in 1989. The park is there for everyone. For decades you could drive in that park. The use of that park should not be restricted for certain days of the week. He urged Council the ordinance to remove that restriction. The posted speed limit is 10 miles per hour.

Ms. Cynthia Mota thanked Mr. Laudenslager.

Ms. Candida Affa stated to Ms. Taylor that she went there on Tuesday biking and found that most people or a lot of people are walking in the bike lanes. She thinks the reason is that they get confused with the days.

Children with trainer should be in the walking lane with their parents. She likes the idea and safety of biking in the park.

Mr. Roger MacLean stated that they should learn the rules from the get go whether they are on training wheels or not.

Ms. Lindsay Taylor stated that it comes down to you have to be aware of your surroundings. Ear buds and Pokemon Go are very difficult.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that the city can't enforce that either. People have the right to listen to music while they are exercising or while they work. She stated that she loves Trexler Park. That is where she try to train for the 5K and that's where her learned how to bike ride. She agrees that people get confused.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that he is not on the committee. He is an avid bicyclist and most of the time he rides in the streets. He also spent a lot of time riding in the Parkway and numerous parts of the city. Trexler Park is the widest are for walkers, bicyclist than any park in the city. He felt safe there. The biggest problem is the confusion people have. He thinks all the parks should be open for bicyclist. Trexler Park is a passive park and bicycling is a passive activity.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that if they are in agreement. Legislation could be drafted at the next Council meeting to allow biking on all days at the park.

Mr. Ray O'Connell stated that just for the Robert's Rule of Order it will have to be introduced. It takes two people to introduce it.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that he will draft the legislation and have two people sign it.

Mr. Roger MacLean stated that he was just talking to a County Commission and passed along to Ms. Taylor of the complementing of the signage in the parks.

Discussion - Budget Preview

From Council's Rules: Committee Review: In August and September of each year, the Standing committees shall conduct a public meeting where the administration shall review their budget priorities, goals and objectives, successes and failures, capital projects and any personnel or organizational changes being considered for the ensuing fiscal year.

Ms. Lindsay Taylor gave the accomplishments of what Parks done this year and what they did last year. The Parks Bureau has 51 employees that are responsible for maintaining 40 parks, 2,000 acres including ball fields, game courts, spray parks, pavilions, picnics, playground, restrooms, and pools. They do a phenomenal job. We are responsible of maintaining the

bowls on Hamilton and the Center City district, landscape beds, providing support to all the volunteers support committees and supporting special events. The accomplishments were that we completed the Lehigh Parkway Wall construction and repair, replaced the playground equipment at Andre Reed Park, installed fitness equipment at Jordan Park for adults to use, the first Phase of the new park signs at many of our city parks, the Bucky Boyle Prays park was renovated, and was done by our aquatics crew. We began construction at Stevens Park. They completed the design for the Dixon Street Dog park, which is at Mack Boulevard and Dixon Street. They improved the parks and developed a capital improvements program. We provided support for over 40 volunteers efforts in the parks. Our goal for 2017 are to install new pavilions at Jordan park, Cedar Creek and the Rose Garden. To continue to install wooden guiderails in our parks. We will start the second phase of sign installation and complete construction of the Dixon Street Dog Park. We will completed a design of the Jordan Park Skate Park. Funding is in place for that, design of the MKL Trail, design of the Jordan Creek Greenway Trail. We hope to complete a Park Master Plan for Valania and Percy Ruhe Parks and complete design and bidding process for Jordan Pools. Recreation is responsible for city and non city sponsor and special events. The summer basketball league continue to grow. We have 55 teams this year and 14 girls team. They opened a concession at Jordan pool and park. Looking forward to renovating concession stands at other parks. The introduced a pilot swim lesson program in the summer playground program that they hope to grow. Enhanced movies in the park. We brought in the library for programs, bringing in costumes to play with the kids. Our goals for 2017 in recreation are to expand the concepts in the parks program. We are pretty one dimensional. We have many concert band concerts and we want to spread out a little bit. We want to continue to enhance the summer playground program with additional activities at each site. We want to continue building our partnerships with the very institutions and organizations. Allentown Municipal Golf Course continues to succeed and improve in its condition. In 2016, Jeff has continued the player reward program to 750 players. It encourages people to spend in our golf shop. We have golf tee signage. We golf cart staging areas and added new lighting. We are watering and using different types of grass seeds. The goals for 2017 for the golf course is to continue to improve signage, develop a capital improvements program for the facility itself. Continue to increase revenue and reduce expenditures. Continue to improve upon our water usage. Our challenges, Cedar Beach pool delayed, Stevens Park delays, emailed wet wilt on our greens at the Golf Course, there is low attendance at some of our concerts and special events. Capital Improvement Projects has funding appropriated.

Ms. Cynthia Mota thanked Ms. Taylor and stated that it seems as Parks

and Recreation has been extremely busy. You do a really fine job. She asked when will the Cedar Beach construction be complete. She asked what were the issues, again.

Ms. Lindsay Taylor stated with the construction in full scale now, indefinitely open next year. They are looking to build the shell right now. She stated that there were unforeseen conditions. There were three pool shells, three bottoms to the pool, the pool shells was completed failed. When we uncovered a wall, there was another wall. When we tried to build something they discovered another issue at the pool house.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked any questions from the dais.

Ms. Candida Affa asked if the revenue from the golf course is up from last year. She stated that her dog, Bell wants to thank Parks for the Doggy Dip Day. It is a great program.

Ms. Lindsay Taylor stated that it was up about \$12,000. It stagnated because of the issue with the greens. Jeff has instituted a discount. Our rounds are not down.

Mr. Ray O'Connell thanked Ms. Taylor for her presentation. He asked about the construction for Cedar Beach. Was it penalties for the construction companies. He is concerned about the city's recreation program. He doesn't see it growing and expanding. You look at basketball, we are doing good in basketball, but what about softball, soccer, kickball, and baseball. The youth organizations are dead or dying. Our summer playground program is successful.

Ms. Lindsay Taylor stated that it wasn't an issue with the contractor that would warrant penalties. It is what we found and the approach to design and differences of theory and how to fix the design. My staff is still getting used to the responsibility of special events which takes up an extraordinary amount of time. We are not responsible for block parties and making sure that communications are going back and forth. We are trying to find out the issues with the youth organizations. They need volunteers. We really need an indoor facility. For a city our size, to not have an indoor facility to run programs hurt our programs.

Ms. Cynthia Mota thanked Mr. O'Connell and stated that she believes that one of the issues that we are having is with communication and the way we advertise. She believes that it is a language barrier too.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that you said the playground operations were down this summer. Were the pools attendance higher. We had a lot of

free pool days.

Ms. Lindsay Taylor stated that ironically our pool attendance is up, significantly. I agree with Councilperson Mota, when we walked the ward around Stevens Park with the Mayor, there were a bunch of kids out playing and I asked each kid if they heard about the summer playground program or if they went to the summer playground program. None of them did.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that the city has a problem with advertisement. Not every has internet or a smart phone or has a computer or knows how to use a computer. We have to find other ways to reach out to the community.

Ms. Lindsay Taylor stated that one positive she does have to report regarding youth sports is that we have found a home for the Allentown Soccer Club. They will be up at Keck Park this fall. They are excited about their program and the growth of their program.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked any other comments from the dais or the public.

Mr. Tom Hahn, 2016 E. Highland Street, asked Mr. O'Connell if he remembers back in the day when they had clinics on the playground to teach kids who wanted to participate, but did not have the wherewithal to go to a camp. How did that program disappear? He asked the city to reach out the professionals in the area. Can we solicit them to run a camp for a week? We have hockey players, basketball players, and football players.

Mr. Ray O'Connell stated that he remember, but doesn't know or have an answer. It is a different world now. They have video games. The volunteers are not there.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that Ms. Taylor said it, that people are not volunteering enough.

Ms. Lindsay Taylor stated that she the playground program we did have an intern and they went around each camp this year a sport a week and he did instruct the kids on soccer, basketball, flag football, Frisbee, and golf. He would work with the kids and they loved it.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated to Mr. Hahn that is a good idea. She asked any other questions from the public.

Adjourned: 5:51 PM