

Item 23-0456: Resolution #4-R-23 To Support Pollinator & Wildlife Habitats in Ellen Kort Peace Park

Parks and Recreation Committee
Mon, Jun 12, 2023 6:15PM

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 39:49

All right. 23-0456 resolution R 4-R-23 to support pollinator and wildlife habitats in Ellen Kort Peace Park. Mr. Gazza.

Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 40:07

Yes, thank you Chair. I met with alderperson Schultz near the location of Ellen Kort. One important thing to note is Ellen Kort was not mowed during the month of May. Also, we did look at some of the ideas that Alderson Schultz had. He had eight different grass types that could be conducive to a park setting to keep grass from having to be cut as frequent as normal. There—it's called Low Mow Grass. Had eight different species which we looked at. And I agreed that there are a couple species in there that—if you call them that "species", I guess, or mixes, grass mixes—that would be very neat to experiment with in a park. And I think Ellen Kort Park, when it does get developed, could be a great candidate for a Low Mow grass. It's basically the same as grass. It's grass, but it just has different mixtures in it, and it grows a little bit slower. So, we just left it at that and agreed that that as the park would get developed, we would look at it in the future and also look at other parks, if the opportunity exists in the climate for that park in regards to sunshade, deer, things that would thrive that we would definitely could try that.

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 41:35

So, help me. Where are we then with the resolution?

Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 41:40

Yeah, the resolution then I think is basically—I don't know if you would just hold it forever, or

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 41:49

The City Attorney doesn't like that.

Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 41:50

Yeah, or, or what he what he would recommend. But the month of May did pass. We did not cut the grass part of just because of the weather. And I don't know if—I cannot recall if this meant to be something that would continue. But I think the author can kind of clarify that if it was meant to be one year or just until the park was developed.

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 42:15

Alderson Wolff?

Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 42:17

I actually would like to propose an amendment to my resolution. Since we had that conversation, and since it has passed May, this resolution isn't really doing much at the moment. So, you know, so I would like to change it to after "Now Therefore Be It Resolved, The city of Appleton Parks and Recs facility department shall make its best effort to make Ellen Kort Peace Park a low mow park." That's it.

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 42:56

Amendment has been made to the resolution. Do I hear a second?

Alderson Patrick Hayden (District 7) 43:04

Second.

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 43:05

Motion has been made and second to the resolution. Any comments? Questions? Alderson Hartzheim.

Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 43:20

Thank you, Chair. Can what Alder Wolff is proposing here be done without the amendment or without the resolution itself?

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 43:31

I'm going to ask Mr. Gazza that question.

Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 43:37

Certainly. I, you know, it can. I think their discussion and our interest in pursuing something like that does, you know, just that. You know, at this time the park has been seeded or have seed, has existing turf, that is not the Low Mow, but when it would be redeveloped would be the time that we would make it, you know, a low mow.

Alderson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 44:03

Thank you, Chair. May I follow up? In that vein, I'm wondering whether it would be—what I would hate to do is have this particular resolution stand and be amended and then have that stand in the way of this cooperation that seems to be going on as far as the Parks and Recs and Facilities Management folks and people who are interested in in developing Ellen Kort to be a low mow sort of park. So, I would prefer that this be received and filed so that the continuing relationship and working relationship that that Director Gazza and his team can come together with interested parties can continue without this being in the way and then there be quest—there being questions like "Does this still fit with the resolution? Does this still do what we say it's going to do?"

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 45:05

Alderson Wolff.

Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 45:07

Thank you, chair. So, this is more—like I fully, I know that Parks and Rec will do this. This is more just reaffirming the kind of conversation that took place in the event that they're—you know, this is down the line. So, there's changeover in Council and there's also changeover in, you know, staff over time. And if something were to change, this way it is on file that this is what we want it to happen in the future.

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 45:41

Mr. Gazza, you don't plan on leaving us in the near future, do you?

Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities) 45:47

I did buy a lottery ticket. I will confess.

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 45:51

I only say that while it's true that, you know, we serve on a two-year term, normally department heads are here for quite some time, and whatever's worked out on your level will likely stay on for quite some time, longer than probably will be here. Alderson Alfheim.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 46:15

Thank you, Chair.

Attorney Christopher Behrens 46:16

Chair, I'm sorry, may I?

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 46:19

Step in.

Attorney Christopher Behrens 46:23

Based on some of the discussion and collaboration with staff, I just want to remind the committee as well as the author, of Council Rule 34 that would allow for a resolution to be withdrawn by the lead author at the committee level if no action has been taken to approve or deny or amend the resolution. No action has been taken to amend this resolution yet. There's one on the table, but no action has been taken on it. So that is another option that is available should the lead author instead want to allow some time to pass and reconsider whether a different resolution would be more appropriate down the road.

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 47:11

Alderson Wolff?

Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 47:12

I would like to withdraw this resolution.

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 47:16

Does that need a second? You got two other authors.

Attorney Christopher Behrens 47:23

It—let me consult the rule, but I believe it's the lead author has the authority to withdraw without the consent of the coauthors.

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 47:33

So, Alderson Wolff is the lead author?

[There was a discussion partially off microphone possibly regarding procedural steps for withdrawing the resolution.]

Attorney Christopher Behrens 47:57

According your rule, there is no action that's been that's required—the author may withdraw it as long as no action has been taken on the item.

Alderson William Siebers (District 1) 48:06

Okay. Alderson Wolff did tell me that we do have we do have a motion on the floor. So, we need to deal with that don't we.

Attorney Christopher Behrens 48:14

That motion was made by Alderperson Wolff, seconded by Hayden. If that is withdrawn then there is nothing pending on it.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 48:23

Okay. So, you're in favor of withdrawing the resolution?

Alderperson Nate Wolff (District 12) 48:31

Yes.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 48:31

All right. We're done. All right. And I think that was a wise decision.

Attorney Christopher Behrens 48:39

Just to confirm, the motion and second on the amendment was withdrawn, and the resolution—now the author has requested the resolution also be withdrawn? Got it?

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 48:54

Yes. Alderperson.

Alderperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 48:55

I apologize. I just, I think that there's something to be learned in this whole discussion. I think that perhaps conversations with staff about things ahead of time would prevent needing the resolutions. My fear in this resolution is that the next park have another one and the next park. And then we're chasing around paperwork on it.

Alderperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 49:16

Where really what needed to happen was Alder Shirts—Schultz had a great conversation with Parks and Rec and Director Gazza about some other options in seed that the city may be able to utilize. And I think the outcome has been fantastic. And it got to the author's point and perhaps even a larger scale. I just—I don't know that we always need a resolution to cause great change. And I hope that we continue to have great conversations and communicate and find answers without having a legal document to do that.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 49:47

I applaud you for that. We don't always need to have a resolution to get things done as long as we have a relationship with the director or directors and we're working with them. Great.

Alderperson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 50:00

Thank you.