

River Forest Park District
Special Board Meeting
December 7, 2015, 6:00 p.m.
Observer: Judith McDevitt

Present: Board President Ross Roloff; Commissioners: Dunne, Koester, and Kuzmich.

Also Present: Executive Director, Michael Sletten; Athletic Director, Aly Copus, and approximately 30 attendees.

Purpose: The purpose of the meeting was to receive public comment on the Park District's proposal to construct two additional platform tennis courts at Keystone Park.

Background: Platform tennis in River Forest was added to Park District recreational opportunities three years ago, when two courts were built at Keystone Park. Memberships were quickly filled and capacity exceeded, with enrollments now capped at 144. Members want to expand the house leagues and form travel teams, but the additional court time is not available. Membership dues to cover operating costs and pay down construction debt are \$182 for River Forest residents plus \$30 program fees per season.

According to the proposed space plot shown at the meeting, two more platform tennis courts could be added immediately east of the existing courts, with a possible future platform tennis hut placed in front of the courts facing Central Avenue. The new courts would be the same dimensions as the existing courts and would have the same lighting. They could be construed during the summer and ready for season play starting September 1, 2016. Adding the two new courts would mean that one of the six lighted tennis courts at Keystone Park would be eliminated, leaving five courts at Keystone Park and two unlit courts at Washington Square (on Forest Avenue near Washington) for tennis in River Forest. However, demand for tennis in recent years has lessened, most likely because of nearby private and public playing space and other recreational opportunities are available.

Public Comments:

President Roloff read the names of 13 persons who prior to the current meeting wrote to the Park District in support of constructing the two new platform tennis courts.

Attendees provided comments:

Support for building two new courts (five comments) and for building the two new courts and the paddle hut (four comments).

Platform tennis is a winter activity for adults. It's the "best exercise ever" for middle-aged men and women (two comments).

The current two courts aren't sufficient for program use. Space is limited and more court time is needed for non-league use (two comments).

Open Session:

The meeting was reconvened into Open Session at 6:35 p.m. The minutes of the November 9, 2015 Board Meeting were approved by voice vote.

Public Comments:

A petition signed by 32 platform tennis members was submitted asking for an elected committee to replace the current appointed Platform Tennis Committee overseeing policies and operations. The Board recommended that members look into how nearby leagues are governed to see if a model structure would be suitable.

What is the long-term plan for platform tennis in River Forest? Would the Board consider the addition of four courts so that non-league, house leagues, and travel league uses all could be accommodated?

The proposed paddle tennis hut would be a highly desirable addition that would allow members to view matches and keep warm rather than waiting between matches in their cars. For those purpose, situating the hut between the two sets of courts would be preferable. The Board responded that architect proposals will be solicited and reviewed in February. Building the hut will be part of a phased development process, with timing and funding still to be determined.

The reconvened Open Session ended at 6:45 p.m., when the Board voted to enter a Closed Session for the following: appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, dismissal, performance or personal status of employees, officers, and legal counsel of the Park District.

The next regular Park District Board Meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 14, at 6:00 p.m.