

1 Work Session
2 October 15, 2013
3 6:00 pm
4

5 **Those present:** Mayor Kenneth Romney, Council Members Mark Preece, James Bruhn, Dave
6 Tovey, Debbie McKean, Duane Huffman (City Administrator), Ben White (City Engineer),
7 Heidi Voordeckers (Finance Director/ Recorder), Steve Maughan (Public Works Manager),
8 Cathy Brightwell (Deputy Recorder), Chief Todd Hixson, Nathalie Ellingson (Secretary).
9 Council Member James Ahlstrom was excused.

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11 **Visitors:** Alan Malan, Kelly Enquist, Chad Turner, Adam Tullis, Joel Dodge, Penn Ausick,
12 Ryan Larsen, Mark Stanger, Tiffany Sowby, Michael Sowby, Cheri Dautel, Ryan Dautel, Brad
13 Vanderstek.

14
15 The meeting started at 6:05 pm

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17 1. Discussion on issues and options related to Birnam Woods Park and surrounding city
18 property.
19

20 Mayor Romney – The city is in the early stages of investigating options regarding what
21 should be done with the park area. They have asked the public to talk with their neighbors
22 and council members to gather ideas, and the council requested that staff prepare a list of
23 options.

24
25 Duane Huffman – Using a bird’s eye map of the property, Duane went over the location and
26 dimensions. Part of the property is designated wetlands by the Army Corp of Engineers.
27 There is also an easement for gas pipe 87’ wide, along with other utility easements. Around
28 the perimeter of the park is a walking trail. Duane had made an outline of issues and options.
29 Issues: Efficiency of use – the park is not currently getting much use. The grass is wet until
30 the middle of the summer because of drainage issues. An area was designated for a pond, but
31 that area is full of cattails. There is also a corner of the park not visible from the street which
32 has weeds. Visibility: The park is only visible from the surrounding homes and Legacy
33 Trail, which is a risk to public safety. Access: There is a parking area but it is a long walk
34 from there, past the wetland area, to the park. There is no access for emergency vehicles.
35 The cost of maintenance is also an issue. As requested, staff prepared a list of solutions that
36 address the various problems. They could pipe the open ditch to help dry out the pond area,
37 or build a concrete ditch, however the pipe/ditch would require maintenance. They could sell
38 off portions that cannot be used as a park, or lease portions for animals. A resident suggested
39 a BMX bike track. They could develop more areas by planting grass or use it as a
40 community garden. The walking trail could be relocated to accommodate the changes and
41 keep it from collecting water, as it does currently. They could also widen the walking trail to
42 allow emergency access, acquire more property for parking, and create a trail head.
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44 Mayor Romney asked for a show of hands who would be interested in just getting rid of the
45 property. Debbie McKean and the Sowby’s indicated they would be in favor of this solution
46 as long as it was legal. Duane said it was city property to dispose of any way they wish.

1 Others of the group suggested they could improve the playground area, elevate the ditch, and
2 clean up the pond area, then they could sell or lease the land on the west side, which would
3 require a certain level of maintenance. A problem with selling it would be the lack of access.
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5 Tiffany Sowby stated she does not believe it would be maintained by any private party; the
6 city would have to do it. Her property backs the park and she has seen very few people use
7 it. Michael Sowby said public funds should be used to benefit everyone in the city, and he
8 thinks they should put public money into the main city park. Debbie McKean asked what he
9 thought of finding a different use for the property. He said accessibility will always be a
10 problem.
11

12 Adam Tullis had a question whether drainage in the neighborhood would be affected. The
13 Mayor said no matter what happened to the property, there would have to be an easement for
14 drainage from the neighborhood.
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16 Chad Turner owns the end property. His kids love the trail and the playground when it is
17 dry. He sees it as an area to benefit the community. They could create a gathering place
18 with pavilions for people walking Legacy. Once the water issues were taken care of, the area
19 could be usable by the entire community. There is a park like that in North Salt Lake. Adam
20 Tullis asked if North Salt Lake gets any revenue from it. Mark Stanger said they do charge a
21 fee, but he does not know if it covers maintenance. The area is used frequently.
22

23 One visitor to the meeting said he would like to see it developed; he bought into the
24 neighborhood counting on a park. He grew up in the area and it used to all be underwater.
25 Residents said the plat charts of their properties did not show wetlands or a pond; the whole
26 area was represented as a park. Dave Tovey said they actually planned natural grasses and
27 James Bruhn said pictures they were shown by the developer at the beginning are much
28 different than what exists now. The Mayor said changes probably happened during the
29 approval process.
30

31 Chad Turner asked where the drainage flowed out. Mayor Romney said it goes to the north
32 corner into a culvert. Ben White said some of the west side of the trail is higher than the east
33 side, and the park is on a 2-inch slant. They may have to install a pump. James Bruhn asked
34 if they could raise the property so it would be even with the backyards. Ben said it could be
35 done. The drainage could back up, but the area would be drier and easier to mow. Adam
36 Tullis asked if any study had been done regarding the elevation needed. The Mayor said that
37 had not been done yet. Mark Stanger said that raising the pond area could dam up the
38 wetland.
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40 Anthony Jorgenson asked how many parks there were in West Bountiful, and after hearing
41 there is only the one main park, he asked if the Birnam Woods Park could be made big
42 enough for a family activity place. He was told it could but the lack of parking would be a
43 problem.
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1 Chad Turner said he was worried about having a parking lot at the north corner close to
2 Legacy because it would not be visible. Duane suggested maybe the city could work with
3 UDOT to create access and turnarounds there for emergency vehicles.
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5 Mayor Romney reminded everyone they have to consider budget constraints. Adam Tullis
6 said the necessary improvements could cost a lot more per person than is reasonable unless
7 more people use the park, and that drainage should be addressed before any other plans are
8 discussed. In the meantime, the property could be leased. The Sowby's stated they would
9 want lease agreements to strongly require maintenance. Lessees would have to put in fences,
10 etc. Mark Stanger suggested they improve the part closest to the homes and then let the west
11 side be natural.
12

13 Debbie McKean asked the group how many would be interested in selling or leasing the west
14 half or selling the whole property. About six people were in favor of selling the west half.
15 Only James Bruhn was interested in leasing the west half. The Sowby's want the whole
16 thing sold. Mark Stanger said the problem with selling it is access, but he thought if they had
17 three or four potential buyers they should pursue it. He said a big factor to him is the lack of
18 maintenance up until now.
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20 Mayor Romney agreed they first need to investigate the water flow. Any improvements need
21 to be easy to maintain. Anthony Jorgenson said the residents were let down from the
22 beginning, and they would be let down again by the city if the park is not improved and
23 maintained. James Bruhn commented that no matter what is ultimately done with the
24 property, they will have to solve the drainage problem first. Chad Turner stated he is
25 concerned about mosquito control and drainage of animal waste if the property is sold and
26 used for pasture. He asked if they knew the value of the property. Mayor Romney said that
27 would be determined when they are further along in the discussions, but he didn't think the
28 value would be very high. James Bruhn mentioned another property belonging to the city
29 that someone had wanted to purchase for very little money. The city decided not to sell it
30 and the property was used to extend the driving range. He said they should fix the drainage
31 and keep the property mowed for now.

32 The work session ended at 7:05 pm.
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MAYOR KENNETH ROMNEY



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HEIDI VOORDECKERS (CITY RECORDER)


NATHALIE ELLINGSON (SECRETARY)