

Village paves way for trail system

Written by MARK JAEGER

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Board approves ambitious plan that calls for network of paths linking parks, community attractions

The Fredonia Village Board adopted an ambitious 46-page park plan last Thursday that envisions a community connected by interlinking trails and enhanced by recreational facilities.

The plan was prepared by Village President Chuck Lapicola, a retired civil engineer who made updating the park plan a priority after taking office this spring. The previous plan was completed in 1997.

Following a public hearing on the five-year plan, Lapicola said the document is intended to fill in the recreational gaps that exist in the community.

“You have to remember that this plan is flexible and is always subject to change,” he said.

Lapicola said a central component of the plan is the expansion of the village’s trail system linking existing parks and other community attractions.

The plans calls for the existing bike trail to connect with a future Milwaukee River nature trail and an extension to the Northern Ozaukee School District campus from the Emerald Hills subdivision.

“There is already a plan for a service road from the subdivision to the school property, but it would be better to call it a trail than a maintenance road. It would allow people to keep off busy Martin Drive and be safer for our kids,” Lapicola said.

He said the idea of extending the trail system has been well received in the community.

“I was talking to senior citizens at the meal site, and they really liked the idea of connecting the trail system to places like the post office and beyond,” Lapicola said.

The public hearing did focus attention on a couple of recreational shortcomings in the village.

One is the lack of a skating rink. The park plan mentions Marie Kraus Park, the Lundman pond or a designated area of the Milwaukee River as possible rink locations.

Trustee Scott Ehaney said accessibility should be kept in mind as the village looks into designating a rink site.

“The post office gazebo area would seem to be an ideal site. You’d have to do something about the stormwater runoff, but it would be nice and visible,” Ehaney said.

Public Works Director Al Neumann said the gazebo site was one of several rink locations, but

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there are some inherent problems.

“We tried a rink there a couple of years ago and it worked fine until there was salt on the road that ended up washing down onto the rink,” Neumann said.

Extending the storm sewer in the park or finding some other way to prevent runoff from flowing onto the rink might make the site usable, Neumann said.

Village officials said past attempts to create a skating surface in Firemen’s Park or on the basketball court adjacent to the public works department garage might be worth revisiting.

A lack of youth baseball facilities was also noted at the hearing, with only a partial solution being proposed.

Neumann noted that the plan suggests creating another baseball diamond in Marie Kraus Park, although it would have to share space used for a soccer field.

That approach could cause conflicts when the youth sport seasons overlap.

“We won’t know where needs like this are unless we hear from people like the Little League,” Lapicola said.

He asked that the plan be referred to the Plan Commission for review, but Trustee Fritz Buchholtz said he was ready to endorse the plan as presented.

“I think we should move forward on this. I’ve read it over and see no reason why we shouldn’t adopt it,” Buchholtz said.

Trustees unanimously adopted the plan.