

**PARK COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, April 24, 2013**  
**City Hall, Room 207 5:30 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jerry Wiezbiskie, Brian Danzinger, Joseph Moore and James Warner

OTHERS PRESENT: Ald. Steuer, Ald. Brunette, Ald. Boyce, Bill Kloiber, Mayor Schmitt, Dawne Cramer, James Andersen

A motion was made by Ald. Moore to approve the minutes of the March 27, 2013 meeting as recorded, seconded by Ald. Warner and carried.

A motion was made by Ald. Moore to adopt the agenda and take item 3 out of order, seconded by Ald. Warner and carried.

3. Request by Ald. Steuer to look at naming the West Side Trail after Ben Edinger who died in Iraq in 2004

Staff explained that historically trails in our community have been named after locations where the trails are located within the city. Examples are East River Trail, Fox River Trail, and Baird Creek Trail. This is a common practice in a number of communities. The trail we are discussing tonight is the West Side Trail. The first section is Oneida to Military. We started construction on this section this week and hope to complete it by the end of July. The Second Section starts at Military and goes to Bond Street. This trail will eventually connect to the Mountain Bay Trail. There are various opinions on what to re-name this trail. The Park Department did not initiate a name change. This came from neighbors and individuals associated with the trail that wanted to bring forth a more defined identifier for this trail. Staff has received many comments on what this trail should be named. Options included naming the trail after Sgt. Benjamin Edinger who died serving his country in Iraq in 2004. Other options were to name the trail after all veterans or leave the trail named the West Side Trail but allow memorials along the trail for all veterans. Another comment was not to name it for veterans but let everyone place memorials along the trail. All individuals in our community should be allowed to be part of the trail. Trails are to unite people, not divide them. By naming it for individuals and groups this is no longer a community trail.

Mayor Schmitt said the City of Green Bay is committed to a trail system. We have to take the long view on things. There are a lot of great people who came before us and will come after us. This trail will last many years. I am hesitant to go with one specific name in that there are so many great people. It is appropriate to honor people but we have to think long term.

Ald. Wiezbiskie indicated that this item got off on the wrong foot. The process was broken. There were premature media releases, petitions and even a special meeting that was called by the petitioner that started us off in the wrong direction. Tonight our goal is to obtain objective and respectful discussion.

A motion to open the floor was made by Ald. Warner, seconded by Ald. Moore and carried.

Ald. Brunette said staff did a good job of summing up this issue pertaining to the trail. We agree that the trail belongs to the public. Therefore it is important that the community comes forward to voice their opinion. I trust that Park Committee's recommendation will be well thought out and given great respect.

Ald. Steuer said last November he met with four neighborhood associations to clean the trail. That was the best day of his tenure as alderperson. The passion these folks brought forward was amazing. I made a communication to Council to name the trail after Ben Edinger. My job is to listen to both sides. I trust the judgment of this Committee.

Justin Kroening, 2325 Oak Ridge Circle, De Pere, said there are many parks and sections of parks in this City that could be named. Ben is the only veteran from Green Bay who died in the Iraq war. I would donate plants from my nursery and help in any way if the trail is named after Ben. The advantage of naming the trail after one person is it gives a face to the trail. I would like to see you honor him in this way. Ald. Danzinger asked if he was interested in offering his help only if we name the trail after Sgt. Edinger. Mr. Kroening said he would help either way.

Kristine Michell, 1265 Reed Street, would like to say she isn't representing any neighborhood association. She believes honoring Ben is fitting. This is a significant way to honor him. He spent significant time in this area camping in the backyard, went to Franklin Middle School where the trail approximately starts. This is more fitting to name this trail in Ben's honor than putting a plaque on a bench. Howard is in the process of naming a trail to honor Justin Ross. Ben is the only citizen of Green Bay that has given his life in Iraq. Others lived in Howard and Suamico. Ben was part of this community. He was connected to this area. His classmates are in this community. Let's consider naming this trail in honor of Ben, our fallen hero. I would like to read a comment from someone in the community. When we are walking this trail, Ben's will be leaving footsteps of courage on our hearts.

Dan Becker, 1115 Mount Mary Drive, read a letter from the Desert Veteran's of Wisconsin, a local nonprofit veteran organization, supporting the naming of the trail in Sgt. Edinger's honor. Ben committed his life to defending not only this great nation, but defending the Marines with which he served. The Desert Veteran's of Wisconsin humbly ask that the trail be given the proud distinction of carrying his name. Our veterans don't simply want a place to go to see Ben's name on a sign, we need a place where we are able to connect with Ben and enjoy the lands he once enjoyed.

Rosanna Scannell, 854 Dousman Street, mother of Sgt. Benjamin Edinger, said he was killed in Iraqi Freedom on November 23, 2004. He was a Marine, a member of second force reconnaissance company, second platoon. After his death he was given a bronze star with an added V which is an award for Valor. When Joe Vanidestine suggested that the trail might be named for Ben, we were touched by his suggestion. I am here to tell you about Ben. Ben wasn't any different than a lot of people in Green Bay. He grew up on the west side his entire life, rode his bike everywhere, played ball in Seymour Park and Perkins Park. In high school he would

jog at Colburn Park and then go to his Grandmother's house for ice cream. He graduated from West High School. And then he did what we remember him most for, he signed up to defend his country. His original job in the marines was a small computer system specialist. When he was stationed in Okinawa he passed the test for forced reconnaissance, a special forces in the Marine Corps. Not a lot of people pass that test but Ben did. People in the computer field were considered a critical job so they would not release him to go into recon. He fought for a year before they let him go into recon. He could have sat out the war behind a desk but he made the choice to go into combat. He wanted to do and be the best. When he was in Iraq next to his bed he had written on the wall, what is your level of commitment? He looked at that every day. Commitment was important to him. In the end he made the ultimate sacrifice. Ben is a good representative of our community and the people of our community. I thank everyone for your consideration.

Ald. Danzinger and Ald. Wiezbiskie thanked Ms. Scannell.

Ald. Moore said I can't thank you enough. I've made the argument making it a veterans trail and have specific memorials along the trail. No one serves to have recognition or attention. Speaking as a veteran, no one serves so their name can be on a trail or a post office. It's a great honor for the family.

Ms. Scannell said Ben represents what we want to show the world, which are our community values and his personal sacrifice. If he were here today, he would say "oh mom", but the point is, he not here today. He represents all those lost; he puts a face on it. This is a person. People can connect with that instead of a bureaucracy.

Randy Scannell, 854 Dousman Street, thanked the committee for their consideration of Ben.

Joe Vanidestine, 1333 Reed Street, thanked the committee and thanked the veterans for serving this country. Ald. Wiezbiskie thanked Joe for all the time he has dedicated to this. Joe said Ben was very special to my heart as a member of the brotherhood of the Marine Corps. I knew Ben before he became a Marine. I am not sure that I had influence in him becoming a marine. Sometimes I think that maybe I did, and because of that, he isn't here today. I apologize if anyone took offense to the petition I started. I feel bad that this has turned political. I put a memorial on Shawano Avenue for all veterans. Maybe I am too close to this but that spot means something to those kids. I didn't go to the press. The press came to me. I apologize that this hit the press the way it did. Those were not my words that we were going to have a Park Committee meeting. I sent copies of the petition to all Council members so they would know who started this and who to question. Joe presented his petition to the Committee. There are 550 signatures. There are names from 20 different states. We have one person in the City of Green Bay who lost his life. I am proud to have known him and stand up for him and his family. I did not want to bring any shame to this family. Thank you for your time.

Bob Heroux, 611 Wilson Avenue, said that anyone who goes into service doesn't go in with the thought that something will be named after me. We serve to keep everyone of us free. I have seen many streets and areas named after people who have excelled in politics or sports. Ben excelled in keeping this country safe, and with that in mind I would go along with naming the trail after Sgt. Ben Edinger. We

were in a thankless war, Vietnam. Let's make it right for this generation and the next generation to come.

Rae Ellen Smith, 723 Saratoga Street, President of Perkins Park Neighborhood Association, said she was speaking with the advice of the Perkins Park Association and for herself. At our meeting on March 26 I asked attendees their opinion on this topic. We talked about the naming policy. As we understand it, there may be a cost for it and the dollars may go to the next phase of the project. We understood that was city policy and we should continue with city policy.

Staff explained we do have a naming policy. The dollars from any naming policy would be brought back to this committee to make a decision where it should be spent. It would not automatically fund the other part of the trail. There have been exceptions to the naming policy.

Ms. Smith said the majority of bike trails in the state of Wisconsin are named by location. We took that into consideration. Many of the Neighborhood Association members know Ben and his family. They felt the trail should remain the West Side Trail and a plaque should be placed on the Maple Arches bench for him. Four neighborhood associations have applied for a grant for benches along the trail. At this time we do not know if we are receiving the grant. We feel we could put a plaque on the bench closest to the area that Joe was discussing. People in the neighborhood already refer to the trail as the West Side Trail. There are not too many families who do not have a connection to the military. Losing your son would be heart wrenching but we have to look at the big view and not just what happens to our emotions at the moment. The board asked questions like what about my brother, what about my father, what about my sister, why wasn't there a trail named for them? There are many people who have provided service for us just as much as Ben did.

Ald. Boyce said he is a veteran of the Vietnam War, was in the Army six years and the Air force over four years. He said I believe we should take full advantage of naming military crossings after people. It would be fitting to everyone.

Ald. Moore made a motion to close the floor, seconded by Ald. Warner and carried.

Ald. Warner thanked all veterans for their service and for those who had family members who served. Ald. Warner has strong ties being a retired veteran. He had no people who said they didn't like this. He gave his commitment to support naming this trail after Ben. There are areas around the nation named after veterans such as Admiral Flatley Park. This request is very relevant because of the location, because it was his park. I support this. Ben wasn't an admiral, he wasn't a general, he was a regular guy representing regular Green Bay. He achieved taking care of us. He died for everyone in this room. We recognize that value of commitment. I support with all my heart naming this trail after Ben Edinger Trail or Edinger West Side Trail.

Ald. Moore had a question for Dan Becker. Will your organization utilize this trail for awareness marches or fundraisers? Mr. Becker said we have not put a lot of thought into that. We do similar activities in De Pere. I can't speak formally for the association but based on my experience, I know we will make use of this trail.

Ald. Moore said he came in to the meeting wanting to leave it as a heroes trail. What is swaying me is Rosanna's answer that it puts a face on the trail. I would like to see the Armed Forces encourage use of the trail. I would like to see fundraising. If we have 550 signatures on a petition in such a short time, even a \$10 donation per signature would pay for signage. I am going to vote in favor of naming this trail after Sgt. Edinger.

Ald. Danzinger thanked everyone for attending. This is not a political debate. No one should feel apologetic about awkwardness about this discussion. This is a very emotional and personal debate. We want to honor Sgt. Edinger and also value the commitment and sacrifice of all military personnel. You join the military to serve something greater than yourself. The majority of you mentioned not forgetting veterans, specifically from the Vietnam War. We agree Sgt. Edinger deserves to be honored. The debate comes down to how is the best way to honor him. The debate seems to come down to this trail or nothing. I have had people ask if this happens, how they would be able to make similar requests. Maybe we have to explore a policy for requests. I would like to ask staff how much discussion has gone into the options.

Staff said we have had discussions for the past two months.

Ald. Brunette said he was strongly leaning towards naming the trail in honor of Sgt. Edinger.

Ald. Steuer said this is a very emotional issue. I called Ald. Warner to meet with Mr. Vanidestine. I was the Alderperson to give the communication to the City Council. I take my position as Alderperson very seriously and wanted to hear from both sides. I am in support of naming the trail after Ben Edinger.

Ald. Wiezbiskie has mixed emotions on this. I had the opportunity to get a group of advisors on this topic. Mayor Schmitt, Jerry Polus, Brown County Veteran's Officer, Tom Hinz, Craig Huxford, Kevin Kuehn and Troy Streckenbach, County Executive, said the trail should be named for all veterans. Larry Heyrman, President of United Patriotic Society of Green Bay, offered the suggestion to name the trail in memory of Veterans of the Southwest Asian Wars. I am hearing people present at this meeting want to name the trail after Ben; however this group of deeply respected people in our community want to go the other direction. I value their opinion, that's why I called them. Concerns expressed were the loss of many veterans lives challenges naming of a trail for one individual; we don't want to show disservice to other men and women who not only fought but gave their lives; and we want to honor all, it would be more honorable to do that. I have to stand firm. I definitely think this should remain as the West Side Trail. When all is said and done you have to think of everybody. To honor all would be honorable. What would Ben want? Would Ben want it after him or would he want to honor all?

Ald. Danzinger asked staff how is the boundary of the trail determined? Staff explained each trail is different. East River Trail has sections named for individuals such as the Cora Vanderperren Section or Red Lewis Section. Ald. Danzinger said I think it's just a matter of having a place to be honored. I don't see a problem if we were to incorporate this as veterans trail and designate a corridor for Ben. I think this is a way to satisfy the concerns that we are hearing. We don't have to put in

specific boundaries from street to street. This was his backyard. What a more fitting way of acknowledging where his footsteps were than having that corridor section named after Sgt. Edinger.

Ald. Danzinger made a motion to name the Sgt. Benjamin Edinger Corridor on the West Side Trail, length to be determined and discussed. The motion was seconded by Ald. Moore.

Ald. Steuer pointed out the corridor area on the trail map. I am in favor of the trail being named for Ben but I would entertain the thought to name the corridor as well.

Ald. Danzinger said he would like to amend his motion to refer to staff the naming of the Sgt. Benjamin Edinger Corridor on the West Side Trail and to communicate with the Alders in their districts to determine the dimensions and boundaries of the Corridor. Ald. Moore seconded the motion for discussion.

Ald. Moore questioned if we build the trail with one corridor, will people think the whole trail is named after Ben Edinger anyway? I agree with the corridor. In the future we need to follow our naming policy.

Ald. Danzinger said the naming policy is a second issue and needs a second communication.

Ald. Wiezbiskie said we need a policy that addresses the whole city.

Ald. Warner would like to refer this item to staff to bring back in two weeks. This allows all Alders to share this information with their interested parties.

Ald. Danzinger wanted clarification on his motion. He would like discussion to occur with the two Alders in the district on the Corridor dimension and then bring it back to Park Committee on June 12.

Ald. Boyce stated he would be in favor of putting Ben's name on a crossing. This is a crossing, not a corridor.

Ald. Brunette stated he wanted to keep an open mind and was leaning toward naming the trail after Sgt. Ben Edinger. My fear of delaying this is the possibility of the trail opening without a name and that concerns me.

Ald. Wiezbiskie said it already has a name, the West Side Trail, so we would be changing the name.

Ald. Brunette said when a trail opens it usually is a public event and it would be a great way to honor Ben. I went to high school with Ben Edinger. Ben was sharp and on the ball. You could tell he would be successful in life. Just a month ago this Council voted to name Donald Driver Way. He's a great guy but we have to put this in perspective.

Ald. Wiezbiskie said that street was named under a different policy. We have already discussed our policy tonight. We do not have time to review history.

Ald. Danzinger made a motion to allow Ald. Brunette to speak, seconded by Ald. Moore.

Ald. Brunette said I politely ask that this committee refer this item back to staff.

Ald. Wiezbiskie asked staff to read the motion. Staff said the motion was to refer to staff the naming of the Sgt. Benjamin Edinger Corridor on the West Side Trail and to communicate with the Alders in their districts to determine the dimensions and boundaries of the Corridor and to bring this item back to Park Committee on June 12.

Ald. Moore seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Staff would like to invite anyone here this evening to please address your Alder persons so they can get their comments to the Park Department. Thank you for coming and expressing your opinions this evening.

1. Request by Fireman's Park Neighborhood Association to install two little library bookstands at Fireman's Park

Fireman's Neighborhood Association would like to install two library bookstands at Fireman's Park, one for adults and one for children along with a park bench. They would purchase pre-made boxes. Once installed, they would become property of the City. Fireman's Neighborhood Association would be responsible for construction materials and installation costs. Park staff would approve location, materials and installation method. It must meet City building and inspection codes. The Fireman's Neighborhood Association is responsible for managing the reading content, damages, maintenance and repairs of reading boxes.

Crystal Morrow, 805 Sunny Lane, Vice-President of Fireman's Neighborhood Association, supports this project.

Ald. Danzinger made a motion to approve the request by Fireman's Neighborhood Association to install two little library bookstands and a park bench at Fireman's Park contingent on:

- Fireman's Neighborhood Association would be responsible for all costs of construction materials and installation.
- Once installed it becomes City property.
- Park staff approval of the layout and installation plans. All materials must meet City building and inspection codes.
- Fireman's Neighborhood Association is responsible for managing the reading content, damages, maintenance and repairs of reading boxes.
- All proper permits and insurances being obtained.

Motion was seconded by Ald. Moore and motion carried

2. Discussion/Action on a request by Karen Faulkner of the Golden House to host a Bikes & BBQ event July 19 & 20 at Leicht Park and to allow the sale of alcohol in the park for this event

This is a fundraising event for Golden House to raise support for programming for victims of domestic violence. Friday, July 19 they will set up at noon for a BBQ contest and from 5:00-8:00 p.m. hold a VIP dinner. On Saturday, July 20 from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. they will hold a motorcycle run, picnic, raffles, children's activities and from 6:00-9:00 p.m. they will hold an outdoor concert. There is no admission; it is free to the public. They expect about 150 people on Friday night and 500+ on Saturday. They have applied for a special event permit and are asking permission to sell alcohol. Private individuals cannot sell alcohol in the park. Non-profit organizations can with the approval of the Park Committee providing all proceeds go to the non-profit organization. The permit allows only beer and wine as hard liquor is not allowed to be sold in parks per state law. The alcohol permit is for two days. They must provide a licensed bartender for this event. Security and overnight security must be provided. On Saturday two police officers are required on site from 12:00-6:00 pm and four officers are required from 6:00-9:00 p.m. Per Health Department rules all vendors must be licensed. All traffic, parking and pedestrian issues have been addressed in their special event process. Ald. Wiezbiskie asked if there would be a designated area where people would purchase alcohol. Staff said yes.

Ald. Warner made a motion to open the floor, seconded by Ald. Moore and carried.

Karen Faulkner of Golden House said this event, *Bikes & BBQ*, is a second annual event but is new to the downtown area. We are working with Dean Distributing to provide the Safe Ride program. We will provide designated drivers non-alcoholic drinks. We are interested in working with GBPD to keep this a safe, family event. Last year this event was held at Vandervest Harley Davidson. The ride will start at Vandervest but end at Leicht Park. Ald. Danzinger asked if we have to close streets. We do not. Ald. Moore asked if they had any backlash about serving alcohol at a domestic abuse awareness event. Ms. Faulkner said this is a family event and they ensure that people are acting responsibly.

A motion to return to regular order of business was made by Ald. Warner, seconded by Ald. Moore and carried.

A motion was made by Ald. Moore to approve the Bikes and BBQ event request by Karen Faulkner representing Golden House on July 19 & 20 at Leicht Park contingent upon all fees, proper permits, special event requirements and approval and insurances being obtained, seconded by Ald. Warner and carried.

A motion was made by Ald. Danzinger to approve the request for the sale of alcohol (beer and wine) at the Bikes and BBQ event by Karen Faulkner representing Golden House on July 19 & 20 at Leicht Park providing all proper permits and insurances are obtained and all proceeds of alcohol sales go directly to the Golden House, seconded by Ald. Warner and carried with Ald. Moore voting no.

4. Request by Eagle Scout Eric Erb to install batting cages at Perkins Park baseball field

Ald. Moore made a motion to open the floor, seconded by Ald. Warner and carried.

Eric Erb addressed the committee. I am a Boy Scout working toward my Eagle rank. The project I am proposing is a pair of double batting cages at Perkins Park consisting of concrete crushed granite for the base, aircraft cable to support the net and the net itself. The location has not yet been determined but staff has agreed to work with me on this issue. I am not asking for money from the City. I will fundraise from the Babe Ruth organization, corporations, family, friends and baseball players. I am going to ask for discounts on materials and supplies. With the exception of a contractor to pour concrete I am not planning on paying any professionals to help on this project. This project will take place over the course of the summer. Mr. Erb distributed a sketch of the batting cages. It would include slabs of concrete for players to stand on and for a pitching machine. Ald. Danzinger asked about the time frame. Mr. Erb said as soon as possible. Ald. Warner commended Mr. Erb on his presentation.

Rae Ellen Smith, 723 Saratoga Street, said they are already dealing with an Eagle Scout to put tee boxes in the park and he did not accomplish his goal yet. She asked if Mr. Erb has approval from the Boy Scouts for this project.

Barb Erb, Assistant Scoutmaster, mother of Eric and his Eagle Scout coach, said Eric has decided to get approval from the Park Committee before he approaches the Bay-Lakes Council for their approval. Eric is asking for approval for the design and materials from the Park Committee and then get project approval from his Boy Scout Council. He will come back to the Park Committee for approval to install the batting cages. Ald. Wiezbiskie asked Mr. Erb if he was interested in presenting his project to the Neighborhood Association and he agreed to do that.

Ald. Moore explained that the agenda states Eric is asking permission to install the batting cages.

Troy Ness, 1151 Fourteenth Avenue, west side director for Babe Ruth, said he has personally picked Eric for this project. This project will be completed. This is his project but we will help him.

A motion to return to regular order of business was made by Ald. Danzinger, seconded by Ald. Moore and carried.

A motion was made by Ald. Moore to approve the request by Eagle Scout Eric Erb to install batting cages at Perkins Park baseball field contingent upon:

- Approval of his plan by the Boy Scout Council.
- To bring the request to Park Committee prior to construction for final approval.

Motion was seconded by Ald. Warner and carried.

5. Discussion/Action on the purchase of 1344 Main Street (parcel 8-295) for the expansion of the East River Trail

Ald. Moore made a motion to go into closed session, seconded by Ald. Danzinger and carried.

The Committee may convene in closed session pursuant to Sections 19.85(1)(e), Wis. Stats., for purposes of deliberating or negotiating the sale of public properties, investing of public funds or conducting other specified public business as necessary for competitive or bargaining reasons. The Committee may thereafter reconvene in open session pursuant to Section 19.85(2), Wis. Stats., to report the results of the closed session and consider the balance of the agenda.

Ald. Moore made a motion to return to regular business, seconded by Ald. Warner and carried.

Ald. Danzinger made a motion to proceed with negotiations as discussed in closed session on the purchase of 1344 Main Street (parcel 8-295) for the expansion of the East River Trail, seconded by Ald. Moore and carried.

6. Discussion/Action on the renewal of the Leicht Park lease.

For the past 9½ years the City has been leasing 4.49 acres of property at Leicht Park from Western Lime Corporation. Last year Western Lime sold their property to Graymont Corporation. We had discussions last year about the possibility of selling this property to the City of Green Bay. Graymont was not interested in selling at that time. We talked with them about extending the lease. This is our special event property. We need this space to host large special events at this park. Without it we cannot accommodate some of the special events we wish to run there. Our current ten year lease expires February 28, 2014. We are receiving requests for next year's events. It is important that we secure this park area before we start approving special events at Leicht Park. Graymont has agreed to enter into an additional ten year lease with the City expiring February 28, 2024. In the old lease the City had agreed to pay Graymont an annual payment equal to the tax, storm water and run off fees attributed to the lease land area. Our attorneys have been working with their attorneys to draft a proposed lease agreement for approval.

Ald. Danzinger made a motion to approve to amend the existing lease between the City of Green Bay and Graymont for an additional ten years for 4.49 acres of lease land for park usage in Leicht Park, seconded by Ald. Moore and carried.

7. Director's Report

Staff invited the Committee to the Golden Memories Ball at Bay Beach Pavilion on May 10. The Brass Factory Big Band will be playing.

Bay Beach opens May 4 for Saturday and Sundays from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

On May 16 & 17 we will hold a STEM Day at Bay Beach which will provide a math and physics day. While observing and riding our rides, students will be able to experience Newton's Laws of Motion, momentum and energy transformation as well as the dynamics of physics. We are providing a middle and high school curriculum.

The Friends of the Wildlife Sanctuary received a \$10,000 grant for the K4 program for supplies and education materials to be used for water activities and education.

The Sea Dragon was temporarily set up to train staff on installation and operation. Friends of Bay Beach are funding a waterfall for the Sea Dragon ride.

Ald. Moore made a motion to receive and place on file the Director's Report, seconded by Ald. Danzinger and carried.

Ald. Warner made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ald. Moore and carried.