

MINUTES

City Council Parks, Trails, & Recreation Committee

Wednesday, January 20, 2021, 3:30 PM
City Hall Council Chambers

Members Present: Mac Morrow, Chair, Council Member
Maureen Copelof, Vice-Chair, Council Member
Jim Fatland, City Manager
Paul Ray, Planning Director
David Lutz, Public Works Director
Nancy DePippo, Citizen Member
Erik Emaus, Citizen Member
Howie Granat, Citizen Member (via Zoom)
Matt Christian, Citizen Member (via Zoom)

Absent: Ryan Olson, At-Large Member

Staff Present: Denise Hodsdon, Executive Assistant

Guests: Torry Nergart, Conserving Carolina (via Zoom)

A. Welcome & Call to Order

Committee Chair Mac Morrow welcomed all in attendance and called the meeting to order at 3:36 PM.

B. Certification of Quorum

Quorum was certified by Executive Assistant Denise Hodsdon

C. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Ms. DePippo, seconded by Ms. Copelof, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Approval of Minutes of November 18, 2020 Meeting

Motion by Mr. Emaus, seconded by Ms. Copelof to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2020 meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

E. City Project Updates

1. Rosenwald Community Projects – Mr. Fatland reported that all the playground equipment has been installed at Silversteen Memorial Playground and the mulch will be completed early next week. Mr. Ray said we are still waiting for formal

approval from the County. There are a few things that we are going to have to defer until the weather warms up, such as to the ADA accessible features, but it is his hope that the Building Department allows us to go ahead and open without the ADA features. Mr. Fatland plans to schedule a soft opening as soon as possible if we get the go ahead from the County and insurance coverage from NCLM.

Mr. Fatland said Summit Engineers is working on specifications for the concrete work, including the basketball court, sidewalks and the picnic shelter pad and we will be creating some handicap parking spaces close to the picnic shelter. When that project goes out, we will get one contractor to do all that. The basketball hoops have already been delivered and the court surface is ready to be delivered once the concrete slab is poured.

Mr. Fatland reported that the architect is wrapping up the design for the Mary C. Jenkins Community Center and is getting ready to put the project out to bid.

2. Dog Park – Ms. Copelof reported that the Dog Park is looking great. We have received approximately \$28,000 in donations to date. We are under contract with Transylvania Fencing and they will be ready to start once they get the materials. David Lutz worked with Comporium who helped us with getting the water line to the park. There will be two dog wash stations and we are getting estimates for a doggie splash pad.

The concrete footers for the rain shelters have been poured and David Lutz is working with Alvin Fuller of Summit Engineers to design the rain shelters. The plan is to build them ourselves with Public Works crews and volunteers. In order to cut costs, we have reduced the number of paths within the park, but there will be paths from the entrance to the rain shelters and a path around the inside perimeter. Ms. Copelof noted that we can always add paths later on once we know what the natural movement is within the park.

3. Railroad Avenue – Mr. Morrow noted that the work on Railroad Avenue is ongoing and they are currently putting in the blocks for the wall. Mr. Lutz explained that the asphalt work is temperature sensitive and we will need a three to four day window of time where the temperatures are above freezing to lay the asphalt.
4. Community Garden – Mr. Fatland said he has talked with an individual who is interested in starting a community garden. The individual has been offered a location, but the property owner is requiring that he get insurance so he reached out to the City about the possibility of the City leasing the property. Mr. Fatland is going to contact the property owner to inquire if they would be willing to do a long-term lease with the City. Mr. Fatland has also contacted the AG Extension Co-op Director about helping with education and a design for the garden. He thought that if we could make this a model that works, we could then look at other locations as well. Ms. Copelof suggested that the group Moving to Conservers would be very interested in partnering on a community garden project.

F. Potential Park Land Adjacent to Bracken

Mr. Ray reported that we have obtained an appraisal of the property adjacent to Bracken Preserve that is owned by Home Trust Bank. The property consists of two parcels. One parcel is approximately 34 acres and appraised at \$335,550; and the other parcel is 3 acres and appraised at \$60,000. Mr. Ray has been talking with Home Trust Bank President Dana Stonestreet and he wants to see the property used as a park/preservation area where people can enjoy nature and he really wants to work with the City on this. Mr. Ray believes that the bank has plans to sell the 3-acre parcel to the Waterford Place Homeowners Association, but it is really the 34-acre parcel that we are most interested in developing for a trail system. Even though it was appraised at \$335,550, Mr. Ray said Mr. Stonestreet thinks he can make \$150,000 work. We may have to do some configuring to cleave off a portion of the property that we are not interested in building trails on so that they can sell off that portion to build houses on and therefore, it may not be quite 34 acres that we end up getting.

Mr. Ray shared the map of the parcel and noted that this would give us a lot more options for building beginner and intermediate trails on land that we own that is not encumbered by any other type of agreements. He and Aaron Bland are planning to meet with a trail builder on the property next week. The trail builder is going to help us scout out the area and figure out details. Mr. Ray said Mr. Stonestreet has said they would not want people parking at the Waterford Place Homeowners Association Clubhouse to get on the trail system there, so he wants to make sure that we aren't going to try to build a parking lot or trailhead inside Waterford Place, unless they want some type of connection.

Mr. Morrow said it is wonderful to think about this as a potential possibility and the first thing we need to do is give a conceptual idea to Home Trust Bank so we can actually put a package together and maybe follow up with a PARTF grant. Mr. Fatland said if we go with a PARTF grant, the bank would have to be willing to wait for the grant decision, which would be sometime in August. Mr. Fatland suggested that another thought is we could offer the bank a lower price and we close at an earlier date without the grant. Mr. Ray said the bank has hired a realtor, but has agreed to sit on the 34 acres while we work through the process. Motion by Mr. Fatland, seconded by Ms. Copelof to recommend to City Council to take a serious look at this opportunity to acquire this parcel in order to expand Bracken Preserve. The motion carried unanimously.

G. Set Date for Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Parks, Trails & Recreation Committee will be on Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at 3:30 PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

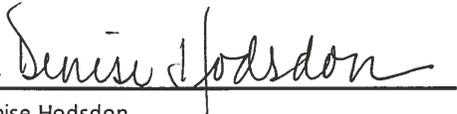
H. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:32 pm.

X 

Mac Morrow,
Chair, Council Member

Minutes Approved: February 17, 2021

X 

Denise Hodsdon
Executive Assistant