

VILLAGE OF WESLEY CHAPEL
PARKS AND REC COMMITTEE MINUTES
November 17, 2008

The Parks and Rec Committee of the Village of Wesley Chapel, North Carolina met at the Village Office at 4107 New Town Road, Waxhaw, North Carolina.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Council Member Sondra Bradford, Julie Brown, Mike Giaimo (arrived late 8:25 pm), Marnie Holland, Scott Ives, John Lepke (arrived late 7:15 pm), Melissa Mauro

MEMBERS ABSENT: Tim Spilde

OTHERS PRESENT: Cheryl Bennett, Administrator/Clerk;
Citizens: none

TIME CONVENED: Bradford called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. A quorum was present.

I. Welcome

Everyone introduced themselves and told what their favorite park was. Sondra Bradford is on Council and will serve as the council liaison, she has lived in Stonegate since 2004, and her favorite park is Percy Warner Park in Nashville, and Colonel Francis Beatty Park. Julie Brown has been in the area for 15 years, lives in Wexford and her favorite park is WCWAA, she was on their board many years. Cheryl Bennett is the clerk/finance/administrator for the Village, she lives in Price Mill, and her favorite parks are Table Rock and Devils Fork in South Carolina. Scott Ives has been in Stonegate six years; his favorite parks are a little park in Matthews and the Cleveland metro parks. Melissa Mauro has lived in Wesley Oaks 4 years, formerly lived in New York City and loved Central Park; locally she likes Colonel Francis Beatty Park. Marty Holland has lived in Champion Forest for 3.5 years, being from Chicago she liked Ty Warner Park, locally she likes Colonel Francis Beatty Park and Cane Creek Park.

Bennett went over open meeting rules; being a committee of the town we must hold open meetings and publicize them. We normally meet at Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church, but their availability is limited. More than two members should not be discussing town business together because that could constitute a meeting. You should make agendas, and send them to Bennett to post them on the website. You need a quorum (4 members) to have a meeting, and to make motions. The Secretary will take minutes, to include who attended, what was discussed, actions taken, and votes. The meeting should be signed by the Secretary and Chairman, e-mail them to Bennett and mail or fax the signature page.

John Lepke arrived, he has lived here 4 years in Silver Creek, formerly lived in the Middle East, and his favorite park is Bear Mountain Park.

II. Housekeeping

Consensus was to wait to elect a Chairman; the Secretary duties will rotate alphabetically; and minutes will be done within seven days of the meeting. Meetings will be held the first Friday of the month at the town office, the next meetings will be December 5 and January 2. (later changed).

E-mails should not include replies, as that starts to constitute a meeting. If you send e-mails discussing town business, please include a copy to the Clerk (wesleychapel@windstream.net)

III. Background/Work to Date and IV. Goals/Output

The Committee has input from the public, it will come up with a plan for Wesley Chapel, prioritize needs, which will transform into a parks and recreation plan for council approval, and a capital improvement plan to implement it. We have approximately \$160,000 for parks from the fee charged developers. Funding opportunities include grants, some require a match. We currently have 6 acres at the Village Commons, and are getting 2.5 acres at the Lowe's Foods Shopping Center. Other options include fundraisers, tax increases and donations.

Regarding the 6 acres, the YMCA was looking at where to put a aY in Union County, they have decided to put the first one in Marvin/Waxhaw, but were also interested in using our land. We got legislative approval to have a long term lease of the land to the Y. Their capital fund raising campaign has started, and we asked them to include something for our land, and their idea was to do an outside pool, which was not really what we wanted.

There is some money in the town budget for parks and rec for things such as maps or flyers, but we would need Council approval before spending it.

Bradford will get the Master Plan on a disc for each member. About 20-25% of the residents responded to the Master Plan survey, and at the 10th anniversary celebration Bradford handed out surveys and got 122 responses. They showed parks and greenways being the major interest. About 60% of the master plan respondents were willing to support a one cent tax increase; Bennett estimated one cent in tax would equal \$70,000 in revenue.

Discussion on making a greenway was held, Bradford talked to the town planner Langen, and you would buy up land along flood plains, you can buy access easements but then there are liability issues; it is best to own the land. A map from Langen showed a preliminary proposed greenway plan; various conservancy groups might help with grants or advice; if we can connect to neighboring greenways, or even regional greenways, we would have a better chance of funding. He will pull information together for the next meeting. With current economic conditions we might have some good buys in land available.

V. Resources

Resources will include Joshua Langen; the Downtown Committee will be looking at traffic and access; the Local Area Regional Transportation Plan (LARTP) committee which is joint with Waxhaw, Weddington and Marvin; and MUMPO which is advisory to DOT, as well as Conservancy groups and Council of Governments (COG). Brown noted there is an annual \$50,000 grant program from Union County, and the Elementary School got two grants and WCWAA got a grant.

VI. Potential Partners

Union County's only parks are Cane Creek and one planned in the northeast corner of the County. Bradford spoke with the schools, and there are opportunities to partner with them; she sent a letter to get us first in line. Brown noted developers can benefit from parks, and bring money to the table; also

the Wesley Chapel Swim Club owns 10 acres, and may be open to ideas. The YMCA spoke of using 50-60 acres in the New Town Road area. Silver Creek also owns 50 or more acres of land.

VII. Discussion

Discussion was held on surveys, what level of information we need, how they would be distributed, and to what length do we go to get the information. For homework, Council members will be thinking about how we go about doing the information gathering. The village newsletter and website can be used.

(At this point Mike Giaimo arrived).

Brown said she felt like the Master Plan survey caught how people felt at that moment, but not looking ahead with a vision. Looking ahead 10 years, people may have different needs. Demographics were discussed; there may be more information on the Union County Public Schools website from the ORAD data. State revenue grant sources may also have information on what types of surveys they suggest. Ways to reach segments of the population were discussed. We will get information to the members on what types of survey data the granting agencies are looking for. The possibility of a community center type building was discussed and having facilities centralized with the possibility of biking; this might be included in a survey. The problem of teenagers having nowhere to go was brought up.

VIII. Next Steps

A list of HOA's was distributed, committee members split up the list, and in conjunction with the planner we want to find out any open space development they are planning, and willingness to allow public access. Bradford will get a list of uniform questions to ask them. We presently have about 4,000 tax parcels in the Village. Demographics from the Master Plan were looked at; more than half the population is age 49 and under. Ways to reach large groups of the population were considered. Sidewalks are desired, but costly. Data on the impact of greenways on property values and safety could be useful. The importance of

contacting people who don't live in neighborhoods was pointed out, possibly through contacting some of the older local churches. A future joint meeting with the Downtown Committee might be useful. The possibility of using some of the six acres for recreation was brought up.

IX. Homework

Members will think of questions they want answered, and Bradford will get more information on the methodology the grants prefer for surveys. Bradford will assign any neighborhoods not already assigned. At the next meeting Langen will attend, and walk the committee through a basic parks and rec plan. If members e-mail Bradford she will compile a list of nearby existing facilities. She will also get copies of the Master Plan on discs.

The next meeting was planned for here on December 5. (this was later changed to Dec. 4).

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Bennett, Clerk

Council Member Sondra Bradford