

VILLAGE OF WESLEY CHAPEL
COUNCIL / PARKS AND REC COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES
WESLEY CHAPEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
120 Potter Road, Wesley Chapel, NC 28110
January 13, 2011 – 6:30 P. M.

Council Members Present: Mayor Brad Horvath, Mayor Pro-tem Sondra Bradford, Howard Brotton, Todd Hess and Kim Ormiston

Parks and Rec Committee Members Present: Chairman John Lepke, Bill Bennett, Julie Brown, Marnie Holland

Absent: Regina Hilbert, Pat Utley, Alternate Elaine Rosoff

Others Present: Cheryl Bennett Administrator/Clerk; Joshua Langen, Planning & Zoning Administrator

Citizens Present: Carol Mullis, David & Linda Mount, Diana & Kerry Bowler, Frank & Peggy Jennings, Kim Bayha, Doug & Cheryl Vielk, Dave Ruzsala, Valerie Pariella, Dave O'Brien, Jenny Lepke, Ken Martone, Judith Bareham, Bill Connolly, Kate Stahlman-Dwyer, Bill & Shannon & Haley Bennett, Steve Moss, Karen Wylde, Karen Partee, Patricia & Joseph Hess, Cindy Owen, John Balles, Pat Stitt, Mike Patterson, Amy Hennen, Dave Werker, Jeannine Kenary, Bill Meyer

1. PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSION ON PRELIMINARY PLANS FOR DOGWOOD PARK

Mayor Pro-tem Bradford noted the Master Plan survey identified parks and recreation as a priority of the residents. The Parks and Rec Committee survey showed residents wanted a passive park, hiking and walking trails, and an amphitheater. The Village hired HadenStanziale to design the park and apply for a PARTF grant. Bradford expressed appreciation to the Parks and Rec Committee members for their work, and asked that residents complete the feedback sheets that HadenStanziale passed out.

Jon Wood from HadenStanziale described the site which is 22 acres at the corner of Lester David Road and Highway 84. The tract will be divided by the sewer line into two parcels, one of 17 acres, and the other 5.6 acres. He showed photos of the lake, residence, sewer line and tennis court on the property. Mr. Wood then showed the proposed plan for the park. Access is off Lester Davis Road, and the existing old tennis court becomes parking. A trail is developed around the lake, and a 20 x 30 foot picnic shelter is on the green space that could double as additional parking. A step down amphitheater is near the lake. There is a paved half mile trail around the lake, as well as half mile biking and hiking unpaved trails. There will be a fishing pier; the NC Wildlife Commission has a 75/25 grant program to provide that. Scattered picnic tables and a potential future

playground were also shown. The residence will be assessed to see how it works in. A pull off on Lester Davis Road was shown for the trail. There is a paved trail to overflow parking across Highway 84.

Mr. Wood showed pictures of possible amenities, including green space, picnic tables and shelters, an amphitheater for small performances, piers, 200 – 300 feet of boardwalk, and play equipment including climbing rocks.

Jim Haden from HadenStanziale said the initial grant won't develop all that is shown, and asked for input on what should be done first. A two lane entrance road is needed, along with better parking and stormwater management. We can probably use volunteer work to do some of the soft surface trails.

Carol Mullis asked about the plans showing the house being used for restrooms. Jon Wood said we need to show this in the grant, to start out we might want to use portable johns. Ms. Mullis asked if the house would be accessible now; it will not be. Mayor Pro-tem Bradford noted the house has a walk-in basement, and asked if we could include bathrooms there if the costs work out; Jon Wood replied yes we could, and they would need to be ADA accessible.

Jon Wood explained the PARTF process. We can apply for up to \$500,000, and the 50/50 match can be from grants or the Village CIP program. The deadline to apply is January 31, 2011. The PARTF board will apply the submittals by mid May. Last year 88 projects were submitted. There is a second round of grant awards in July. Contracts are signed in mid-summer and you have three years to complete the work. Funding comes from the real estate transfer tax, which has decreased in recent years.

Jeannine Kenary asked if there would be something like a gate to secure the park. Mr. Wood replied there is an entrance gate at the roadway, and fencing along the residential side. Ms. Kenary asked if there was a sheet with costs; Mr. Wood said not yet. Jeanine asked if the grant would preclude us from charging non-residents to use the park; Jon Wood said he was not aware of anything like that.

A citizen asked if we were applying for the full \$500,000. Jon Wood said we are still deciding on that, in talking to two of the four reps from the grant program, they suggested we ask for a little less. It is rare that they offer less than the amount requested. Last year they funded four projects at the \$500,000 level.

A citizen asked how we would fund the matching part. Sondra Bradford said the CIP that Council approved allocated one million for parks and 1.25 million for a town hall. Jon Wood noted we will also apply for some other grants. The citizen noted if we don't use the house it will still require maintenance. Mayor Pro-tem Bradford said we haven't decided on the path forward for the house, and we would still have to maintain it. Council member Todd Hess said the CIP plan also took into account the maintenance and allocated funds for it.

A citizen asked about the two parcels; Mayor Horvath said the house is on the 16 acres, and we have an option to purchase the other six acres. Council member Hess noted we are buying the 16.6 acres outright, and the 6 acres on Highway 84 are contingent on obtaining a grant. Jon Wood noted the 6 acres have unpaved hiking and biking trails. We have a waiver from PARTF so we can buy the land ahead of time; the 16.6 acres with house are \$750,000, and will close by the end of February; the six acre parcel is contingent on obtaining PARTF funds and costs \$300,000. If we don't get the PARTF grant, we won't get the six acres.

A citizen asked about volunteerism. Jon Wood noted other municipal projects included a combination of in-kind donations and land donations; in one the town built the restrooms and the Home Builders Association provided the labor and the materials came from another donation.

A citizen asked how large the field is. Jon Wood said it is designed at one hundred by two hundred feet; it is already cleared, we might have to move a couple of dogwoods. The land needs to be graded. They know rock is near the surface so they are trying to minimize grading. It will not be used for sports teams. He noted the 100 x 200 space will double the size of our parking.

A citizen asked how the number of parking spaces was determined. Jon Wood replied that it is based on the amphitheater.

The dam was discussed; from a cursory look it appears okay, and it has a riser. DENR has looked at it, and it is not on the High Hazard list. Council member Hess noted a breach would not go over Lester Davis Road.

Bill Meyer asked if the traffic volume impacts the grant. Jon wood said no, DOT has been contacted, and they are not requiring turn lanes now. PARTF is not interested in funding road improvements. If you are using parking across Highway 84, you would probably need a pedestrian operated button to cross or to hire deputies for events.

Butch Plyler asked what amenities would be funded and when. Jon Wood said you don't have to use the entire grant for land, you could get parking, shelters, and a stage, and you want to have three or more amenities which helps on the grant. You have three years to build so you should be complete by July 2014.

Jon Wood said the grant application uses a point system, they look at the site, a written justification for the park, public involvement, the comprehensive Parks and Rec Plan, and the score sheet gives points for the different items. You get 20 points for your first park, and points for meetings with civic groups.

John Lepke asked if there was anything about this site that would get less points than the last site, Jon Wood said no.

Carol Mullis asked if there was any connection that WCWAA would have in the use of the park, she noted that when they have tournaments cars are parked up and down Highway 84; would it interfere with citizens using the park. Mayor Pro-tem Bradford said the subject never came up.

Jeannine Kenary asked how deep and what the slope is of the lake. Jon Wood said he didn't know. Mayor Pro-tem Bradford said the Wildlife Commission is doing soundings in the lake on January 28, 2011. A citizen said next to the dam it is six to eight feet, and the rest is two to three feet deep. Jeannine Kenary asked if it could freeze and be a hazard. Mr. Wood said we would put up signage. Jeannine Kenary asked if we don't own the six acres, how we would plan for security. Jon Wood said most parks of any size only fence the area adjacent to residences, if someone were in the park you might fence them in. He assumed the Sheriff would patrol. Council member Ormiston noted a deputy is funded in the CIP plan in three years. Parks and Rec Committee member Bill Bennett said we had a Sheriff Deputy come out and meet with the committee and got tips on security including lighting, cameras, and gates. Marnie Holland, also a P&R Committee member said we could possibly provide a place for deputies to plug in their laptop. Mayor Pro-tem Bradford said we also have only one entrance and it is gated; there are potential grants for Segway scooters for patrolling. Jon Wood said some communities have volunteer park watch groups including Mecklenburg County and the city of Concord.

Council member Ormiston asked if we have to provide all the amenities shown in the grant application. Jon Wood said all things we seek funds for we have to provide, we can show other items as future items and don't have to provide them.

Jon Wood said we can go after the PARTF grant for land acquisition and in the next year go for funds to develop the land. The approach to go for land and development at one time strengthens the application. Mayor Pro-tem Bradford noted Marvin and Indian Trail are going for grants this year. Jon Wood noted last year they distributed the funding equitably across the state. They estimate a funding pot of seven to nine million; a few years ago fifteen to sixteen million was available.

Carol Mullis noted Jon Wood had participated in the process last year. Mayor Horvath explained the Village had three parcels we were considering, including one with a land donation. We started the process on the donated parcel and in the interim found the dam was high hazard; we allocated \$250,000 for repairs, but upon further study the repair costs were up to \$410,000. Since it was on Highway 84 we would have needed a turn lane costing \$75,000 to \$100,000. We were awarded a grant, but couldn't accept it.

Jeannine asked the estimated total number of people the amphitheater could hold: Jon Wood replied just under two hundred. Carol Mullis asked about there being parking for only forty-four vehicles. Jon Wood said the event may need offsite

parking like Matthews does; Jim Haden said the overflow area could also be used for parking.

A citizen asked how large the house is. Mayor Horvath said about 4,200 square feet; it is two stories and has a basement. It is not configured for office space, and needs work. Jeannine Kenary asked if the house is occupied. Council member Hess replied it is occupied through June, and no rent is being paid. A citizen asked if we could put our town hall there. Mayor Horvath said in terms of renovations it would be costly. Mayor Pro-tem Bradford said the house would be another set of discussions, there is interest in a library, dance studio, or rental for weddings.

Jeannine Kenary asked when specific pricing on amenities would be available; Jon Wood said next Tuesday.

2. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro-tem Bradford thanked everyone for attending, and asked that citizens turn in their sheets with feedback.

The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Bennett, Clerk

Mayor Brad Horvath