

VILLAGE OF WESLEY CHAPEL PARKS & REC MINUTES

September 20, 2010-7:00 PM

Wesley Chapel Town Hall

4107 New Town Road, Wesley Chapel, NC 28173

**Committee Members Present:** John Lepke, Julie Brown, Regina Hilbert, Marnie Holland, and Pat Utley

**Committee Members Absent:** Bill Bennett, Greg Miller, and Elaine Rossof

**Non-Committee Members Present:** Council Member Sondra Bradford, Chuck Adams, and Carol Mullis

**John Lepke called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM.**

**1. ADDITIONS, DELETIONS, AND / OR ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Agenda was approved.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**3. APPROVE MINUTES FROM AUGUST 16, 2010**

Minutes of August 16, 2010 were approved.

**4. DISCUSSION AND COMPLETION OF PARK SITE EVALUATION MODEL**

John led the discussion regarding the park site evaluation model. He acknowledged that we have a ceiling on our budget and need to be prudent to decide on the best option available that will provide the amenities citizens asked for.

If a property doesn't have a pond, we could dig one, but it would need to be about 10 feet deep to avoid algae bloom. We may need a liner depending on the soil type. We would have to drill to see whether we need a liner. A man-made pond would have no inflow or outflow in dry weather, so we'd need a well to top it off.

A running/biking trail is the amenity that requires the most land. The perimeter of a 40 acre lot is about 1 mile. If the trail loops and winds, it can be compressed into 20-25 acres.

Multiple sites require infrastructure duplication and increased cost.

We need a flat area for the paved trail, an inclined area for the amphitheater, and contoured land for the unpaved trail.

A pond is desirable because fishing ranked high as an amenity and because it opens up grant opportunities.

Open, flat areas are desirable for play. Wooded areas provide a diverse ecosystem and shade. Also need a flat area for parking.

Another issue captured on the site evaluation model is whether you can access the property from a minor road, reducing the likelihood of a turn lane.

If a criterion costs us money, it should be awarded negative points.

Proximity to a major road is important for visibility and for EMS access. Proximity to the town center is desired by our citizens. The potential for pedestrian connectivity allows us to connect eventually to the Carolina Thread Trail.

It's better if there's no power line at the park, so a utility easement isn't desired. It's also better not to be right next to a major subdivision. Proximity to alternate parking is desirable for large events. Might have to either hire deputies to direct pedestrian crossings or bus participants over.

Neighboring Open Space is desired for future expansion of the park.

If a parcel requires subdivision it adds complexity to the project. Revenue generation is desirable through weddings, events, etc. An existing structure could be used for events, a nature center, etc.

Regina said the proximity to a major subdivision and neighboring open space are related – if no subdivision is present, then you can expand the park in the future. Pat thought it would be desirable to be near a major subdivision because then residents could walk to the park.

Chuck Adams commented that our ordinances already don't allow light to leave the property, so major subdivisions wouldn't be affected by light pollution from a park.

Marnie commented that using the survey results to build the model have made it strong and unbiased.

John said that in the next 5 years the committee wanted to deliver the top 10 amenities citizens requested. He wanted 5 responses to suggest point ranges for each criterion on the model. He will compile those results and determine the average high and low scores as suggested by the committee. He will then present it to Council tomorrow night. He said the criteria are based on amenity goals, lessons learned, and the path of least resistance (presence of wetlands, flood plain, extra licenses required, etc).

Once Council approves the model, the committee will apply it to the list of properties.

## **5. COMPLETION OF SITE LIST**

John presented a list of 23 properties for sale, 4 acres and larger, for consideration. Those colored in red are very expensive, generally due to their large size, but they are retained on the list because they could be willing to subdivide.

Properties in yellow could be too small. The green properties are the most attractive.

John would like to close the property list by the end of September. After further discussion, the committee decided to close the list on October 11. Will ask for input from Council regarding a date for closing the list. If Council approves the methodology and score card, he will divvy out the properties by pulling names out of a hat for each site.

## **6. ASSIGNMENT OF SITES**

John suggested each member evaluate 4 properties apiece. Each member will take a site picture from GIS and lay out which amenities would fit. Then they can share with the rest of the committee. Everyone will

then fill out a score sheet for each property. Results will be compiled, the committee will narrow the list and do site visits on those with high scores.

Marnie suggested asking Josh to help out with more formal park layouts after narrowing the list. The committee could hold a special field trip meeting to visit the sites and discuss potential layout. May consider assigning two committee members to each high scoring site for this second evaluation. John would like to present a site to Council by November. If Council agrees on a site, the committee could apply for another PARTF grant using Haden Stanziale or try to submit the grant without outside help or do the grant with limited assistance.

Marnie advocated aggressively pursuing grants to defray costs. If Council approves a site in November, would be able to focus on PARTF grant in December. Julie cautioned that not pursuing the PARTF this year would cause the committee to lose momentum.

Carol Mullis suggested waiting to pick a property until the first of the year because people would be more likely to donate property once they received their taxes.

John says it would be better to move ahead due to current favorable market conditions.

## **7. OTHER BUSINESS**

Committee briefly shared information about the upcoming festival and the parade participants.

Chuck Adams suggested having a trail walking incentive program. You could provide interested citizens with a stick and then get an emblem to put on the stick for every milestone reached. Chuck said we would have to walk through neighborhoods until trails could be built.

Marnie commented that participation of Wesley Chapel citizens at Carolina Thread Trail meetings would be helpful because Wesley Chapel is not currently considered a destination.

Julie mentioned the Red Box program could be more than just sports but could also involve crafts, dress up, woodworking, nature awareness, etc. It would be a wonderful multi-generational effort if different age groups throughout the community participated to bring their knowledge and skills to our youth.

Marnie mentioned that Marvin may be willing to share a Parks & Rec staff member with us should we both need a part time individual in the future.

There is a utility line trail from WCWAA to Col. Francis Beatty Park. There's also a historical trail from Andrew Jackson state park to the Museum of the Waxhaws. Julie would like to connect it to the Houston House.

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 9:02 pm.