

City of Greenville
Recreation and Parks Commission
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, July 8, 2015 @ 5:30 PM
City Hall – City Council Chambers
200 West 5th Street

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Garrett Taylor, Chair | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deb Jordan, Chair-Elect |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audrey G. Nealy | <input type="checkbox"/> Kandie Smith, City Council Liaison |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tyler Clark | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Darin White |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Robert Jones | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Donald Williams |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jaimie Yahnker | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nikki Caswell |

STAFF:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gary Fenton | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dean Foy | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laura J. Davenport |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shana Kriewall | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lamarco Morrison | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Godwin |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kathleen Shank | | |

OTHER:

- Council Member Marion Blackburn

MEETING AGENDA, DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS:

The meeting opened at 5:30 PM and the following items were addressed:

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. INTRODUCTIONS

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made to approve the July 8, 2015 agenda as presented.

Motion: Deb Jordan

Second: Don Williams

Motion carried unanimously among those present.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made to approve the June 10, 2015 minutes as presented.

Motion: Don Williams

Second: Nikki Caswell

Motion carried unanimously among those present.

Commissioner Nealy arrived at 5:36pm.

V. YELLOWFINS PRESENTATION

Mike Godwin, Aquatics Supervisor and the YellowFins swim team presented the Commission with YellowFins t-shirts. This year the swim team has grown to 109 participants. GASSL Championship will be held at the Community Pool again this year. The swim team places heavy emphasis on sportsmanship.

Swim team comments (parents and swimmers):

1. Ann Hocum – Two children on the swim team for the past three (3) years. Has taught them great values, and now her daughter is a lifeguard at the Community Pool.
2. Stella Augustson – 9 years old, the swim team is important to Greenville, the program keeps growing.

3. Rex Augustson– 7 years old, swimming for 3 years, it’s important because it teaches sportsmanship.
4. Heidi Dennison – son started with Mike when he was 5 years old, now swimming for GAFC at 14 years old. He is now a junior staff member and gives back to the small children.
5. Lori Smith – 6th year with Yellowfins; organize parents with YellowFins booster to make sure they stay on track and make meets happen! Three children in the program.
6. Randall Cobb - 11 yo and has had an awesome time with the swim team, Coach Mike has helped me become a stronger swimmer; I just have an awesome time.
7. Shelly Braswell – Daughter has been swimming since she was 4, has helped her with leadership, in and out of the pool, but this is her passion thanks to Mike Godwin.
8. River Peoples – glad to be a part of the swim team.

Commissioner Yahnker arrived at 5:41pm.

VI. PUBLIC INPUT MEETING – TAR RIVER PARK

Lamarco Morrison, Parks Planner provided a PPT presentation discussing Concepts 1 and 2 from previous public input meetings. Project goals include citizen recommendations, concerns and issues, develop program elements, and determine the best use of the park land for all users.

This area is considered a neighborhood park. The park already has nice amenities including trail head/trail access, river access/views, off leash dog park, several picnic areas and benches, FROGGS community garden and informal open space.

First public input meeting with favored elements: Frisbee golf on 10 acres, kayak landing, river overlook, picnic shelter, public restroom facility, informal open/green space, playground areas (was not favored because mostly students live in the area; however was preferred in this area from the Tar River Legacy Plan public input sessions).

Tar River Legacy Plan Overlay – Two elements Greenville residents said they wanted were playground area and kayak landing.

Shared general comments from the first Input Session which included:

- Safety (for area residents) will be an issue with more users coming to the proposed park.
- Lack of parking is a major issue. Added amenities will only make it worse.
- There is a perceived danger is disc golf and others users, i.e. walkers/joggers, gardeners, dog park users, etc.
- The river is littered with trash and debris and perceived to be dirty.
- The dog park needs to be expanded and needs additional amenities.
- “Expand and exploit” river access.
- There needs to be a distinct separation, a buffer between disc golf and trail users.
- Proposed storm sewer ditch will take up valuable land.
- Consider thinning out underbrush and open views to the river.

The first concept plan was developed from the above comments; the main element was Frisbee golf. Other elements included proposed public restroom, informal green/open space close to river, overlook, kayak landing, picnic shelter to enjoy the garden/river, picnic shelter close to proposed playground, and expand Dog Park by one (1) acre.

Second public input meeting with favored elements: Many supported Frisbee golf area, but concern for safety of citizens using the greenway and dog park; preferred to keep this area as open space.

Shared general comments from the second Input Session which included:

- Major safety issue; GDGA does not support a disc golf course in this area.
- Find an alternate location near ECU for disc golf; perhaps the old landfill.
- Conflict between disc golf course and children, dogs, and trail users.
- Buffer should be adequate to separate disc golf course from other park users.

- Playground area should be in the open area away from rivers edge and closer to restrooms.
- Some would like to keep large open area natural; perhaps three holes to the far west for disc golf.
- The drainage ditch is a hazard; public works should consider piping storm water to river.
- Construction and hard cost is an issue; who will build the future disc golf course.

The second concept plan was developed from the above comments; making use of more open space, concerns about playground area being too close to river, so moved it into the open space area close to the restroom area and across from the dog park, picnic shelter, circular walk, and extended parking (34 parking spaces).

Third Public Input Meeting tonight, looking for open comments regarding a third concept plan.

Commissioner comments:

1. Audrey Nealy – Inquired about the number of parking spaces now (19) with an increase to 34 parking spaces in the park master plan.
2. Deb Jordan – Inquired about the 34 parking spaces based on available space. Mr. Morrison responded that parking is based on space and saving some of the trees; to try and make it as environmentally friendly as possible and to leave shade. 34 is the maximum number of parking spaces that will fit. For clarification – based on input and professional knowledge – public input meetings are to collect ideas and to see what can be accommodated, but its staff who will pull all information together and present to City Council. Mr. Morrison responded in agreement, stating it's not a vote, and everyone's comments are taken into consideration and look at the space that is being rendered. With this project, the Tar River Legacy Plan is an overlay, plus the existing greenway, so some elements are already there; just need to blend it all together.
3. Don Williams – At one meeting was able to hold a Frisbee golf disc and found that it was heavy and hard sharp edges; and wouldn't want to be hit with one. Not sure how it would be in relation to the greenway, but there is a perception of danger that could limit the amount of use if it's in the dog park area. This is Mr. Williams' only objection to disc golf in the area.
4. Garrett Taylor – Would piggy pack with Commissioner Williams on his comment, due to the playground. With the playground in the area, there is risk of children roaming from the playground area and getting hit unless there is a fence or some barrier of the playground area. The inevitable will happen and children will run off from the playground.
5. Deb Jordan – Important for all to keep in mind that GRPD is for the citizens of the entire City and not just necessarily special interest groups. Need to be really cognizant and keep the forefront that whatever happens with this area, is something that's going to serve the citizenry, rather than a group that wants a kayak place, or a group that wants this; that we really need to consider the breath serving the variety of folks we have in the community. Mr. Morrison responded that's why they wanted input from the Commission and anyone who may be watching on TV, so ideas can be gathered from everyone.
6. Garrett Taylor – As a reminder of current capacity and looking at the entire system, we need to make sure that we are adding to the overall needs of the City; in making sure we don't have too much overlap and neglecting some other needs. What do we have for current disc golf locations? Mr. Morrison replied only City facility is the disc golf course at Matthew Lewis Park at West Meadowbrook. Mr. Fenton replied there is also a disc golf course at ECU's North Campus Crossing and a disc golf course at Covenant Church which is open to the public.
7. Darin White – Would like to see a compromise. You can't build it perfect, for everybody, but try to compromise and give everybody something they want. Mr. Morrison responded that was his dilemma because looking at both and the decision haven't been made on what to put there. When I'm sitting down and looking at concepts, piecing things together and seeing if they work, I'm thinking about everybody. Is there a way, or is there another area closer in proximity that we can do Frisbee disc golf course, still looking at the land that we own, even land less than a mile away from this location. Commissioner White commented if we are going to stand out from other cities, because often times Greenville gets compared to other cities; then it's a good idea if we can incorporate things that other cities don't have. And we can say, "This is where you need to come, because we have it all." Compromise if you can.

8. Garrett Taylor – Again, is this going to be a City park that people will know? I've not played the sport; don't know much about disc golf, but it looks like it might be fun. I don't know how it might be maintained, but I might not have the disc – and I've never played – I might not go out and buy discs. Is there going to be anything there that I might be able to get; for example kayaks – I might not have one, but can I rent one? Is there going to be something there for those of us who have never played, to make sure it's accessible to all, without having to go out and purchase equipment in order to participate in the park; if we are going to obligate that much space. Mr. Morrison responded he hasn't thought about that. Mr. Fenton mentioned that had not been considered yet. Possibly the Greenville Disc Golf Association might be a partner in providing that because they do try to grow their sport and a lot of times people begin the game with a very primitive basic Frisbee and graduate to the disc as they get a little more competent in the sport.
9. Darin White –Necessity parking space is always underestimated. Mr. Morrison responded there are always two things constant in planning a park or facility – parking and storage are always never enough.

Public Input Meeting Comments:

1. Brad Beggs – on the board of FROGGS and works at ECU, Disc Golf course is interesting, more important for kayak landing, Knee Deep Adventure would also be interested in this.
2. Jim Blount – Blount Properties in the university neighborhood, agree with Commissioner White on compromise, have to create things for the neighborhood to do – looking at dead spaces, applaud McLean Godley for trying to get something done. This Frisbee golf course is not to be used for competition, just for recreational fun. Understand there's always risk for injury, but there's also risk on the greenway. Applaud Lamarco Morrison for looking at a buffer with planning.
3. Sandra Butternorth – lives downtown, as a parent and looking at safety, there should be more concern regarding children falling in the river.
4. Max Crotts – represents the Greenville Disc Golf Club, 501c3, have 156 members, this group has designed 23 Disc Golf courses. After looking at the land, the land is not adequate and there are significant safety issues. There is a concern regarding the discs (two (2) lawsuits currently in the country). A smaller course could be made to have an aspect of Disc Golf on the property.
5. Mark Gillespie – 40 years' experience with parks and 20 years of significant design; these are 10 very unique acres in Greenville. Tremendous disc golf supporter, it's a great sport, but this is the wrong location for a Disc Golf course. The open space is used tremendously; this course would exclude other users. Practice holes would be a good idea, it's important to let the staff do their job without political conflict. Shelter location by the dog park is a great location, use the area for multiple reasons, disc football, pick-up game of soccer, son playing football with his father, but the shelter should not be able to be reserved, North Warren Street parking lot use diagonal parking areas and playground area with informal picnic tables and utilize the shade, south of the dog park – suggest a skate park in this area (perfect location).
6. Joe Davis – local business owner, run high school basketball camps all over the country – understands the need for outdoor recreational ideas. Course will be a valuable addition to the university neighborhood, and make Greenville a more unique place to live and looking forward to the day where people, young professionals and so forth can stay in Greenville, because there's not much to do for those just above the college age. Feel this would add to the neighborhood and the community and bring more development.
7. Eric Thomas – intrigued with another park in the area, lifelong resident of Greenville, supports disc golf course. First thoughts were for fraternities to have disc golf tournaments to raise money for charities. So many young professionals living close by, many of them could walk or bike to the park, play a quick nine for a cause, but would also be able to draw much larger crowd of students. Disc golf appeals to people of all ages, not just college kids, people from all across Greenville would come out and help raise money for a cause while playing Frisbee disc golf. I believe that the disc golf course should be included in the master plan at Tar River Park and it would give the back to the community for years to come.
8. Melissa Tilley – property manager in area, huge following of disc golf in Greenville for all ages, attracted to this because of its location, have seen the changes in the area and is a greenway user. Thinking disc golf is not safe shouldn't be a concern. Just two guys can get together and play, doesn't have to be a group.

9. Preston Reycroft– disc golf is a very popular sport for all ages, not very dangerous with a 75' buffer zone. Have spoken with many coalitions and programs like this gives a different activity for the community to participate in besides illicit activity. This is a way for the community to get more involved in the parks. It is a cheap sport, friendly and safe.
10. Penny Taft – thinks this disc golf idea and kayaking would be great for young professionals in the area.
11. James Robbins – family uses the greenway extensively, there are a lot of shelters in use by Elm Street Park, few concerns but would prefer to keep the green space and not more structures, but couldn't think of a better location for the Disc Golf course. All citizens can play Frisbee golf. Hope it's approved and look forward to using it.
12. McLean Godley – was a member of ECU's SGA. Pitched the idea of disc golf and have been working with Lamarco Morrison since. Biased for the Disc Golf, but have a petition with 400 signatures who are in favor of the disc golf. There is widespread support for this project. Yes, someone could get hit by a disc, but there are safety risks at a baseball game too. There's going to be risk at any amenity you build. I am for the Disc Golf, but there are other great amenities associated with this area. Kayaking is a great idea. Lamarco Morrison has done a great job making it as safe as possible.
13. Kelsey Curtis – owner of Knee Deep Adventure kayaking, would love another access point on the Tar River, currently one by the City (Town Common) and one by the State (Port Terminal), would like to get more people to experience the water and kayaking. Loading and unloading kayaks need to be considered with this plan because of the weight of kayaks (50-80 lbs.); need to be able to drive up to unload to make it more accessible for handicapped citizens.
14. Resident by greenway – needs to be done so that it doesn't exclude any citizens for usage.
15. Daniel Overby – lives downtown, asked for a show of hands for disc golf supporters in the room (a majority). Would hate to see a ton of money used in the area because of floods, and it will flood again. Need to look at future needs with being cost effective and keep the demographics of the neighborhood in mind.

Commission Comments:

1. Don Williams – it's a shallow river, we need to accommodate small vessels (kayaks), if there was a walking bridge to the other side, there could be more parking.
2. Deb Jordan – appreciate comments that this is a neighborhood park. Need to keep in mind the dog park is beyond the neighborhood; and it serves citizens all across the City. The Tar River Legacy Plan cannot satisfy everybody, think the open space would accommodate all citizens, not concerned with safety. See an issue of the space being used by the community. Would love to see data on exactly who disc golf users are. Appears to be young white males. Need to think broadly on whom disc golf users are in Greenville, from my view, everyone doesn't play it.
3. Garrett Taylor – Maybe there should be an honor system where you might could leave some discs such as you might leave books on an honor system; for folks who do not play. Yeah, you can buy a disc, but if I'm a parent and happen to see this thing walking thru or by the dog park, it actually might help the initiative. Don't want to lock ourselves in here to the point of excluding other activities that might come along. I'm in favor of an abbreviated option. We definitely want to let the professionals be the professionals on this.
4. Gary Fenton – As the greenway continues to grow, the uniqueness of this particular greenway, the river side piece of the land, is the fact that it spreads out so much more than the rest of the adjacent lands that border the greenway. Another site we talked about as a possibility of a disc golf course was the old landfill area because it's another area along the greenway that is City owned and spread out. As we look at other options like an outdoor fitness area, we can look here, we can look at other places that may not take quite as much space. And you be able to go down the trail a half mile to find a place that comes out big enough for something like that.
5. Darin White – thanks to everyone who came, impressed with tonight's group, saw a mix of people, it's a strong statement. Our parks system is always evolving because things are constantly changing.
6. Jaimie Yahnker – impressed by GRPD because they look at things and how to reuse them. If it doesn't work, we can pull back and reevaluate.

7. Garrett Taylor – thanks for coming out, Mr. Godley – thanks for your input and investing into your community.

Director Fenton suggested two changes to the agenda for action:

1. Add Public Comment Period back on the agenda for right now;
2. Move Section VIII: New Business – Proposed Amendment to the Magnolia Arts Center Agreement to follow the Public Comment Period since Collice Moore and guest are here to present from the Magnolia Arts Center.

Motion: Deb Jordan
Second: Jaimie Yahnker

VII. COMMENT PERIOD

Mark Gillespie shared information regarding the Wake County Neuse River Greenway and it was funded by bond money. Wake County has a suspension bridge that crosses the Neuse River on the greenway. Wanted to share what Raleigh was doing because Greenville doesn't compete with local areas, it competes with other cities across the state. When students graduate from ECU we want them to stay in our City. When professionals are looking for new jobs, we want them to come to Greenville. We need a strategic vision and encourage the Commission to get involved with the budget process. You need to know where you are going as a community.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Proposed Amendment to Magnolia Arts Center Lease Agreement
Collice Moore, Jr and Laurie Maloney (board members) of Magnolia Arts Center (MAC) have asked for an amendment to the lease agreement, allowing them to extend the term of their lease an additional term of seven (7) years, instead of five (5) years. Magnolia Arts Center is really growing! Bathrooms are not handicap accessible; therefore renting a handicapped accessible port a Jon. There are usually 100 patrons at an event. Need to raise \$32,000 just for the restroom renovations. MAC has been able to raise money with concessions. There is so much opportunity with this new building. Ready to launch a capital campaign for \$70,000 to upgrade restrooms and make needed renovations. Recently showed *Most Valuable Player, Jackie Robinson* and partnered with the Jackie Robinson Baseball League (JRBL) and the last dress rehearsal charity money of \$600+ was given to JRBL which was presented at the JRBL Opening Ceremonies. This was a collaborative effort with JRBL. Usually have 10 performances per show, and looking at two (2) charities to host for each show. A motion was made to propose to City Council an amendment to the Magnolia Arts Center Lease Agreement to extend the term of their lease an additional term of seven (7) years. This lease agreement amendment will go to City Council in August.
Motion: Deb Jordan
Second: Darin White
Motion carried unanimously among those present.

IX. DIRECTOR'S MONTHLY REPORT

- A. Coming off a very busy weekend which impacts a lot of staff; 4th of July was held on 7/3, the Eppes Alumni Reunion at Eppes Recreation Center and Sunday In the Park; all complicated with the weather – but staff pulled it off and a big thanks to them. Other contributors included the Police Department, Fire & Rescue, Greenville Jaycee's, Public Works, Hastings Ford, Coastal Beverage, Minges Bottling, the Daily Reflector, WITN, Chick Fil A, and several others.
- B. Parks Superintendent – Offered seven (7) interviews out of 67 applicants, interviews next week and the following week. Interview panel includes Dr. Kindal Shores, an Associate Professor in ECU's Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies; Mr. Kelvin Yarrell, Rocky Mount's Parks and Recreation Director; Mr. Frank Salvato, from the City's Human Resources Department; and the Director.
- C. As you know, Parks Coordinator Dean Foy has served as Interim Park Superintendent since March, but continues to address the Parks Coordinator duties. He has managed to pull it off with long hours and appreciate the sacrifices he has made during his time as Interim Parks Superintendent.
- D. Continue to work and negotiate an agreement with Greenville Advocates for Public Skateparks (GAPS) for the repurposing of the in-line skating rink at Jaycee Park into a skatepark, through

GAPS adding, over time, various skatepark elements. Staff will be meeting with GAPS representatives to review the proposed agreement.

- E. Two (2) Tournaments of State Champions to be hosted at Stallings Stadium in Elm Street Park again this year, will include state Little League champions from VA, WV, NC, SC, GA, TN, FL, and AL. The first tournament for 9-10 year olds starts on Friday, 7/24 and the second tournament for 10-11 year olds starts on Friday, 7/31. This will be some high quality baseball at Elm Street Park.
- F. The annual facility tour is proposed for Wednesday, 8/19 from 5:30-8:30pm. If this doesn't work for the majority, another date can be proposed.

X. STAFF REPORT

- A. Shana Kriewall, Recreation Superintendent
 - 1. Recreation Update
PowerPoint presentation highlighting YellowFins swimming, Celebration of Youth Expression Event, Kickball, Sunday In The Park, Greenie League Baseball, Splashpoint, Adult Softball, Jr. Counselors, Summer Camps, Hershey's Track & Field, Parks and Recreation Month Event on 7/24 at RPN, and Volunteer Appreciation Day on 8/6 from 5:30-8:30 PM.
 - 2. New staff Chasity McCurdy will begin on 7/13 with Specialized Recreation.
 - 3. Nation Night Out will be at the Dream Park on Tuesday, 8/4.
 - 4. GASSL swim event on Saturday, 8/8 at the Community Pool.
 - 5. Doggie Pool Party at the Community Pool on Saturday, 8/15.
- B. Dean Foy, Interim Parks Superintendent/Parks Coordinator
 - 1. Parks Update
Things are going well, hope to bring some updates on projects in September.

XI. OLD BUSINESS

None

XII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- A. Garrett Taylor – will do best to represent at City Council for Commission presentation.
- B. Nikki Caswell – Considered young professional group without children; would like to volunteer to help promote some of these events.
- C. Don Williams – no comment.
- D. Deb Jordan – no comment.
- E. Darin White – This Commission has passionate debates about things and we take this Commission seriously. Hope City Council takes this into consideration. See a lot of public/private partnerships going on which is a good thing.
- F. Jaimie Yahnker – Awesome meeting; thank you to Vidant Medical Foundation for a grant to fund the STAR program for 2015-16.
- G. Audrey Nealy – child at BET, now at Eppes, few slots open so encourage parents to look at camps.

XIII. MOTION TO ADJOURN

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 PM.

Motion: Deb Jordan

Second: Darin White

Motion carried unanimously among those present.

Respectfully Submitted,



Laura J. Davenport
Administrative Assistant
Recreation and Parks Department