

## RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

### MEETING MINUTES

JANUARY 12, 2015

**Board Members Present:** Hutch Kerns - Chair, Josh O'Conner – Vice Chair, Forrest Merithew, Pat Dennehy, Kim Reed, Barry Mundt, Ashley Arrington, Todd Dunnuck, Bob Pierce

**Staff Present:** Roderick Simmons – Director, Debbie Ivester – Assistant Director, Judith Scott – Administrative Assistant, Al Kopf – Superintendent of Planning & Development, Pete Wall – Landscape Architect, Christy Bass – Business Services Supervisor, Allison Dains – Program Supervisor, Dee Black – Program Supervisor

**City Council Member:** Chris Pelly

Hutch called the meeting to order at 12:31 pm.

#### 1. Approval of November Minutes

Hutch asked if there were any comments. Barry noted on goal #2, item #1, he also participated in Our Parks Day. November minutes to be amended. Barry motioned to approve the November minutes as amended. Pat seconded and the motion passed with all in favor.

#### 2. RAB 2014 Annual Report

Debbie explained all boards and commissions do an annual report to City Council which is due to the City Clerk by the end of January. Some years the mayor may call for each board and commission to present its report to City Council. There is no word from Mayor Manheimer if this will occur this year.

The RAB goals report still needs to include a progress report on each goal.

Chris explained there are 28 boards and unless it's requested most often a council presentation is not requested.

Josh motioned to approve the Annual Report. Ashley seconded and the motion passed with all in favor.

#### 3. Mayor's Boards & Commissions Luncheon

Hutch reported the chairs of all boards and commissions have been invited to the Mayor's Boards and Commission Luncheon on January 10, and he will attend on behalf of RAB. This might be an opportunity to advocate for Parks and Recreation. Roderick reported the luncheon agenda is to present guidelines on how to operate City of Asheville boards and commissions. Chris feels it's an opportunity for chairs to interact with the Mayor. Roderick, Debbie and Chris will also attend the luncheon.

#### 4. FY 14-15 Deferred Maintenance Report

Al presented a highlight of deferred maintenance projects. There is a budget of \$650,000 for all of the projects listed below.

- Grove Park: Restore plantings and furnishings in conjunction with the Grove Park Sunset Mountain Neighborhood Association who is considering raising funds to support restoring the fountain.
- West Asheville Park: Batting cages were added and are ADA accessible.

Pete presented ongoing and future deferred maintenance projects.

- Shiloh Center: Gym floor was replaced using the former Civic Center flooring. Scoreboard, goals, height adjusters, LED lighting and a curtain for dual programming were added.
- Azalea Park: The fishing pier on the pond was completed and is handicapped accessible. The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission will stock the pond with channel catfish.
- New fencing is being developed at Reed Creek Greenway and Riverside Cemetery.
- French Board River Park: Dog park improvements were completed supported by the Purina One donation including making it handicapped accessible at the main entrance.
- Swimming Pools: Replaced the pool pump at Recreation Park Pool. Federal pool drain standards were revised and replaced the drains at all three pools to comply with code.
- Carrier Park: 1) Restroom renovation architectural drawings are 95% complete. Includes ADA accessible, a family restroom and lockable storage rooms for leagues. Final drawings and construction cost estimates are due in January. This is a funding priority funding in FY 14-15. 2) Velodrome architectural drawings are 95% complete. The plan calls for removing replacing the entire track, banking it, new guard rail and fence. A lighting plan is also included in the project. Final drawings and construction cost estimates are due in February. Pat asked about the amount of use the track gets. There are no usage numbers of the amount of people using the park. 3) The fence and landscape buffer between the park and Harrin Sand Company is complete.
- Stephens Lee Center: Work is in progress to replace the gym floor, sports equipment, LED lighting, scoreboard, bleachers interior paint, and replace tile floor. Work is scheduled to be complete in June.
- Scoreboards: Install 15-18 new scoreboards throughout indoor and outdoor facilities to be completed this spring.
- Montford Complex Master Plan: The Master Plan is complete. It addresses priorities such as pedestrian and vehicle circulation, parking, replace playground, basketball court, and pickle ball courts. Other features include a new restroom facility between the lower ball field and the amphitheater, community garden space and a trail in the existing wooded area. The Montford Park Players will contribute a new guest services facility and improve the stage at the amphitheater. Construction documents allow for phased construction. Forrest asked if the plan includes replacing the existing tennis courts. Roderick reported Montford Park is an opportunity for future recreation features and may offer a tennis feature. Staff will bring the Montford Master Plan to RAB at its March meeting for endorsement.
- Azalea Park: Staff is in the preliminary stage of identifying multi-use trail system opportunities within the park.
- Park Master Plans: Three master plans are in the works for Jake Rusher Park, Linwood Crump Shiloh Center Complex and Mountainside Park. All will include public engagement which RAB is invited to participate, and all will come before RAB at a later date for endorsement.

Barry asked about the White Fawn Park area within Beaucatcher Greenway. Stephens Jones died on Friday and had offered \$25,000 as a gift to the city. Roderick will check with Asheville Greenworks to see who would spearhead it and how much they will fund.

Bob asked about the front entrance at the Nature Center. Construction documents and construction cost estimates are complete. Debbie and Nature Center Director Chris Gentile are working on the Tourism and Development Product Fund grant for the 2016 grant cycle to support the front entrance construction. The amount of city capital improvements budget for the construction is to be determined.

Ashley asked about the ADA recommendations. The ADA assessment identified hundreds of infractions. A multiyear budget via the deferred maintenance budget will support a multiyear improvement plan as directed by the assessment report.

Kim recommended the T-Coil hearing loop to be used in senior centers to benefit people with hearing loss who use the centers. There will be a looping presentation at UNC Asheville next month.

Chris expressed the public's desire for dog parks in north and south Asheville. Roderick emphasized the lack of park property in these areas is an issue. There are no playgrounds in north Asheville and it's difficult to find land within city limits to support park land use. Hutch asked how these are prioritized. Deferred maintenance is #1 and the others are based on the master plan.

## **5. RAB 2014 Goals Report**

### **Communications**

#### **Goal #1 Develop relationship with City Council**

Hutch will attend the Mayor's Boards and Commissions Luncheon on January 10.

#### **Goal #2 Represent RAB with Stakeholders**

Hutch reported that nothing has happened with the Buncombe County's library and recreation services board.

Bob reported the Friends of the Nature Center is still working on the private public partnership proposal, and looking at regional partnership with Buncombe County and maybe state support. The Friends is exploring that the city move from an active role to an oversight role of the Nature Center.

Josh asked if there are any other stakeholders we need to reach out to. Debbie responded the upcoming public engagement on Jake Rusher Park, Shiloh Complex, and Mountainside Park will put RAB members in the community and play a lead role with stakeholders.

### **Community Outreach and Public Engagement**

Forrest reported that Greenway Committee is doing a lot of outreach in the community and working on a calendar to share with RAB. The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible to maintain the greenways.

Hutch asked to add future parks to the action list on the RAB Goals.

Ashley reported that the Aston Tennis Center Focus Group completed its report on public comment and the Finance Committee is still in its review process. There were recommendations to develop a Tennis Center advisory board and a business plan.

Kim is planning to attend the Black History Month event at the Dr. Wesley Grant Sr. Southside Center in February.

RAB's March meeting will be scheduled at a facility such as Montford and Shiloh since both recently completed gym renovations. Shiloh was requested.

### **Partnerships**

The Asheville Parks and Greenways Foundation will do its spring "Our Parks Day". Ashley stated that groups who use the parks and neighborhood associations are particular as to what they want to see done. Staff will link RAB to APGF.

RAB discussed if the partnership expo something it should be pursuing or take off the list. Most citizens don't know RAB and are going to city council. RAB needs a way to let citizen know to come to RAB first. Forrest sees developing interest in community outreach and through social media.

### **Finance and Budget**

Roderick reported the Finance Department operating and capital improvement budget review has started and are looking at fees first. City Council retreat is January 30, 2015 and will know more on the budget process then.

## **6. Director's Report**

- The spring 2015 Activity Guide was distributed to RAB members.
- Buncombe County has revised its plan to locate the Charter of Freedom monument to be located on county property, and the city has no role in the process therefore it will not come back before RAB for consideration.
- Staff is working with the North Carolina Arboretum to develop a master plan for Pack Square Park which will be funded by the Arboretum Society with funds from the Pack Square Park trust fund. This will come to RAB at a later date.
- The transition of greenway management to the Transportation Department is complete who now serves as the lead on all things about greenways. The exception is Beaucatcher Greenway since this development was already in progress prior to the transfer, and Parks and Recreation will complete the current design and construction management. The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for greenway maintenance and repair only, and will no longer serve as the city's spokesperson on greenways.
- The consultant for the Parks and Recreation Department fees and charges study will make a presentation to RAB on February 9, 2015 at 12:30 pm in City Hall, 1<sup>st</sup> floor conference room. The consultant will present to the Finance Committee at its meeting later in February.
- A recent article in the Asheville Citizen-Times about the history of the Nature Center reported the Friends of the Nature Center's interest in seeing the Nature Center transfer to the Office of Economic Development as part of its proposal for a public private partnership.
- Forrest requested an update on greenway management transferring from Parks and Recreation to Transportation Department. Roderick referred him to Mariate Echeverry, Transportation Planning Manager. Forrest will ask Mariate to contact Roderick about scheduling an update.

## **7. Other Business**

No new business

## **8. Adjournment**

Josh motioned to adjourn. Forrest seconded and the motion passed with all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 2:21 PM.