

**Recreation Advisory Board**

**February 10, 2014**

**Members**

Wayne Wheeler                      Ashley Arrington

Todd Dunnuck                      Bob Pierce

Josh O'Connor                      Hutch Kerns

**Staff**

Roderick Simmons, Director

Al Kopf, Superintendent of Planning and Development

Mark Halstead, Program Supervisor

Sandra Travis, Program Supervisor

Christy Bass, Interim Superintendent of Business Services

Judith Scott, Administrative Assistant

Wayne opened the meeting at 12:34 PM

**1. Approval of January Minutes**

Josh motioned to approve the January minutes. Ashley seconded and the motion passed with all in favor.

**2. Friends of North Asheville Dog Park (FNADP) Presentation**

Dave Thompson, veterinarian from the Animal Hospital of North Asheville, made the presentation.

The FNADP currently has 110 members. A petition for an off-leash dog park has over 1,000 signatures. FNADP hopes to partner with the City of Asheville and will raise funds for the park.

They have talked to architects and developers and their goal is \$100,000.

What is the yearly dog park maintenance? Once the park is built, it's just a matter of putting in mulch. Debbie Ivester estimated \$14,000 per year. Atlanta uses a combination of gravel and mulch in its dog park so it's low mulch maintenance.

Roderick: The maintenance cost will vary based on the design. We need the design first to get a true maintenance cost.

A property owner proposed land with a house on it, but FNADP hasn't followed through because of the need for partnership with the City first. FNADP needs to seek and acquire property in north Asheville. Asheville Greenworks would be the agent for fundraising because they are a 501 (c) 3 non-profit status.

Ashley: What do you see your role for the parks department? FNADP would love to have the organization grow to help all the dog parks in Asheville. It was suggested increasing dog licensing fees to use for development and maintenance of the dog parks.

Wayne asked how many dog parks we currently have. Two, one at French Broad River Park and one at Azalea Park.

Roderick stated that the Parks and Recreation master plan does designate a neighborhood park serving North Asheville. The city's real estate manager is looking at potential land sites.

### **3. TIGER II Grant Update**

#### Clingman Forest & Town Branch Greenway

Mariate Echiverry from the Transportation Department provided an update on the Town Branch and Clingman Forest Greenways funded by the TIGER II grant. The grant focuses on transportation features, urban renewal and development. The city has the Clingman Forest Greenway, the Town Branch Greenway and the roundabout in the five point intersection on Depot Street in the grant project. The charge for this project is to develop design and construction documents.

Both greenways are part of the greenways master plan and will provide connections from downtown Asheville to the River Arts District. The consultant team is Sitework Studios and Baker Engineering. Mary Weber is working on the roundabout plan. The challenges are land acquisition and easement with Asheville Middle School and maintenance needs to be provided.

The Town Branch Greenway will be an accessible transportation route, future development to the neighborhood and will enhance the cultural history of the neighborhood. Two things need to happen, property needs to be acquired and storm water needs to be addressed. The city needs a six-year easement with the SCOT to move the trailheads.

The round about plan was added to TIGER grant project. The five point intersection will address vehicular and pedestrian safety due to inadequate sidewalks and provide an alternative route to New Belgium Brewery. The only challenge is land acquisition.

Wayne: The first path through the City will eventually go up to Beaucatcher Mountain? Eventually they will all connect.

Josh: Any issue to make it ADA compatible with the elevation? It's not compliant to SCOT standards but will allow everyone to go through the greenway.

#### Riverside Drive Development Plan

Stephanie Monson from the Office of Economic Development provided an update on Riverside Drive Development Plan which was also funded through the TIGER II grant. The plan is to look at 10 acres of city-owned property on the French Broad River front and figure out what it should be used for.

The consultants feel it's going to be difficult to develop in this area. The city can't put anything in the flood way. The recommendation is to develop riverside park amenities. City would do new mixed use construction. The driver is ecological restoration and to create something low maintenance. RADTIP design is being developed and construction would be 2016-2017.

14 Riverside Drive (city-owned PSNC Bldg.) has no infrastructure or connection to sewer.

Construction needs to be made flood proof or flood through, and will have public restrooms. City is looking to rehab the building, and has the money for the construction drawings and could issue a RFQ next month. All will be ADA accessible. City could also issue a RFP for a not-for-profit or public sector group to rent it which would not be renovated to be open for community use at any time.

The City will look at redevelopment strategies on private/public partnership on its land. It will not be able to do by itself. New Belgium will be interested in development.

The city will start work on the building this fall and should be ready by the spring of 2015.

Riverfront area residents are interested in rising property values but are concerned about gentrification. Staff will deliver this proposal to City Council. Questions will be coming to you about the recreation components.

Wayne: If someone takes over the open space, could a group use the deck or would it belong to who rents the space? We intend to keep as much of it as possible for the public and allow the private partner to manage the process. The RFP will address these goals.

#### **4. Parks and Recreation Department Fees FY2015**

Director Roderick Simmons addressed the FY2015 fees. There will not be a lot of changes. After school and summer school fees were raised last year, but were later reduced.

Youth sports community program fees went up, but the youth leagues are asking the fees be reduces to the old fees. Old fee was \$125 and went up to \$750 with ball field lights and \$350 without lights. These are annual fees. Recommended department fees will go to the City council finance committee.

Hutch: Is the revenue tied to a specific facility? It's general revenue and doesn't come back to Parks to offset expenses.

## **5. RAB Retreat Follow Up and Next Steps**

To complete the RAB retreat it was recommended that the RAB meeting agenda be short and hold the meeting as usual, adjourn and then move the RAB to the 6<sup>th</sup> floor to work on the goals that came out of the retreat. May take four to six months to get it done. Roderick will work with Debbie to set it up.

Josh: Would like to see the board meet quarterly regarding the goals?

Todd: Can any of it be done by email before we meet? Wayne will put the notes together and then get down to action steps.

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

Director Roderick Simmons reported the following:

We are working on the budget and seeing how we can increase center hours, where it would be appropriate and how can we maximize those facilities.

There have been a lot of summer camp registrations.

We will be scheduling a Montford gymnasium ribbon cutting. A date has not been set yet.

## **7. Reports: Asheville Area Riverfront Redevelopment Commission**

Wayne reported that Stephanie said it all in the TIGER II Grant update.

## **8. Other Business**

No other business

## **9. Adjournment**

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

Adjourned at 1:33 PM.