

## **Recreation Advisory Board Minutes October 8, 2012**



### **Members Present**

Wayne Wheeler, Chair  
Todd Dunnuck  
Ashley Arrington  
Barry Mundt  
Cecil Bothwell, Council Member

### **Staff Present**

Roderick Simmons, Director  
Debbie Ivester, Assistant Director  
Abigail Riley, Special Projects Coordinator  
Sandra Travis, Festivals Supervisor  
Frank McGowan, Business Services Superintendent  
Amy Rickman, Recreation Superintendent

### **Guests Present**

Jeff Staudinger, Community Development Director  
Guillo Rodriguez

Wayne called the meeting to order at 12:31 pm

### **1. Approval of September Minutes**

There was no quorum to vote on this item. September minutes will move to the November 12 meeting agenda.

### **2. Bele Chere Board Chair 2013**

Having no quorum to vote on this item Debbie suggested the Sandra continue with her presentation and introduction of the propose Bele Chere Board Chair for 2013, Guillo Rodriguez.

Sandra presented Guillo Rodriguez for consideration to be approved as the Bele Chere Board Chair. He has been involved with the festival for three years. He has experience serving on boards and commissions in the past including, North Carolina Land and Conservation Review Committee, Durham Open Space and Trails Commission, and the New Orleans Latin. His contribution to Bele Chere has been significant, bringing new ideas and suggestions to the committee.

Wayne said the Board would vote on this item in the November meeting.

Guillo expressed his enthusiasm for being placed in the role as soon as possible. Cecil thanked him for being at the meeting.

### **3. East of the Riverway Sustainable Neighborhood Project**

Wayne introduced Jeff Staudinger who gave a brief overview of the initiative, with a focus on the areas in the Recreation Advisory Board's purview. The project supports almost all City Council goals, and it came about through a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) sustainable community challenge grant and TIGER funds. Asheville was one of 60 communities chosen for the grant, which was awarded \$850,000 for the project. Within the project area, there are five public housing communities, the River Arts District, and institutional partners including Mission Hospital, the Asheville City School System, and A/B Tech. The area is within walking distance to 40,000 jobs. The area of town was chosen due to the economic atmosphere that lends itself to creating sustainable jobs and opportunities.

Jeff emphasized the core deliverables of the project: community engagement, neighborhood inventory, energy planning, river way and greenway planning, and transformational projects. Community participation and planning is the foundation for the project. Tara Irby is the consultant working with the City to help engage the community in order to create opportunities and strengthen the neighborhoods and organizations in the area. The neighborhood inventory is about defining the demographics, land use, and priorities to ensure improved and sustainable plans, which will be integrated into the City's capital improvement plan. The energy plan is to determine the carbon footprint of the area and create a policy framework for future programming. The transportation network plan is for looking to the future and determining how people and goods move in and out of the area. He is currently looking for a consultant to help build the transportation network plan and infrastructure as it relates to current plans already in place.

The Wilma Dykeman River Way Plan and the River Arts District Transportation Improvement Plan (RADTIP) should be completed in the next two months, which means that approximately 30 percent of the project will be designed. \$100,000 of the grant is dedicated to the design of the Wilma Dykeman River Way. Clingman Forest and Town Branch greenways are built into the final phase of the plan. Jeff said that he is hoping to begin design of these elements in the next 30 days. The design will include history of the area, public art, and storm water management. Design should take approximately nine months. During this time, an assessment will be conducted to examine City-owned property ready for development and how to use these resources.

Within the HUD grant, there is dedicated funding for recreational development. The Reid Center will be used as a jobs training center as job creation is the main issue for the residents of this community. The other recreational opportunity is a project using the PNSC Building that was donated to the City. Redevelopment and reuse of this property will integrate recreating using TIGER grant funds to bring this phase to completion.

Jeff added that the Dr. Wesley Grant, Sr. Southside Center was a great asset to the community. He thanked Board members for making the Center a reality and creating an opportunity for sustainability. He emphasized that the East of the Riverway Sustainable Neighborhood Project is

not only a City project; it is a collaboration with the community, Federal government, and other partners to develop this area.

Wayne asked if businesses other than retail, such as manufacturing would be developed in the area. Jeff said that vision integrates many types of businesses and gave New Belgium as an example. It is the City's role to create the environment for successful job creation. The question becomes how to train residents for the types of jobs the area attracts. He listed Mission Hospital, A/B Tech, and the Kitchen Ready project as organizations that are currently helping residents with job training.

Cecil said that he has convened a group including New Belgium, the Sierra Club, Earth Fare, among others to produce a net-zero energy district. He is interested in the energy plan. Jeff referred to Maggie Burleson, the City Clerk, who has the energy plan which will be broadly distributed.

#### **4. Director's Report**

##### Golf Course

Pope Golf, Inc. began operations on October 1, 2012. Roderick said the transition has been smooth, and he looks forward to building a partnership with the organization.

Wayne said that he heard Pope Golf, Inc had reduced staff to only part-time positions. Roderick said it depends on the position. All employees that applied had been offered a position. He added that some employees accepted City employment in different departments while others had stayed with Pope or found other employment.

##### Hey Day

Todd asked about the success of Hey Day. Roderick said the final report had not been issued regarding attendance, but he would send that information out to Board members when it is available.

#### **5. Reports**

##### Bele Chere Board

Todd asked Sandra when his appointment to the Board would begin. Sandra said the Board is in the process of wrapping up this year's festival and its analysis. In this preliminary stage, she can see the festival had adequate attendance and met revenue goals.

Todd inquired about the status of the street preacher situation. Roderick said that the City Attorney presented to the Board last month. The City is currently working on the Noise Ordinance, and that issue will be arising in those discussions. Sandra added that the issue is broader than that of the street preachers. Staff is trying to figure out a means to control all non-

permitted amplification, both from commercial and non-commercial organizations.

Cecil asked the status of Mission's sponsorship in lieu of tobacco sponsorships for Bele Chere. Debbie said she would follow up with Karen Caldwell regarding the potential partnership.

#### Asheville Parks and Greenways Foundation

Wayne said the report at the September meeting regarding Josh's appointment as the Board's liaison was not a decision the Foundation could make. Debbie added that she would have further discussion with staff in order to clarify the situation.

#### Asheville Area Riverfront Redevelopment Commission

Wayne said there was concern from the community regarding the capacity of the landfill with New Belgium being introduced into the river and flood plan. The re-alignment of the transportation corridor will be 70 percent complete in October. The cost is estimated at \$750,000. There will be a public hearing on the project in the coming months.

### **6. Other Business**

Lonnie resigned as of October 4th. That position will be advertised and filled.

The tour of the Department's facilities was Friday, October 5<sup>th</sup>. Wayne encouraged everyone to take the facility tour in the future because it is important to understand the park system. He added that it was entertaining and illuminating, and he would like to see more of them offered. Todd asked if there is information for a self-guided tour. Abigail said she would send that information to all the members.

Wayne wanted to make a motion to encourage the City to put up signs within the cemetery to help visitors find their way around. He would like members and staff to think about it and discuss it in the future.

Cecil said he is currently having a discussion about an off-road bike park. Southern Off Road Bicycle Association (SORBA) has asked him to bring this issue to this Board. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has agreed to help develop the park if the City also agrees to it. SORBA has the funding to build the park, and they would like to present the project to the Recreation Advisory Board. Wayne asked Debbie to put that on a future agenda. Roderick asked Cecil for contact information at NCDOT in order to follow up on the conversation.

Ashley expressed concern with one the bollards at Pack Square Park. A child was almost harmed during a festival over the weekend. She sees them as a safety issue because they are loose and not bolted down. She praised the staff in the pavilion with their help on the issue.

### **7. Adjournment**

Wayne adjourned the meeting at 1:01pm.