

Recreation Advisory Board 12-12-11



Members Present:

Wayne Wheeler, Vice-Chair
Mildred Nance-Carson
Todd Dunnuck
Josh O'Conner
Lonnie Gilliam
Mary Ann West
Hutch Kerns

Staff Present:

Roderick Simmons, PRCA Director
Debbie Ivester, PRCA Assistant Director
Christy Bass, Business Services Supervisor
McCray Coates, Storm Water Services Manager
Diane Ruggiero, Cultural Arts Superintendent
Al Kopf, Parks, Planning and Development Superintendent
Amy Rickman, Recreation Superintendent
Frank McGowan, Business Services Superintendent

Council Present:

Cecil Bothwell

Wayne called the meeting to order at 12:32 pm.

1. Approval of November Minutes:

Josh motioned to approve the November minutes, Mildred 2nd and all were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Lake Craig Restoration Project:

McCray Coates, Storm Water Services Manager, presented a presentation and provided background on the project in the Swannanoa Water Shed. He stated that staff has currently been working on this project for six months and it came about from the hurricane flooding in 2004. He stated that \$4.6 million has been awarded to the Swannanoa River Basin by the NC Legislature and the Hurricane Recovery Act of 2005. The Flood Damage Reduction Task Force recommended a comprehensive study of the watershed and the Lake Craig project was one of the top projects. McCray stated that elements of the project include: a dam investigation and recommendations, Azalea Road improvements, and a water line extension to the soccer complex. The current proposal includes a water line extension and relocating the Swannanoa River to allow for roadway improvements and create more floodplain storage.

The project is still in the early phases and there will be another public meeting in January 2012, with the designs being done by McGill Associates. McCray stated that currently

the funding is coming from the State and that there is funding in place for the feasibility study. Lonnie asked if there has been any consideration for damming up the river to irrigate the golf course. McCray responded no, with the top priorities being dam investigation, road improvements and a water line extension, adding that the goal is to reduce the flooding downstream and look at how much they will really be able to reduce the flooding compared to other projects that both the Corps and Buncombe County are working on. Josh asked if the DOT (Department of Transportation) is going to improve the intersection at Gashes Creek and Swannanoa River Road. McCray responded that there will be a meeting soon to discuss this and improve that intersection.

Hutch asked about the pricing of the schematic drawings. McCray stated that there is a budget for the engineering but that the schematics are still changing. Cecil asked if, when the water is held back, will it flood the soccer field artificial turf and if there is a sub material that will erode. McCray stated that yes; there is a material under the artificial turf with AI adding that there is currently nine inches of stone under the turf. During the last flood there was only one field laid down so staff is unsure how it will behave in another flood situation. Hutch asked if either of the options have a better result in terms of recreation. McCray responded that yes, with one of the plans having good connectivity and shared parking with additional walking ability. The other alternative plan also provides pedestrian connectivity and staff is trying to keep all of these types of things in mind along with the feedback from the community in the Gashes Creek area.

3. Director's Report:

Roderick stated that the department first quarter report was distributed with the Recreation Advisory Board materials.

He stated that the Martin Luther King, Jr. playground ribbon cutting was a good event, despite the cold. Reed Creek Greenway is currently under construction 60-70% complete. The next project is the RFP (request for proposals) for Town Branch, Clingman Forest and Beaucatcher Overlook Greenways which will be going out soon. Roderick stated that the Council retreat will be in January and that should determine our CIP budget, long-term process and planning. Roderick stated that the RFI (request for information) on the Golf Course are due today and that staff will review the submissions before bringing them to the Finance Committee which will determine the next steps. He added that there were more responses received than he thought there would be. Wayne asked when the reviews will be ready for presentation. Roderick responded that with the holidays and working with other departments, and council doing their Board appointments tomorrow, this information may not be ready by January. We will need to go before City Council for permission to put out the RFP (request for proposals).

Josh asked about the multi-modal transportation Council goals and the Complete Streets program. Roderick responded that Cathy Ball, Director of Public Works, and the Greenway Commission and transportation will be key in this discussion for those important corridors.

4. Reports:

Bele Chere: Roderick stated that they are now getting the applications ready that will go out early in 2012.

Asheville Parks and Greenways Foundation: Wayne stated that they are in the process of restructuring their guidelines and rules, and they are getting ready to submit two grants today. Roderick stated that one of the grants is to help redo some of the clay tennis courts at Aston Park.

Pack Square Conservancy: Roderick reported that the restrooms are going up and there will not be another update for 2 months.

Wayne adjourned the meeting at 1:00.