

Wednesday, May 19th, 2020- 7:00pm
Department of Recreation Headquarters
WebEx Video Meeting

Members Present: Ed Coleman, Co-Chair; Dave Grabowski; Antonia Watts, Tom Franklin, Herman Charity, Eduardo Marin

Staff Present:

A. Raul Delerme, Director; John S. Marshall, Bureau Chief of Parks; Nicola Morgal, Acting Bureau Chief of Recreation; Robert T. Linz, Acting Bureau Chief of Capital Projects, Park Planning and Construction; Michael T. Milani, Bureau Chief of Administrative Services; Ryan Etter, Recording Secretary

Call to Order:

Mr. Coleman called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

Approval of March and April Minutes:

Both months were approved unanimously.

Public Comments:

Mr. Joel Hurewitz joined the meeting to discuss the new Cedar Lane fire station and the Harriet Tubman Building.

Mr. Hurewitz: "I am Joel Hurewitz. I live in Columbia. I want to speak about the North Columbia fire station. Back when it was at the Harper's Choice Middle School field project. I guess I looked at the master plan and I did not see anything in there for that property. When it got moved. To the park, I still did not see anything in the master plan. And if I am missing that, please point that out."

Mr. Delerme: "Which master planning are you talking about, Joel? You mean, the Land Preservation, Park and Recreation Plan?"

Mr. Hurewitz: "Yes, your capital master plan that includes the fields that is the Columbia library. As part of your long-term development."

Mr. Delerme: "Are you talking about the East Columbia library or the North Columbia Fire Station?"

Mr. Hurewitz: "Okay, I was saying I saw that and that's how, at the time could value the fields at Harpers Choice Middle Schools based on the same basic \$3 Million that was in the master plan for East Columbia. But you did not ever have a real discussion about the location and the needs that I saw the master plan related to the fire station. Did anybody ever look at Policy 12 of the general plan? Which says to expand the County park system and recreational facilities by accelerating land acquisition to meet long term recreation needs while suitable sites are still available, particularly inside the planned service area where population is greatest. Reducing the parklands and facilities at Columbia is the antithesis of Policy 812, so it would seem that somebody in this process should have noted that before. I brought that to the attention of the County Council, Policy 10.1. To project and enhance established communities through compatible infill, sustainability improvement, and the community was very, very much opposed to the lights and the sound from Cedar Lane Park development plans."

"Furthermore, I am looking at articles from about 8 years ago from the house in manor park in Baltimore County, which basically is the same situation. The County wanted to put a fire station in the park, the community revolted and the County Executive changed the plans. Did anybody have any contact with anybody from Baltimore County? Did anybody used to work there? Did anybody realize that eight years ago a neighboring jurisdiction went down the same path.

The location at the school is a place that I've been trying to get for two plus years now. So, I hope Ms. Watts will help with that as well."

"If you have any answers to any of the history of this, I see that it was in the old business in one of your minutes from a few months ago but I did not see it in the minutes from the month before as being an agenda item. It is all a bit unclear to me and a number of members of the community how the pickleball advocates are given so much advance notice before the community meeting and were able to along with the housing people to usurp the meeting from the community there at Cedar Lane Park and the fire station proposal to talk about other things that they had been given advance notice of. Obviously, because they came prepared to talk about Pickleball. If I can get any answers, that would be appreciated."

Mr. Delorme: "We are working on that Joel, and actually a lot of it happens via phone calls. You know, as citizens found out about the meeting, other athletic

groups called us as well. So, a lot of communications happens that way. In regard to your question about Baltimore County, we're Howard County. I don't really contact the other jurisdictions for anything that they do."

Mr. Hurewitz: "Where it fits in the master plan, and whether anybody express any reservations, and particularly with policy 8.12 the general plan to get more parkland."

Mr. Delerme: "No, there was not and actually you mentioned about enhancement. You know this park has probably over 30 years old and this whole thing was going to be an enhancement for a 30-year-old park. We were bringing new trends into the park as well and actually just for the Board's information that this site is no longer going to be at Cedar Lane East Park for the fire station. They are looking at a different location as we speak. So, the funding is no longer available for us to do anything. County Council made some adjustments. I think Administration is now looking at another site up the road at the school system."

Mr. Hurewitz: "I appreciate some of that. I guess I am a lone advocate on having the library participate with the Harriet Tubman, but that would seem to be above people's here pay grade. I still think having a library pick up at least and get members of the community who have a different reason to go. They would most benefit from learning about the Harriet Tubman history, rather than the people who already know about it or going there. It would benefit the people who do not know about it and would most benefit by being exposed to the history. So, I would like to see a way of encouraging people to stumble on it and go. "

Mr. Delerme: "There will be a lot of history in regards in that building on Harriet Tubman and Mr. Charity happens to be on a Harriet Tubman Foundation. He has been working with us all along."

Mr. Hurewitz: "Right, right also it's the white community will most benefit to learn about the segregated history. How to get people who don't know anything about that to have a reason to go there and be exposed to it accidentally rather than people who are wanting to go their purposefully."

Mr. Delerme: "Yes, we will be marketing everything Joel, believe me. We market a lot of our facilities and a lot of our programs so that people will know about it."

Mr. Hurewitz: "Thank you, thank you take care."

Director's Report:

- Herman Charity has been appointed as a new member for the Recreation & Parks Advisory Board
- This is Sylvia Ramsey's last meeting as Chair of the board. Sylvia will remain on the Board
- Board member terms have been reduced from 5 years to 3 years
- New student board member recommendation has been sent to the County Executive
- Blandair Park Playground ribbon cutting will be on May 21, 2021 at 10:30am

Bureau of Parks:

- Graffiti removal at Savage Park, Savage Mill Trail, Dickinson Park and Guilford Park. There has been an increase of 80 hours in April from a 15-hour average. 95 hours to date where increase has been evident in Savage and Guilford areas. 65 hours of projected work remains to clean-up graffiti.
- Tim Maynard coordinated with Steward Green with regards to Deer Density Surveys in Dorsey Hall and Benson Branch Park. Awaiting final report. Both properties had an initial report of over 100 deer per square mile. Sustainable level is 15-30 deer per square mile.
- Brian Campbell worked with Jeff Crooks from the Howard County Beekeepers and arranged for the installation of two support beehives. They're both doing great! Super excited to have honeybees back at Robinson Nature Center!
- Continued archaeological investigations at Robinson Nature Center/Simpsonville site. Two new features were identified – part of a fieldstone foundation and possible builder's trench. Investigations will resume through spring and summer 2021 as a public archaeology project.
- Heritage participated in two joint events with Robinson Nature Center, one for Archaeology Fest and one for Autism Awareness, reaching 112 people.
- Rangers Carpenter-Driscoll, Eve, Smith, and Anthony represented the Park Ranger section at RNC's Outdoor Awareness Extravaganza on April 10th.

Their specially designed “Mystery in the Woods” activity was a huge hit, and they interacted with many of the participants at the table they set up. Many participants have already asked if we’ll be hosting the event again next year. Approximately 100 attended.

- April 24th Program Bird ID Hike at High Ridge Park, led by Rangers Eve, Kanagie and Carpenter-Driscoll. The topic was Bird Conservation & Identification. Twenty-five folks attended. This was the debut of this program, and it received lots of positive feedback! All sections filled and waitlisted, so Rangers Eve and Carpenter-Driscoll coordinated to open several new sections.
- Lightning alerting systems got their first real test when thunderstorms rolled through the County. They passed.
- Hoping to install four donated water fountains by the end of June but may need to wait for money in next year’s budget.

Bureau of Capital Projects, Park Planning and Construction:

- **Blandair Park Phase 3-** The contractor is working on punch list items. We brought in a county requirements paving contractor to repair and finish the West parking lot since Porter was unresponsive. The ribbon cutting is May 21st.
- **Blandair Park Phase 6-** We had a kick off meeting with Vince from Spohn Ranch to begin design for the skate park. Spohn Ranch is very excited to be involved with the project.
- **Centennial Park North Playground-** The scheduled start date for the playground is Monday May 17th. The outfield fence will be installed in the near future.
- **Windsor Court Path-** Bamboo removal and pathway paving renovations are scheduled to begin Monday May 17th for pathways near Windsor Court. Columbia Association is teaming to renovate the Columbia Association paths in the same area.
- **Belmont Station Bridge-** The stream bank stabilization project has been completed. The bridge package will be ordered soon with the anticipated completion date still scheduled for August 2021.

- **Land Preservation Parks & Recreation Plan-** The 2022 Land Preservation Parks & Recreation Plan has been awarded to Agency L&P. Staff are from Sasaki that prepared the 2017 Plan. Bryan Moody is meeting with the firm and its subs on Thursday, May 20th to discuss scope, tasks and available data.
- **David Force Park-** The second fiberglass trail bridge has been installed.
- **NRPA Parks Metrics Performance Report-** Dawn Poholsky has completed the annual NRPA Parks Metrics Performance report for the department.
- **B&O Ellicott City Station Museum-** Heritage staff installed cobble stone in the plaza area at the B&O Ellicott City Station Museum along with replacing the ornamental iron picnic tables that were lost in the 2018 Flood.
- **Safety Training-** All Construction staff have been completing the HC11 mandatory safety training in preparation for completing the HC17 more technical construction training program in cooperation with the Office of Risk Management.
- **Cedar Lane Park Dugout Covers-** Paul Walsky has the building permit ready and the dugout covers will be installed during the summer ball field break. The dugout covers for Schooley Mill Park and Hammond Park will be installed this fall after play ends.
- **McTague Property-** Department of Public Works and Real Estate Services has prepared the Right of Entry Agreement for SHA to start work at the Centennial intersection. SHA approved the draft and the Right of Entry is in circulation for county signatures.
- **South Branch Park-** HTI & BGE will complete electrical work to complete the parking lot project the first week of June.
- **East Columbia Library Site-** Howard Hughes is asking the County to purchase the site. Recreation & Parks has requested appraisals through Department of Public Works and Real Estate Services.
- **Coles Property-** We are looking into the Howard County Fire and Rescue to perform a training to burn the barns. The demolition proposal came in very high and this would save funding.
- **BGE License Agreement-** The 10-year BGE license agreement with BGE has been signed by the County and returned to BGE for the County (Columbia Gardeners) to use for Long Reach and Elkhorn garden plots.

- **Glenwood Shopping Center Well-** The new well that will be installed on Gary J. Arthur Community Center at Glenwood property has been designed and is ready to install. The County will receive a use fee by the owner.
- **Haviland Mill Trail-** Preliminary meetings have taken place with the Project Management Team and contractor. Site clearing and hazard tree removal has been completed. We anticipate starting the project by the end of June 2021.
- **CIP Budget-** We have spent a significant amount of time this past month responding to council and auditor questions, along with several budget amendments and attendance at Public budget hearings and Council work sessions.
- **CAPRA-** Staff continue to draft narratives and locate evidence of compliance for CAPRA reaccreditation. The 4 CAPRA leaders will be reviewing all documentation in May.
- **Program Open Space-** We will be requesting reimbursement for Coles, Savage Mill remainder and Blandair Phase 3 this month. The Fullerton property at 3910 New Cut Road was approved by the Bureau of Public Works as a Program Open Space acquisition grant. We are waiting on the Howard County Public School System to provide a needs agreement for Troy to send to MDNR to determine conversion requirements.
- Antonia Watts asked if there will be adequate shade at the new playground at Blandair Park.
 - Bob Linz responded that each individual pod of the playground has a form of shade incorporated in addition to the pavilion at the playground

Bureau of Recreation:

- **Vaccination Clinic**
 - 7 days a week, 5 days at Columbia Mall for Mass Vaccination site
 - Contractor will take over Mall site
- **Roaming Gnomes** community engagement program came to an end. Great feedback from the public
- **Quiet Outdoor Movie** at Meadowbrook Park. Everyone wears headphones
- **Lifelong Learning Day** for Leadership Howard County
 - Showcased everything the Recreation Bureau does
 - Was virtual in the morning and then did site visits in the afternoon

- Blandair Playground
- Roger Carter Community Center
- Belmont Manor & Historic Park

Bureau of Administrative Services:

- ESPN broadcasting live from Troy Park throughout the summer
- Weddings are now at full capacity
- Met with County Council for budget
 - Timbers Golf Club benefitted greatly during COVID Pandemic
- Field rentals continue to be very popular and great revenue generator
- Antonia Watts asked if there was a centralized location to see what events are happening at all the parks
 - Mike Milani responded saying that there is not a list, but assured that every field is rented every weekend, and will speak with marketing to see if something can be put on the website.

Old Business:

- Revisions to Title 19 will go before the County Council in June. Will present updates to board at next meeting.

New Business:

- New Cultural Arts Center project beginning to work with architect
- Press conference for July 4th Fireworks, May 20th at 11:00am

Mr. Coleman made the motion to adjourn the meeting. A second motion was made by Mr. Grabowski. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.

DocuSigned by:
Edward T Coleman
C1A784F654F849C

Ed Coleman, Co-Chairperson

DocuSigned by:
Raul Delerme
A0B88010BA0245A

Raul Delerme, Executive Secretary