

Minutes
March 13, 2008, 7:00 pm
Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
Green Acres Senior Center

Present – David Bauer, Donald Johns, Brian Knapp, Donald Lederer, Arthur Little, Ester Nasjleti, James Ogletree, Zinta Rodgers, Gary Sidor, Harry Wilbur, Jon Buttram, Joe Harmon

Absent –Habib Kahn, Amy Craig (Jon represented the School Board on Amy’s behalf)

Staff – Leslie Herman - Special Events Coordinator, Joanna Ormesher - Cultural Tourism and Marketing Manager, Christina Hurdle – Administrative Assistant, Jackie Fairbarns – Senior Center.

Guest – Jonathan Earley - Eagle Scott/ Troop 1887, Gary Perryman - President of Westmore Civic Association, Elizabeth Gee - resident of Cambridge Station, Shelly Vance - Director of Cambridge Station Association.

Meeting Called to order at 7:10 pm

Approval of February 2008 minutes

With minor modification, the minutes were approved unanimously.

Chairman Knapp indicated that he would reach out to the Chairman of the Planning Commission to encourage a Planning Commission representative to attend PRAB meetings.

Old Business

a) Community Center Update

- i. On March 11, 2008, Chairman Knapp presented to City Council in a work session a presentation called “Requirements of a New Community Center”. The presentation was a collaborative effort that included the Senior Center Council, FPYC, and Commission on the Arts. Knapp thanked all the PRAB members that attended the work session. He expressed special thanks to PRAB members who spoke to Council on March 11, including Don Lederer and Harry Wilbur.
- ii. Chairman Knapp opened the floor to guests for their views on the issue.
 - a. Elizabeth Gee wanted to thank the Sherwood family and stated that Mrs. Sherwood was a wise woman. She expressed that Van Dyck Park would be a great place for a new Community Center.

- b. Jackie Fairbarns stated that she was very pleased that the City had received the money from the Sherwood family for the Center. She commented on the upcoming budget and her disappointment on all the cuts being made.
- c. Gary Perryman commented that he is in favor of the location for the community center at Van Dyck Park and noted that there will always be issues in the traffic. The biggest problem he feels will be the money issues within the City.

b) FY09 Budget

Leslie Herman gave a brief overview of the operating expense adjustments for the new budget. Director Mike McCarty will give his presentation of the Parks & Recreation budget to Council on March 18, 2008 at approximately 8:40 pm. Chairman Knapp will also have a few minutes to speak to Council, and he outlined the points that he plans to make: support Commission on the Arts in restoring money for COA and Fall for the Book and City Band; endorse staffing positions for the Seniors' Center and the parks crew; highlight the numerous CIP items that the City Manager failed to endorse for the coming fiscal year. Knapp would like as many of the PRAB members as possible to tune into the meeting or attend.

c) Westmore/Stafford

- i. Chairman Knapp gave an update on both properties. There was a Council work session on March 4, 2008 where Council discussed the Westmore School property and also Stafford West. Since this work session, Council decided not to spend any City dollars on engineering proposals for Westmore since it would have cost 20 to \$30K. Mike McCarty is going ahead with the bids on the Stafford property. Chairman Knapp sent an email to all Council members requesting not to delay the project at Stafford West. He only received two emails back from Council members saying "thank you".
- ii. Gary Perryman spoke on behalf of the Westmore citizens that his community would like to have the 10 1/2 acres at Westmore turned into green space. The City is in need of more fields, and if the building was to be torn down, the cost would be less as there is already water, sewer and parking areas. The citizens are not worried about more traffic in their community as they already have fields being used and believe that there would not be an increase in the amount of traffic.

d) PRAB website

All photographs and biographies of PRAB members have been received and will be listed on the City website in the near future.

e) Trails Fest Update

- i. The Trails Fest committee met with Fit Family for Kids and is working on the event. The next meeting will be held at Brion's Grill on March 20, 2008.
- ii. State Senator Chap Peterson will be the MC for the race results.
- iii. Two decisions will be required shortly – a route for the race and a nominee for the PRAB Exemplary Service Award.

New Business

a) Foundation Brief

There will be a discussion at the April meeting on the Foundation.

b) Eagle Scout Project – Jonathan Early/ 5 mile trail

- i. Jonathan gave a presentation on a proposed five mile walking trail around the City for his Eagle Scout Project. His plan is to use existing city trails. The trail would go through parks, neighborhoods, and historic places of interest. The trail would go through Old Town Fairfax, Van Dyck Park, Daniels Run Park, Old Lee Hills, Farrcroft, Draper House, Accotink Creek and Blenheim Estate. This trail would benefit the citizens of the City of Fairfax, visitors/tourists, schools as part of a class, and scouting groups. Jonathan hopes this will increase pedestrian traffic through the City, particularly through Downtown Fairfax, and would draw in tourism. His intent is for the trail to help people get into better shape by encouraging them to walk. This five-mile trail would also help the Boy Scouts fulfill their hiking requirements.

Jonathan has asked Joanna Ormesher and Michael McCarty to be representatives of the project's beneficiary and also to receive guidance in planning the project.

The details of the project are to have the trail to start at the City's Historic Museum and then finish at the Museum. There would be mile markers and markers with directional arrows throughout the trail. A map of the trail would be available at the Museum for all walkers.

Jonathan requested help from the City and has already received funding by the Marketing Department for the mile markers and has received assistance creating the brochure of the map and specific mileage points to place markers from Maurice Rioux, GIS Specialist, IT Department.

The needs for his project are to have volunteers to place signs in specific locations and to have them mark the trail with GPS receivers to mark out geocaching points and to measure mileage.

Jonathan's goal is to complete the project by Trails Day (June 7, 2008)

- ii) Chairman Knapp opened the floor to the PRAB members for any questions. Chairman Knapp and all members expressed their appreciation for the presentation and project and remarked that Jonathan did an excellent job. PRAB approved his project.

c) GMU Square

The GMU Square is the term being used for the Kitty Pozer Garden and the old Weight Watchers property and surrounding area.

Update from Parks & Recreation Department

Leslie Herman reported the department is hard at work preparing for the 4th of July. All parade and concession applications are due April 1st. Fall Festival and the Holiday Craft Show vendor and concession applications are due March 14th. Joanna Ormesher is busy with the children's performance series at Old Town Hall. The performances are very well attended. Laura Lister is actively booking the Old Town Hall and is doing a great job. Chairman Knapp stated that the new programming brochure was great. He thanked everyone who worked very hard on it.

Members Time

- Arthur Little drove by Gateway Park, and the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority was putting in new benches and a new gravel parking lot.
- Harry Wilbur announced that April 18, 2008 is the start of the Spotlight on the Arts Festival. Also on that evening is the Musicale at 8 pm at Old Town Hall.
- Gary Sidor asked about the Council bringing up the dredging of Ashby Pond. This is one of the projects in the Capital budget that was pushed back till FY 2010. He had visited Wakefield Park's Skateboard Park and was surprised that there was a charge to enter. He also announced that the new Pacers running store was having their grand opening on Saturday, March 15, 2008.
- Brian Knapp announced the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority will be celebrating their 50th Anniversary over the course of the year until December 2009.
- Jon Buttram announced May 3, 2008 is the Sidney Lanier Middle School renovation dedication.

Adjournment

9:15 pm

Next Meeting: April 10, 2008 – City Hall