

DRAFT

## Minutes of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting

November 13, 2014 Regular Meeting

The November 13, 2014 Regular Meeting of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board was convened at 7:05 pm in the Multipurpose Room of the Central Services Building with Alan Tatum, Chair, presiding.

### Roll Call

Members present at roll call: Steve Dittner, Fay Martin, Dan Robbins, Alan Tatum and Cathy Toth. Members absent at roll call: Naomi Asher, John Clayton, Ray Garrett, Bradley Spears.

### Approval of the October 9, 2014 Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes for the October 9, 2014 meeting was made by Cathy and seconded by Fay. The minutes were approved by a 5-0 vote.

### Appearance and Citizen Comments

None

### Committee Reports

#### Bike/Ped Committee:

Alan provided an update on behalf of Ray. Ray has completed a survey of the rail line and found that the abandoned rail car is on a siding, so it will not present a problem for the propose trail. Ray has a PowerPoint presentation of various features he will share at the next meeting.

Ray has spoken with Tim Webster, Excess Land Coordinator for TDOT about the proposed Illinois Ave trailhead. A survey is not required for the beginning steps of a request for right-of-way use.

Ray has also been in contact with City Attorney Ken Krushenski again about the type of agreement with landowners required for the proposed East Fork Poplar Creek hiking trail. Ray is looking into alternative agreement types.

#### Community Funding Opportunities Committee:

Alan reported that Naomi has sent him a draft of the community donations brochure. The Board will discuss the brochure further in December. The verbiage of the brochure has been simplified and there will be a QR code on the brochure to link to the Recreation and Parks Department website for further details.

## Dog Park:

Jon Hetrick reported that City staff has begun the installation of security lighting. He has requested quotes for a 20 ft. x 20 ft. cantilevered shade structure with a fabric canopy and will requisition the structure as soon as a third quote is received.

## Updates and Observations (Non Action Items):

Steve attended the October board meeting of the Convention & Visitors Bureau, where he met new CVB director Marc DeRose. He noted that the contract between the CVB and the City had been renewed and they had received more funding than expected. Steve reported that they appear to have new path forward under the new director. The next CVB event is the Secret City 5K and Half Marathon, the weekend after Thanksgiving. Dan noted that Marc DeRose has joined the Rotary work group with Pat Postma for the app "Experience Oak Ridge". Steve will continue to attend and report on CVB board meetings.

## Director's Report:

Jon Hetrick provided an overview of the second Clark Center Park public meeting. He noted that the PowerPoint presentation from the meeting was available to view on the City website, with a link from the home page.

## Friendship Bell Presentation

Alan began the presentation by providing the history / background of the project. He discussed the role of Tetra Tech engineers in evaluating the condition of the structure after city staff noted deterioration during inspections. The Board was then tasked by the City Manager to develop short and long term recommendations to address the structural issues identified by Tetra Tech. The Board recommended that in the short term the original structure be dismantled, which has been completed. The Bell currently sits on timbers at the site, where it is still accessible to the public for viewing. Salvaged decorative pieces of the structure are currently in storage at the Central Services Complex. The Board has created an ad hoc committee to provide recommendations to the Board on a long term strategy to replace the Friendship Bell structure. Alan then introduced the ad hoc committee to the Board and others in attendance. Along with Alan, the committee is comprised of Pat Postma, Shigeko Uppuluri, Ram Uppuluri, Ray Smith, Tom Row and Kay Brookshire, with Jon Hetrick as an ex officio member.

Ram Uppuluri then provided his own insight into the history of the Bell as someone who was involved with the original build, along with his parents Ram and Shigeko and many other prominent members of the Oak Ridge community. He spoke of the impact the project had on the community and the controversy that surrounded the original Friendship Bell project, along with the commitment of the City leadership to see the project through. He discussed the current project as an opportunity to revisit the meaning of the Bell in the community.

Ram then introduced his friend Ziad Demian, an architect based in Washington DC who had become involved in the redesign of the Bell House structure at the request of Ram. Ziad created concept plans for the redesign of the Bell House structure to provide a catalyst to address "the sad moment that is also an opportunity" and to provide a concrete foundation for a discussion to move forward with the Bell House rebuild project. Ziad then

explained that his perspective on the project started with two points: 1) Go big – explore every possibility. 2) Do this right.

Ziad then presented his conceptual plans for the Bell House rebuild. He began with some additional history related to the project, followed by precedents from around the world for different approaches to housing Friendship Bells. He then explained that his designs were based on the three tenets of the Oak Ridge Friendship Bell – Born of War, Living for Peace, Growing through Science. He followed with multimedia presentations of design option 1 and design option 2, including multiple perspectives and animated tours of the structures. Multiple options for potential construction materials were also suggested, with the idea that new technology could provide improved durability of the structure while embracing the concept of growing through science.

A lengthy discussion followed the presentation, with many expressions of appreciation for Ziad's thoughtful and creative effort to create a new vision for the Bell House. Many noted that the proposals were considerably different than the original Bell House and not what they had expected, but most liked the new approaches. There were numerous questions about details of the designs and Ziad reiterated there was still considerable study to be done. Ram expressed the belief that it was unnecessary to compete with the original Bell House design. He noted that he had asked Ziad to take a fresh approach to the design.

Ziad then presented cost estimates for the two design options. Based on estimates from Marion construction, a Washington DC-based construction company, cost estimates for conventional construction (reinforced concrete) of option 1 were \$497,729.60 and, for option 2, \$439,000.00. The use of alternative materials for the structures could significantly impact these cost estimates. These estimates do not take into account landscaping of the site, which could provide an opportunity for a community-build phase of the project.

The discussion included fundraising opportunities, with a need expressed to determine the upper bound of funding ability prior to the development of final plans for the project. Various potential funding sources were discussed. Pat Postma informed the group that the Noon Rotary Club would serve as the 501c3 for the community fundraising effort for the project.

Dan made a motion to adjourn and Fay seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn was approved by an 8-0 vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

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