

APPROVED

Minutes of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting

January 12, 2012 Regular Meeting

The January 12, 2012 Regular Meeting of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board was convened at 7:05pm in the Social Room of the Recreation Center with Gerry Palau, Board Chair presiding.

Roll Call

Members present included: Sherith Colverson, Bob Cushman, Allen Eubanks, Gerry Palau, Laurel Patrick, and Cathy Toth. Absent were Bridgette Ellis, Lou Rabinowitz and Dan Robbins

Approval of the December 8, 2011 Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the December 8, 2011 minutes was made by Cathy Toth and seconded by Bob Cushman. Sherith Colverson requested a correction regarding her stated preference for a multi-sided pavilion design. The minutes reflected a preference for the hex design. The corrected minutes were approved by 6-0 vote.

Doug Colclasure commended the Board on how the power line discussion was reflected in the minutes.

Appearance and Citizen Comments

Mr. Colclasure asked whether the Board's recommendation had been forwarded to the Mayor or City Manager. He was told it had been forwarded to the City Manager and that the State had submitted additional comments to DOE regarding the 69kv power line.

Ellen Smith commented on her unsuccessful attempt to remove the construction of the power line from City Council's Legislative Agenda.

Committee Reports

Bike/Ped Committee- Sherith Colverson

Sherith Colverson reported on the activities of the Bike/Ped Working Committee and discussed the Committee's focus on proposed improvements at the Lafayette/Illinois Ave. intersection. After meeting with Steve Byrd, City Engineer, the group hopes to review preliminary designs for pedestrian improvements such as crosswalks and sidewalks. With the planned development of the commercial development along Illinois Ave., Sherith commented on the significance and timing of the improvements and felt the changes would make the intersection more bike friendly. Several Board members asked about more detail and specific items that would be included in the plan. Sherith suggested the Board may want to consider a work session to discuss specific elements of the plan. She discussed an upcoming meeting with the Traffic Safety Advisory Board regarding the proposed intersection improvements.

Sherith discussed the Committee's interest in researching cell phone use while driving and a possible role to encourage support for legislation banning cell phone use while driving. Chairman Palau acknowledged that this

may be a worthy item for consideration; but he also cautioned that taking on significant new agendas (especially ones whose regulatory jurisdiction may reside at the State level) could dilute the primary efforts on the Committee's agenda and encouraged them to focus on their primary mission. Cathy Toth mentioned the push by some states to move toward hands free and the difficult task to change the cell phone regulations.

Dog Park Committee- Bridgette Ellis

In Bridgette's absence, Chairman Palau briefed the Board on efforts thus far to organize a Dog Park Committee and start to work on the list of assigned deliverables. Bridgette plans to start with a small working group of 6-7 members and add additional members as needed. Due to the up and down history of the Dog Park effort, she hopes to "re-energize" the group and get everyone excited about the future. The Youth Advisory Board has appointed Ms. Ashley Parks as their YAB representative to work with the committee. The first committee meeting could take place in the next few weeks.

The Committee's first deliverable will be an updated benchmark of dog parks in other cities with policies/procedures and what worked and did not work, as well as benchmarking on annual operating cost ranges that consider scenarios with minimum-required maintenance to be safe and functional, up to ideal/perfect maintenance that keeps the park looking like new throughout its operating life..

Playful City USA- Allen Eubanks

Allen Eubanks reported on early efforts by the Recreation and Parks Department staff to conduct a needs assessment of the City owned playgrounds and park areas. He distributed a copy of the Playful City USA Goals and benefits (see attached). Allen will be working on mission, deliverables and a timeline for Board approval. Playful City USA has a goal of providing a playground within walking distance of every child. Allen questioned whether the City was including school playgrounds in the inventory. Since the City does not maintain school sites, there is a difference in maintenance levels between the schools and the City. Josh Collins mentioned the ongoing facility inventory and the focus on City owned playgrounds. Staff hopes to develop an inventory that will meet the requirements for Playful City as well as provide an on line guide for residents and visitors.

Cathy Toth suggested contacting Ms. Shirley Holt Hale as a possible committee member. Cathy also suggested looking at ways to coordinate new playground construction with housing development efforts.

Unfinished Business

February 4th retreat

Chairman Palau outlined a possible agenda for the February 4th Board Retreat. The retreat is scheduled from 9am to 1pm. The location has not been finalized. The first hour would include a detailed overview of the Recreation and Parks Department operation and facilities inventory. It can also give Board members an opportunity to ask the question "what I always wanted to know about the Recreation and Parks Department". The next two hours can be spent brainstorming the Board's Vision and its contribution to the City in 2012. Additional discussions would focus on the Board's Vision for the Recreation and Parks Department's facilities and operation over the next ten years and review budget implications associated with construction of new facilities. The Board could also look at other areas of interest for the Board. The final hour could be used

reaching consensus on ideas, plans and initiatives for the 2012 Work Plan. Although no vote was taken, there was general consensus that this agenda would provide a suitable outline for conducting the retreat work session.

New Business

Waterfront Plan Next Step

Josh Collins discussed the status of the Pavilion RFP and gave an overview of the process. He also discussed key features in the Board's Master Plan that included the pavilion, splash pad, new playground, expanded parking and the restroom/concession/change area. Although funding is in place for the pavilion, the balance of the plan is unfunded. Since the Board has included an alternative use for the space currently occupied by the New China Palace Restaurant in its plan, it may be time for the Board to make a formal recommendation to City Council regarding the City owned building. Mr. Collins briefly discussed the Capital Improvements Program and the current funding limits for City operations (\$700,000).

Ellen Smith encouraged the Board to take an active role in the CIP process and look at how the Recreation and Parks Department staff establishes priorities. She suggested Board participation in the selection of a new restaurant for the waterfront. Several Board members inquired about the process the City would use to select the restaurant.

In general discussion, the group noted that it would be a significant financial challenge for the City to fund all the recreation & parks ideas currently under consideration. Given that none of the significant capital investments like waterfront improvements beyond the pavilion (including expanded parking, bathrooms, embayment bridge, amphitheater, etc.), a dog park, rails-to-trails development of the CSX rail line, etc. are currently in the City CIP, and given that all these facilities will increase the city maintenance budget requirements, it will take convincing 'business case' arguments and broad citizen support to get Council approval to add these types of projects to future revisions of the CIP. This will make it important for the Board to understand and appreciate the balance of the City's capital investment planning in the entire CIP – not just the Rec & Parks portion of the CIP.

Bob Cushman discussed the idea of establishing a foundation to solicit funds for development of the waterfront and the successful effort of the Oak Ridge Educational Foundation in raising money for a new high school. Bob agreed to champion an effort to broadly consider and define feasibility and mechanics for a city recreation and parks foundation.

Director's Report

Josh Collins, Recreation and Parks Director, updated the Board on the delivery of the bike racks and the staff's efforts to prepare bid documents for installation of the concrete pads.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm.

PLAYFUL CITY USA

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, our children are playing less than any previous generation,

WHEREAS, lack of play is causing them profound physical, intellectual, social, and emotional harm,

WHEREAS, not enough play spaces are being built; those that exist are often in disrepair,

WHEREAS, fears surrounding lawsuits and safety are trumping common sense, resulting in sterile, uninspired play environments,

WHEREAS, recess is being eliminated from our nation's schools,

WHEREAS, kids are overscheduled, and in their free time, many choose to stay indoors, lulled by television, computers and video games.

THEREFORE, the City of Oak Ridge would like to identify and create a place to play within walking distance of every child in city.

What is this Playful City USA is an application-based national recognition program honoring cities and towns that make play a priority and use innovative programs to get children active, playing, and healthy. Playful City USA communities make a commitment to play and physical activity by developing unique local action plans to increase the access to play in their community. In doing so, some of the most innovative concepts and cost-effective programs are being developed in Playful City USA communities.

THE PROBLEM

The Play Deficit is an important problem, and it is imperative that we solve it to ensure our children have long, healthy, and happy lives. The decline of play is closely linked to.

- Childhood obesity
- Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity, anxiety disorders and depression
- Violence and other behavioral problems
- Stunted social, cognitive, and creative development
- Lack of green spaces in cities and suburbs
- Fragmented communities
- Failing schools

THE SOLUTION

We fight this troubling play deficit, and its many related problems, through three central strategies. Constructing innovative, kid-inspired play spaces, using a community-build model that improves the well-being of the children we serve as well as the neighborhoods in which they live.

- Sharing the knowledge and tools needed for anyone to find, improve, and/or build playgrounds on their own.
- Building a broad movement driven by research, analysis, policy, and community engagement.
- In saving play, we are creating:
 - Healthier, happier, and smarter children
 - Greener cities
 - Better schools
 - Stronger neighborhoods

Benefits of Being a Playful City USA Community

- Exclusive access to 103 Let's Play Grants worth \$2.1 million between 2011–13.
- Inclusion in national publications spotlighting your city's best practices in play.
- Street signs identifying your community's commitment to children.
- Customized marketing kit and online tools to celebrate the Playful City USA recognition.
- Access to free instructional trainings led by experts that feature replicable programs and policies.
- Connections to a network of city and municipal leaders.
- Competitive advantage for state and national grant opportunities.
- Inclusion in national advertising and public relations campaigns.
- Financial support to attend conferences focusing on play policies, city and state leadership, health, and urban planning.
- Recognition status embraced by realtors, visitor bureaus, developers, and investors to highlight your community as a great place to raise healthy and happy children.

Goal I: Complete a Needs Assessment

Strategy 1: Complete a needs assessment, and develop an action plan that identifies policies, programs, or initiatives aimed at increasing access to play at school, in neighborhoods, and through community engagement.

Timeline	Responsible Party(ies)	Project Cost/ Required Resources	Funding Sources	Evaluation Strategy
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map local playspaces (number, quality, and location of play spaces) • Identify play deserts • Evaluate existing play policies and initiatives in the community • Determine areas that could be strengthened • Determine what new programs can be developed to increase participation

Goal II: Create great play spaces through the participation and leadership of communities.

Strategy 1: Implement policies or programs

Timeline	Responsible Party(ies)	Project Cost/ Required Resources	Funding Sources	Evaluation Strategy
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to play at school, in neighborhoods, and through community engagement

Goal III: Grants...

Strategy 1:

Timeline	Responsible Party(ies)	Project Cost/ Required Resources	Funding Sources	Evaluation Strategy
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •