



SOUTH AREA PARKS AND RECREATION *Rodes Park Referendum Committee*

PUBLIC MEETING
January 23, 2006

A public meeting of the Brevard County Department of Parks and Recreation, Rodes Park Referendum Committee, was conducted on Monday, January 23, 2006, 7:00 p.m., at the Council Chambers of West Melbourne City Hall, 2285 Minton Road, West Melbourne.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Debra Thompson
Joe LaPointe
Ken Dyke
Al Genchi
Mallena Urban
Carol Burns
Keith Barton
Bart Denetto

MEMBERS ABSENT

Ted Whitlock
Steve McKibben

STAFF PRESENT

Jack Masson, Deputy Director, Parks and Recreation
Greg Minor, Construction Manager, Parks and Recreation
Marsha Cantrell, Parks Support Services Manager
Jeff Whitehead, South Area Parks Operations Manager
Jerry Gust, South Area Maintenance Superintendent
Fred Poppe, Park Supervisor II, Rodes Park
Lisa Nicholas, South Area Administrative Secretary

PUBLIC

Rob Medina
Barbara Meyer
Dick Thompson
Mark Ryan
John Wilt
Craig Kupec
Chet Wyndryck
Tom Smolar
Paul Wainikainen
Cyril Hopping
Jon Carey
Larry Prasse
Merlinda Andre
Martin Andre
Lauren Hopping
John Feronti
Tim Ford

Bill Palmer
Dave Dearing
Rick Vaupel
Chris Vaupel
Kathryn Carter
Savanna Bennett
Vincent Martinez
Fabio Tobor
Julie Straus
Pa Lilly
Mike Rottkamp
Mark Mannarino

MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Ms. Nicholas called the roll, and Ms. Thompson noted that a quorum was present and that the meeting would be conducted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Members were provided with a copy of the minutes from the January 11, 2006, meeting. After review, Mr. Barton made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes, and Ms. Urban seconded. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.** Ms. Thompson requested that, in the future, the minutes be provided to members in advance, and staff agreed.

STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Minor informed the Committee that the purpose of the meeting was to brainstorm with staff that was present from the architect and engineering firm of Post, Buckley, Schuh & Jernigan, Inc. (PBSJ) in order to devise a conceptual plan for Phase I of the new Rodes Park. Mr. Minor then introduced Mr. John Wilt and Mr. Craig Kupec from PBSJ.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Wilt of PBSJ presented a conceptual layout and future build-out of Phase I of the park and indicated that a feasibility study had been conducted based on aerial photos. Mr. Wilt referenced the conceptual plan and indicated that the areas in red were actual wetlands and that PBSJ had attempted to optimize the site in an effort to reduce permitting times. Mr. Wilt reiterated the importance of having the Committee and members of the public provide input on their priorities for Phase I of the new Rodes Park. Ms. Thompson reminded participants that they also needed to remain mindful of the original provisions set forth in the referendum. Mr. Minor introduced County officials Dick Thompson from the Traffic Engineering Department and Barbara Meyer from the Building Department's Transportation Planning Office.

Mr. Dyke asked whether any consideration had been given as to where the entrance or entrances would ultimately be, and Mr. Wilt responded that more thought would be given to those kinds of details in the future.

Ms. Cantrell noted that the Florida Communities Trust (FCT) grant required that sidewalks be installed within two years of the opening. Ms. Meyer indicated that sidewalks were needed on all sides (Fell, Flanagan and Colorado) for good access to the park but that challenges could present themselves on Fell and Flanagan and noted that Colorado had not yet been considered. There were some concerns about the width and providing a pedway that could accommodate bikes and enough room for two or more people to walk side by side.

Ms. Burns commended PBSJ for being mindful of the environment and inquired how far down Flanagan one would have to travel to get to the main entrance. Mr. LaPointe responded that it was 450 feet from the end of the road. Mr. LaPointe then asked Mr. Thompson if there would be a traffic light placed at Flanagan. Mr. Thompson responded that there would not be a light placed at that location because the minimum volume of traffic would not be met. Mr. Thompson also stated that would be one of the benefits of having the park entrance at Fell.

Ms. Thompson asked about Colorado, and it was noted that Colorado is not actually a road but an unpaved right-of-way. Mr. LaPointe added that St. John's has the right-of-way to put a road in and that it is plotted as a road. Ms. Cantrell remarked that any access to the north is designed to be pedestrian access. Mr. Whitehead suggested that the focus be on Fell and/or Flanagan with attention to the installation of sidewalks, per the language of the grant.

Mr. Thompson indicated that there is an 80-foot right-of-way on Flanagan and 20 feet of pavement on both Fell and Flanagan. Ms. Thompson noted that it would be important to find out if the new housing development was going to install sidewalks. Mr. LaPointe noted that the property would ultimately be annexed into the City of West Melbourne and asked whether the City required sidewalks to be installed in new developments. Mr. Ryan, West Melbourne City Manager, responded that the City did require sidewalks in new developments and indicated that Flanagan was not being improved because there is no access. Mr. Thompson noted that he would check with the Land Development Office on the sidewalk assessment agreement and follow up with the Committee.

A question was raised by a member of the public as to whether there was sufficient drainage on the north side of Flanagan, as that could determine where the entrance might be. Ms. Thompson stated that it was not decided where the sidewalk or the entrance is going to be located but that Mr. Thompson and Ms. Meyer could do some additional checking and follow up. Mr. LaPointe indicated that he felt it was important to address the issue prior to starting in the event both roads are inadequate, and Ms. Thompson responded that there was no other choice but to work with what is currently there and that it would just be necessary to assess the better of the two options.

Mr. Thompson stated that Traffic Engineering would make the recommendation that the roads be widened to 24 feet. The recommendation may not be approved but it would be requested. Mr. Dyke asked from where the funds would come if the road needed to be widened, and Mr. Whitehead replied that it would come from the referendum and the grant.

Mr. Masson reminded the Committee that the issue at hand was to recommend to the consultants what amenities were going to be put into the park so that the consultants could commence with their bubble diagram.

Mr. Genchi inquired into deadlines, such as critical points of time, and Ms. Cantrell responded that sidewalks had to be implemented within two years from the date of the agreement as a condition of the grant. Ms. Cantrell also noted that the conceptual plan was one of the exhibits contained in the grant application. Ms. Meyer asked if the community and residents would be supportive of a sidewalk on Flanagan, and Mr. LaPointe indicated that they would because it would save a lot of money. Mr.

Thompson asked where the best place for a sidewalk would be, and Ms. Thompson replied that the population is not only north and south of the park but that most of it is actually to the east and will have to cross the road. Ms. Meyer suggested concentrating on Flanagan and having the consultant go forward with that. Ms. Thompson reiterated that a sidewalk would be needed in two years, per the grant, and that another sidewalk could be added later.

Mr. Masson stated that the key would be to place elements as strategically as possible to avoid wetland areas, and Mr. LaPointe noted that PBSJ should inform the Committee of the best locations to place the elements so as not to interfere with those wetlands. Mr. Masson indicated that, if the Committee is comfortable with the current conceptual plan, PBSJ could go back and add parking areas and the additional wetland delineations. The revised conceptual plan would not look exactly like the current plan, and it would be important to denote what elements could be reduced or removed if everything does not fit.

Mr. Genchi noted that the soccer league donated 25 acres, which was used to help purchase the land for the new park site. Ms. Cantrell noted that the 25 acres of land donated was inaccessible.

A member of the public indicated that the soccer league was happy with the current six fields with lights and that it did not matter whether the fields were separate or together.

Mr. Dyke noted that part of the solution might be to go to the other open area in order to practice football and cheerleading, and that particular open area could also be used for temporary parking, which would not damage the actual fields. The open space could be striped-off for practice and utilized for parking on the weekends.

Mr. Wilt stated that there would be 120 parking spaces and that the intent for this phase is to incorporate two fields to get started and to redo the conceptual plan in order to fit everything in. Mr. Wilt noted that the wetlands could be utilized but that the permitting process is very lengthy, so that route was attempting to be avoided in the interest of time.

Ms. Thompson remarked that there are actually no football fields at the current Rodes Park; rather, they are baseball fields. Mr. Genchi stated that, while football is very deserving, soccer is also important and should not be pushed back too far in time. Mr. LaPointe noted that during previous meetings, the park was not being phased in. Mr. Dyke commended Mr. Genchi and his organization but noted that baseball and football have to fight for fields.

Because water cannot run into the wetlands, Mr. Wilt indicated that a new stormwater pond would have to be created, which would also produce a source of fill.

Mr. Denetto inquired as to whether there would be a basketball court, and staff responded that there would be one in the community center, along with four outdoor courts.

Mr. LaPointe asked whether the restroom building would contain a unisex, handicapped facility, and Mr. Masson responded in the affirmative, stating that there would be a men's room, ladies' room and "family" accommodations.

Participants from the soccer club indicated they had heard rumors that soccer would be losing fields and wanted to ensure that was not true. Ms. Thompson responded that it was indeed just a rumor and that is why the Sunshine Law is important and why the interest groups should keep attending the meetings.

Mr. Dyke requested that the bubble drawing provide representation for wrestling, stating that his was the only youth wrestling organization in south Brevard County and that it was growing at a rapid pace. Mr. Dyke further noted that the gymnasium is great but that it does not appear to contain a room large enough to run practices. A 50-foot by 100-foot room with two mats and some amenities would be ideal. Ms. Thompson asked if it would be feasible to perhaps consider another facility to house those activities.

Ms. Cantrell noted that, as a stipulation of the grant, the community center could not be more than 15,000 square feet because the conceptual plan had already been approved by FCT. Any deviation from the original conceptual plan would have to be approved by FCT, even if funds other than grant moneys were utilized. Because the intention of FCT is to preserve the environment and ensure that the lands are kept in as natural of a state as possible, FCT has control over the park for at least five years, and any changes must be reported to them. Mr. Dyke inquired as to just how unfavorable FCT might see a wrestling area, and Ms. Cantrell responded that the plan could be amended but it would have to be approved by FCT. Mr. Dyke asked whether the process was lengthy, and Ms. Cantrell noted that it was her first experience with an FCT grant.

A member of the public asked if there would be potential scheduling conflicts at the community center, and Mr. Whitehead assured the Committee and participants that his recreation staff was capable and experienced and was very familiar with coordinating scheduling. Mr. Whitehead further noted that a good job is already being done at South Mainland Community Center in Micco.

With regard to the concession stands, Ms. Thompson noted that, currently, the equipment is owned by the Greater West Melbourne Athletic Association (GWMAA) and asked whether that would remain the case in the new park. Staff responded affirmatively. Mr. Masson indicated that there would be separate concession stands – one for football and soccer, and one for baseball. Mr. Dyke remarked that, in addition to registration, money from concessions is the number-one item that generates revenue for athletic organizations. If the concessions are good, then registration fees do not have to be as expensive. Mr. Dyke suggested having a concession area in the gym so that participants do not have to leave the area and miss the action. This would help the organizations to raise money and assist with keeping registration costs lower.

A member of the public inquired as to whether there would be an opportunity to have more than one lighted field, and Ms. Thompson indicated that it would depend on the amount of funds available. Mr. Whitehead reiterated the importance of focusing on green space rather than particular types of fields. Ms. Thompson and Mr. Denetto noted that the basketball courts were not lit by the County but that funds were raised in order to have the courts lighted.

A member of the public asked whether the County would purchase lightning detection systems, and Ms. Thompson replied that it is up to each league to purchase equipment and have someone designated to operate it. Mr. Genchi noted that, at many parks throughout the state, the respective County purchases the detection equipment and sets the criteria.

Mr. Barton noted that the football and baseball leagues have no place to store their equipment, and Mr. Whitehead asked whether potentially including a storage shed would require approval from FCT. Ms. Cantrell responded that, technically, it would require such approval. A member of the public noted that Palm Bay Regional Park has fenced, locked areas for soccer. Mr. Denetto asked if the Sheriff's Department would be involved, and Mr. LaPointe indicated that a caretaker for the park had been discussed.

Mr. Wilt stated that he and his colleagues from PBSJ had very good notes and should be able to bring some sound ideas to the next meeting.

Mr. LaPointe inquired about utilities. Mr. Wilt indicated that, for construction of Phase I, a well would need to be drilled and a septic system installed. The water would need to be potable. Mr. Denetto asked if existing utilities could be tapped into, and Mr. Wilt replied that perhaps, eventually, that could be done but not for Phase I. Mr. LaPointe asked why the County was not communicating with the City of West Melbourne, and Ms. Cantrell responded that the County is looking at the issue but is not quite there yet. Ms. Thompson questioned whether it would be better to spend more money now to tap into services rather than have a water and septic system that will become obsolete in five years. Ms. Thompson noted that it would more than likely be the end of May until the conceptual plan could be finalized because of acquiring outparcels and so forth.

PUBLIC INPUT

It was mentioned that perhaps PBSJ could provide a couple of different options for the entrance to the park.

Mr. Ryan from the City of West Melbourne noted that Mr. Jack Masson, Deputy Director, Brevard County Parks and Recreation, was retiring at the end of the month and that all of Brevard County owed him a big thanks.

ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no further business, Ms. Thompson called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Barton made a **MOTION** to adjourn, and Ms. Burns seconded. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.** Ms. Thompson adjourned the meeting of the Rodes Park Referendum Committee at 9:18 p.m. and noted that the next meeting would be held on Monday, February 27, 2006, 7:00 p.m., at the Council Chambers of West Melbourne City Hall.