

HG PARK

MINUTES OF JOINT WORK SESSION WITH HIGHLAND CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Tuesday, February 10, 2004

PRESENT:

City Council:

Jess Adamson, Mayor
Gwyn Franson
Steve King
Kathryn Schramm

Planning Commission:

Steven P. Draper, Chairman
Michael Walch
Larry M. Mendenhall
Brian W. Braithwaite
Jennifer Tucker

Park Committee:

Trixie Walker
Jan Dowling

Staff:

Barry Edwards, City Administrator
Lonnie Crowell, Assistant Director of Planning & Zoning
Wini Jensen, City Recorder

OTHERS PRESENT: Patti Alexander, Elaine Roundy, Chris Dalley

EXCUSED:

Brian Brunson
Glen Vawdrey
Bryce Flanary

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Jess Adamson at 6:15 p.m. Mayor Adamson discussed the City Council's desire to bring the Planning Commission in on the planning for the Highland Glen Park. He asked the Park Committee Chairman, Trixie Walker, to give an introduction.

Trixie Walker explained the committee began meeting last year and studied the history of the park. The park began in 1975 by the Developmental Center in American Fork and was developed for the express purpose for people to horseback, walk, and ride bikes away from traffic. In 1980, the Developmental Center leased the park to Utah County because they couldn't afford the upkeep, and the County ran it for a few years. In 1996, Highland City leased the Park and purchased it in 1998. In 2000, Blake McCutchan was hired to do a survey to see what people wanted, and they came up with maps A, B, and C. Studies found people wanted natural areas, restrooms, trails, and picnic areas at the Highland Glen Park. The Committee looked at how to fund and protect the park and it found vandalism and a lack of funding were problems. It was felt it is important to increase usage by putting up signs directing traffic to the park, along with signs with phone numbers to report vandalism, as well as provide security lights. The Committee discussed ways to gain financing for the park and has become aware of someone who is interested in funding trees for the park. It was felt it is important to develop the park in stages and maintain it with funding available. Roads are a big issue in the park and the committee recommended separating the trails from the road. The new entrance needs to be landscaped. Trixie reviewed the park map which was designated in four areas. Mayor Adamson explained area 3 was purchased separate from the park and it isn't part of the park master plan.

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Area 1 - Central area around the lake. The Committee recommends more landscaping, trees, and shade. It wants a plaque on the pavilion. The area includes the new playground. People want more playground equipment and some for younger children. The Committee looked at whether to have a road to the pavilion; they chose against it and felt it was better to limit vehicle access and recommended providing other pavilions adjacent to parking lots. The west access currently goes to a parking lot at Mystic Cove, and the Committee recommended bringing it to the east side.

Area 2 - Mystic Cove area. This area needs to be cleaned up and have native grass, walking trails, and picnic tables. The Committee looked at this as an informal area for sports and picnic areas and wants to see vegetation screen the park from the neighbors. There could be a bridge to cross the river bed.

Area 3 - North end. This area isn't part of the master plan and it was envisioned to provide soccer and baseball fields for this area, along with parking lots and restrooms. The Committee discussed opening the road, but ruled against it as it would destroy the integrity of the trail and didn't feel there was that much of a benefit.

Area 4 - South end. This is the site of the original access road and it has been left natural. The Committee recommended cleaning it up and opening a couple of meadows in the middle and an area for park maintenance.

Trixie Walker explained the difference between plans D and E is that Plan E shows more parking lots.

Kathryn Schramm inquired about an amphitheater. Trixie indicated the Committee discussed an amphitheater in an area where there is a natural 30' drop-off, along with a concrete pad which would be low maintenance and a parking lot. She noted the area would also be good for sleigh riding. The Committee didn't recommend skating for liability reasons.

Barry Edwards explained Jeff Appel is representing Highland City on the 6F issues and is meeting with the National Park Service as they control the master plan for this entire area. He is telling them Highland City is putting together a master plan, and they will determine what can be done. He indicated the environmental work will cost \$200,000 to connect up the road. Mayor Adamson noted the environmental impact study is mandated.

Steven King discussed the proposal for an east/west road and felt the proposal within the park is the achievable place to have it with the least expense.

Trixie Walker didn't like the idea of a road, but knew the plan needed to take a road into account for the betterment of the entire community. For this reason the Committee recommended developing facilities north to minimize the need to cross the road, as well as provide trails. Currently the road curves into the park and the plan suggests a right-hand turn into the park, and if the proposed east/west corridor goes in north of the golf course it could connect into the park, as well.

Mayor Adamson felt the best way to define a park is for a trail around the perimeter. Trixie Walker indicated the Committee had recommended a similar proposal. Barry Edwards reported he had noticed almost every residence that borders the park has trash dumped next to the fence on the park side, and he recommended at the fence line a trail go around the entire park so people are less likely to throw trash into the park. He also recommended some pedestrian bridges be installed.

Larry Mendenhall noted on Concept C the northeast entrance is closed and he didn't feel it makes sense to have folks drive the perimeter to a parking lot in opposed to opening 2000 feet of road to accommodate parking for soccer fields. Trixie Williams indicated by not opening the road the City creates two parks. Barry Edwards further explained if the City decides to use the other parcel as a park it could be addressed separately, but because

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of the 6F requirements the other parcel the City owns adjacent the park can't be considered right now, and can only be talked about after the whole thing is done. He later explained after the master plan is approved, the City will need to obtain approval from the National Parks and Utah State Department of Construction Facilities Management, and go through the 6F process.

Barry indicated there is \$1 million in impact fees identified for this park. The City generates \$3/4 million a year in impact fees. There are a lot of parks which need to be done, and looking at \$750,000 will generate 10 acres of improvements on an annual basis which would be one park a year (probably one every other year with park acquisition). The City would be looking at 5-12 years to do all the improvements in the Highland Glen Park. Barry indicated trails run about \$10 per foot to build, but a longer trail section would be down to \$8 per foot. Trails need to be part of the 6F project. He indicated he had obtained aerials of the park property going back to 1966 and the only map with improvements was in 1980 when they paved the road and parking lot.

Mayor Adamson requested the Planning Commission take the maps and walk off the park. He noted the Master Plan Committee feel less development is the best alternative, and explained of the 80 acres there are about 24 acres which have been developed.

Brian Braithwaite inquired if the park has been left more natural than planned. Trixie Williams referred to a survey conducted in 2000 wherein residents were asked for input on desired usage of the park. She noted the park has a lot of dead wood, wild life which lives in the park, and the dead wood needs to be taken out systematically and drought resistant trees planted and bring the usage back. Before 1980 the park was heavily used, but after it was closed the usage hasn't gone up. She didn't feel the City wants parking lots and pavilions everywhere because many people come to the park for an urban wilderness experience. Brian Braithwaite commented he has been in the park, and he would rather be in Central Park in New York at night than this park at night as it is scary.

Steve Draper inquired of the Mayor where he wants the Planning Commission to go with the park plan. Mayor Adamson explained the City needs to come up with a master plan, in order to bring it forth for approval and improvements. Steve Draper applauded everyone who has served the City for this park. He noted the Planning Commission would like to have input. Mayor Adamson recommended the Planning Commission work with staff and recommend proposals to the City Council with public hearing and adoption.

The work session adjourned at 7:00 p.m.