VESTAVIA HILLS COMMUNITY SPACES PLAN

MINUTES

**SUBCOMMITTEE: ALTADENA VALLEY PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT**

MEETING #1 – Wednesday, June 21, 2017, 7:30am

Vestavia Hills City Hall, Executive Conference Room

Present:

* Jeff Downes, City Manager, City of Vestavia Hills
* Marvin Green, Interim Fire Chief, City of Vestavia Hills, Altadena Valley resident
* Beth Stewart, Cahaba River Society
* Brian Davis, Director, Public Works, City of Vestavia Hills
* Raynor Boles, TCU Consulting
* Ken Upchurch, TCU Consulting
* Tommy Dazzio, Sub-Committee Chair
* Betty Shivers, Altadena Valley resident, representing Altadena Lake Corporation
* Brooks Harris, Harris Doyle Homes
* Joanie Alfano, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor, City of Vestavia Hills

*Meeting #1 of the Altadena Valley Development Subcommittee was held at Vestavia City Hall in the Executive Conference Room. The meeting began at 7:30am and was led by Tommy Dazzio. Dazzio stated the purpose of this first organizational meeting would be for committee members to identify for TCU their issues and concern for the proposed project, the absolutes that residents have expressed, as well as their ideas for what the project should or should not include. Clarification regarding the preliminary concept plan was made since that concept was developed in 2015 prior to the acquisition of Berry School and its fields as well as the opening of more fields at Liberty Park.*

CONCERNS REGARDING PLAYING FIELDS:

* Flooding: If proposed 6 playing fields are developed, concern about the frequency of flooding and the damage to fields and the resulting long term costs of repair. Potential fields would be practice fields and not competitive.
* Parking: The size of the parking area that would be associated with playing fields is of concern as well as the type of materials used for parking.
* Lighting, noise, privacy: Residents are concerned about the proposed parking area behind homes, lighting - especially for late night games, traffic to fields, fan noise and respecting privacy of the homeowners. Discussion about how these fields are not intended for tournament use or competitive teams would make it possible to establish starting times and “lights out” times. More information regarding need for playing fields is needed prior to next meeting. If proposed fields are not developed, then concerns regarding parking/lighting would be eliminated.
* Need for larger setback of fields from river.

CONCERNS REGARDING INCREASED TRAFFIC, TRAFFIC FROM ACTON ROAD AND WESTERN ENTRANCE:

* Residents’ biggest concerns involve the increased traffic flowing into the neighborhood due to proposed fields. Currently, Altadena Valley is a closed neighborhood and residents do not want to have spillway road reopened or have the entrance to the parking come off of Altadena Lake Road. The need for a traffic light for turning out of neighborhood onto Acton Road also needs to be addressed. Should fields not be developed, this would alter need for Western entrance and large parking. Concern regarding parking on streets was also expressed. Proposed parking could be a smaller, gravel area with limited spots and an entrance gate that would close at dark. Gravel parking with limited ADA paved spaces would be acceptable.
* Western Entrance – The City has purchased property for proposed Western Entrance, had EDG complete construction drawings and drafted an agreement (not signed). Currently the City doesn’t own all the property needed and needs to evaluate the cost of construction of entrance and whether it needs to be a part of the CSP budget for the City Council to consider.

CONCERNS REGARDING IMPACT ON CAHABA RIVER:

* Discussion regarding the current drainage channel and the possibility of creating a bioswale with beautiful landscaping which would assist with storm water handling and infiltration and help protect the river. This would also provide a buffer between proposed parking and houses. Questions regarding the easement will need to be addressed. Concerns regarding head walls were expressed and the suggestion was made that the City may want to consider mirror easements and the use of low impact features which can become an enhancement.

CONCERNS – MISCELLANEOUS:

* Prioritizing needs vs dollars. If built in stages, do more passive amenities first. Residents feel it is more important to have some development rather than see nothing happen.
* Keeping the larger grass areas mowed – currently tall weeds and large ant beds.
* Privacy for gated community be maintained – new residents want to see park developed but have concerns about safety and privacy.
* Staying conscientious about environmental impact. Expanding buffer to river. Inviting citizens to take part in river bank restoration projects. Creating natural amenities.

Recognizing that the Altadena Park would be more than just a neighborhood park but also an asset to all of Vestavia Hills led to discussion of additional needs and how to benefit residents. Additional items to consider would include walking paths, restroom facilities, a playground, a pavilion/gazebo, improving small lake/stocking for fishing, linking cart paths to walking trails, the possibility of connecting VH to Hoover East fields through a canoe launch and river walk connection/simple trails, incorporating Cahaba Blue Way Concept (which can increase recreational economy), including a dog park, possibility of disc golf site.

It was noted that one area that is non-negotiable is the row of specimen pines that are not to be touched or put at risk.

Committee members were asked to encourage residents and members of their groups to attend the open discussions and voice their thoughts and ideas. Dates for future meetings which will be held in the Executive Conference Room were set for Tuesday, July 11 at 7:00pm and Wednesday, July 26 at 5:30pm. The meeting adjourned at 9:05am.

VESTAVIA HILLS COMMUNITY SPACES PLAN

MINUTES

**SUBCOMITTEE: CAHABA HEIGHTS IMPROVEMENTS**

MEETING #1: THURSDAY 22ND JUNE 2017, 5:30 pm

VESTAVIA HILLS CITY HALL, EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM

PRESENT:

1. Andy Bernard, TCU consulting
2. Raynor Boles, TCU Consulting
3. Brian Davis (via conference call), Public Services Director, City of Vestavia Hills
4. Anne Smyth
5. Katherine Gorham
6. Melanie Perry
7. Mark Smith

Principle goals of discussion:

* Review design work to date
* Discuss possibilities/limitations of Miracle Field at Cahaba Heights Ballfields
* Discussion of inclusive playground needs
* Discussion of New Merkel House
* Overall property possibilities with parking, flow and school coordination

*Meeting #1 of Cahaba Heights – Ball field improvements complex was held on the 22ndJune 2017. The meeting began at 5:30 PM at the Executive conference room of the city hall of the city of Vestavia Hills. The meeting was led by Mark Smith of the Cahaba Heights Ballfield Improvements Subcommittee and Andy Bernard of TCU consulting*.

GOAL – MEETING #1

Andy addressed the subcommittee that meeting #1 was focused more towards gathering more information and key points from the subcommittee and to get valuable inputs for the project. He also stated that the meeting is focused more towards prioritizing the needs for the project and it is an information based meeting and to discuss the pros and cons as well.

* Andy stated that Meeting #2 will be of more discussion involved and also a public meeting and Meeting# 3 will be a debate based meeting and the debate would be useful to allocate resources and prioritizing needs.

The remaining attendants introduced themselves and the reason they attended the meeting.

REVIEW DESIGN WORK TO DATE

The subcommittee had very little input into the direction of the engineering rendering produced. They were able to review after published and admit that this render is very positive and will have a very positive impact on the current set up and operation of the park.

DISCUSS POSSIBILITIES/LIMITATIONS OF MIRACLE FIELD AT CAHABA HEIGHTS BALLFIELDS

There is concern that Cahaba Heights would not be the ideal location for a Miracle Field. In the current design, there is not sufficient adjacent parking, inclusive playground, or overall exposure for the Miracle Field to the general community. The subcommittee felt that the Miracle Field would gain better exposure at a Wald Park or a Liberty Park setting.

* There was discussion surrounding the possibility of the north lower gravel lot becoming the location of the Miracle Field. This is a newer lot that was created by the removal of the house on that property and a necessity due to the new gymnasium on the school campus. Locating the Miracle Field here would create the possibility of the City of VH considering purchasing land from the VH BOE. This location would gain adjacent parking, prominent exposure and no less adjacency to the inclusive playgrounds. One drawback would be the distance to adjacent restrooms.

Those in the meeting recognized that the Miracle Field in Hoover is call the Over the Mountain Miracle Field. Those in the meeting would prefer that the Miracle Field in VH be called the Vestavia Hills Miracle Field.

In Vestavia, there are 4 Miracle teams with approximately 15-20 players per team.

If the Miracle Field was not located on the southeast corner of the CH Ballfields, the field would remain a t-ball field for 4,5,6 year-olds.

The group would like to see the green space planned for the park to be as large as possible and as premier as possible to allow for the community to enjoy it in the same way that Wald Park Green Space is planned.

DISCUSSION OF INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND NEEDS

The group agreed that the inclusive playground should be a premier, top-notch space. The space should be large, adjacent to parking, and restrooms. There should be shade structures, and the ability for adults to sit nearby.

It was recognized that the Castle Park at Wald was considered “inclusive” at its delivery. The definition of “inclusive” has matured through the years.

A question was asked if the new playground of Wald Park would be inclusive.

DISCUSSION OF NEW MERKEL HOUSE

* Melanie Perry provided documentation of the programs and needs of the New Merkel House, a senior community gathering facility utilizing a residential home on the west side of the Cahaba Heights property. Ms. Perry operates the facility herself with the help of the community Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:00pm.
* The senior programs operate 10:00am-2:00pm.
* The facility is a 2-story walk-out basement building with large meeting space for about 72 people downstairs, restrooms downstairs, 25 people upstairs, restrooms upstairs, a screened porch, 22 parking spaces, and a residential kitchen. There is no elevator onsite. There is little room in the facility to any growth of programs. The facility has an outdoor garden space.
* The facility is routinely used as a community meeting space for clubs and is rented for events. Ms. Perry explained that this location is key to the seniors it serves.
* The elderly nutritional program brings food services from offsite for the NMH. Meals on Wheels is served by the outdoor garden.
* There is currently no community transit system that serves the NMH. Classtran charges $8 for the current transit service.
* The school uses the parking spaces for their large events. Daily carpool drop off and pickup blocks the NMH parking lot access.
* The adjacent home may become available by the neighbor which could be acquired by the City of VH for little or no cost. This would allow for expansion of programs and parking.
* The building is in need of cosmetic repairs:
  + Interior and exterior painting
  + Drop off canopy
  + Rotten wood repair
* Ms. Perry would like to see improvements in the future that include:
  + lockable storage
  + possibly enclose the screened porch to gain additional meeting space
  + Commercial kitchen
  + Additional parking with better access

OVERALL PROPERTY POSSIBILITIES WITH PARKING, FLOW AND SCHOOL COORDINATION

* All ball fields at CH can become 160’ instead of the current 180’ due to being machine-pitch fields.
* The group asked for further investigation into the foul smell that occasionally exists at the CH School and Ballfields. The source has eluded prior investigations and may be coming from many locations. One possibility is the slope area near the east side of the school.

Mark, Andy, and Raynor confirmed the date and time of meeting #2 as July 13th 5:30pm and Meeting #3 August 1st 5:30pm. Based on everyone’s convenience and the meeting adjourned around 8:15 pm.

VESTAVIA HILLS COMMUNITY SPACES PLAN

MINUTES

**SUBCOMMITTEE: GOLD’S GYM FACILITY**

MEETING #1 – Friday, June 20, 2017, 10:00am

Vestavia Hills City Hall, Council Chambers

Present:

* Raynor Boles, TCU Consulting
* Kevin Overton, TCU Consulting
* Anne Smyth, Sub-Committee Chair
* Jason Burnett, Parks and Recreation Superintendent, City of Vestavia Hills
* Katie Woodruff, Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce
* Karen Odle, President, Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce
* Cinnamon McCulley, Communications Manager, City of Vestavia Hills
* Julie Harper, Senior Program Coordinator, City of Vestavia Hills Parks and Recreation
* Joanie Alfano, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor, City of Vestavia Hills
* Also present: Mayor Ashley Curry, Jeffrey Downes and Brian Davis

*Meeting #1 of the Gold’s Gym Facility – Acquisition and Renovation Sub Committee was held at Vestavia City Hall in the Council Chambers. The meeting began at 10:10am and was led by Anne Smyth. Smyth discussed the purpose of the meeting would be for committee members to explain to TCU representatives about current programming/scheduling, limitations of their existing spaces and identify needs for their programs. Smyth asked the committee to also consider potential outside usage of Gold’s Gym (GG) for rental use in light of Cahaba Grand Conference Center closing and looking at what neighboring cities are doing. Rental space could become a prime component of the facility plan.*

CURRENT PROGRAMMING

* Cinnamon McCulley stated that the VH Library uses a master programming calendar for scheduling of the Library’s spaces. The Library’s meeting rooms include the Community Room (the largest meeting area), the Tree House, the Historical Room and four Study Rooms. There is also an outside area for use. McCulley stated that Library hosts over 600 programs and that their programs have first priority. However, the Library is also used by many outside groups. McCulley added that some of the programs would benefit from having access to the proposed facilities at GG because of the extra parking, access to building and additional meeting areas. The Library has had an increase in requests for use due to groups being displaced at the Board of Education. Karen Odle added that VH is probably losing groups to other venues due to lack of available space at the Chamber and the Library. She added that Vestavia Hills based groups want to keep their events in the community and she felt that if space was available for groups to use, the community would support it.
* Julie Harper with Vestavia Hills Senior Services explained that senior programs currently use space at the Lodge, Civic Center, and New Merkle House. Harper stated that attendees for seniors programs come from all sections of Vestavia, but there have been limitations to offerings based on space. Because many of the senior events involve a lunch or refreshment, it would be important that facilities at GG accommodate catering. Regarding if there was a dedicated Senior Center space at GG, would that attract or detract from attendance was discussed. Historically, there has been a segmentation of seniors in VH that only attend events near them (in Cahaba Heights or near Wald Park). The ideal would be for seniors to blend together at events held at GG. For example, other cities like Hoover and Homewood have a dedicated site for senior activities/senior center. Harper added that if a robust program is offered, that seniors will attend. She added that senior programs need space, AV equipment, storage, and a space for bridge where the table and chairs could stay set up (approximately 6 tables/24 chairs). Harper added that her overall feeling is seniors would embrace a dedicated senior center especially if well thought out and if they had a voice in it.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

* Karen Odle discussed the needs of the Chamber. The current offices are approximately 1,600 sq. feet and house 3 full time employees and a consultant with a conference room, copy room, kitchen and storage area. She said that the Chamber conference room is used by members and non-profit organizations and as an off-site training location for businesses. Currently, space limits attendance to classes and they have to go off site for larger groups. Currently, lack of parking and the fact that there are so many entrances to the building have become a problem. Future needs of the Chamber include state of the art equipment and increased storage space. Odle added that for events where weather can become a factor, it would be nice to have an indoor space option at GG facility. Also, the ability to accommodate large events for VH based programs (Prom, West School Auction) would be a plus so as to not lose these events to other venues.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

* Jason Burnett stated that currently the Parks and Recreation Department staff includes himself (Superintendent), 3 front office administrative staff (one full time and 2 part time), Recreation leader, Senior Activities Coordinator, and a janitor. Burnett added that based on what Recreation programs would be offered at GG, would determine whether a dedicated staff member would be needed there. If GG becomes a dedicated senior center, then he would like to have space for staff/personnel there.

FUTURE USE

* Additional discussion regarding how to repurpose GG for needs included whether the pool at GG is needed, could the current courts at GG be repurposed, would hard woods be possible for Senior dances, would a walking track be feasible, and what are the needs that future programs may have as well as how can this space become a revenue generator, and how could the GG space be incorporated into children’s camps along with WP facility.
* In regards to addressing future program needs while completing the CSP, it was stated that Sports Facility Advisors have been hired to work with TCU to assist with space planning and revenue generating programs.

Smyth and TCU representatives asked for committee members to encourage attendance from their respective groups to attend the open community meetings. They were also asked to review and prioritize their needs and wants and if possible to attend a walk-through of GG to view the facility. TCU asked for any additional data and information regarding scheduling and usage that each department can provide. Dates for future sub-committee meetings were set for July 11 at 5:30pm and July 27 at 7:00pm. Both meetings will be held at City Hall. The meeting adjourned at 11:35am.

VESTAVIA HILLS COMMUNITY SPACES PLAN

MINUTES OF MEETING #1

**SUBCOMITTEE: LIBERTY PARK - SICARD HOLLOW ATHLETIC COMPLEX**

DATE &TIME: 15TH JUNE 2017, 5:30 pm

LOCATION: VESTAVIA HILLS CITY HALL, EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM

PRESENT:

* Rachel Harwell
* Kirk McCulley
* Ken Upchurch
* Brian Davis
* Kevin Overton
* Rocky Harmon
* Lyles Box
* Jeffrey James, Intern, Auburn University

*Meeting #1 of Liberty Park -Sicard Hollow Athletic Complex was held on the 15th June 2017 at 5:30 PM at the Executive Conference Room of the Vestavia Hills City Hall. The meeting was held by Ken Upchurch of TCU consulting. Ken addressed the committee that meeting #1 was focused more towards gathering more information and key points from the subcommittee and to get valuable inputs for the project. He also stated that the meeting is focused more towards prioritizing the needs for the project and it is an information based meeting. Ken stated that Meeting #2 will have input from the public and likely the council would also be present. He also stated that there would be more time allotted between the second and the third meeting and Meeting# 3 will be a debatable and discussion based meeting.*

The above-mentioned members of the subcommittee were present and Ken addresses the meeting asking a question to everyone present to state their importance in being part of the meeting of this Liberty park SHAC project.

Ken handed over blank cards to everyone and asked them to write about their needs, if anything needs attention in the park, if anything was missing and controversies that would need immediate attention before the start of the project. He also addressed all members to write down all that they would need for the park.

Rachel put forth her views about the way of approach towards the Liberty Park. The committee discussed the way of approach for Liberty Park from the highway. Brian took part in this discussion and gave his views and comments on the approach way towards Liberty Park. Brian also discussed the position of press boxes.

The dimensions of the field were discussed.

The drainage system of the field was discussed. Rocky said that the current drainage conditions were good.

Kirk said batting cages for softball and baseball could be built in fields 5 through 9 with 2/3rd of it and 10 could be built. The committee discussed what material could be used to build the cages.

The committee discussed what staff would be required to manage the field, as discussed.

The committee discussed improvements and repairs to the PA system and parking.

The committee discussed the possibility of shortening the field and the addition of a picnic area for two fields to use together.

The committee discussed fencing.

Kirk proposed potential expansion of fields 7,8 and 9 by moving the fences back and including a field. Brian gives out his views by answering his questions but no strict decisions were made.

The committee decided meeting #2 will be held July 18th (5:30 PM) and Meeting #3 will be held July 31 (6PM).

The meeting concluded at 6:20 PM.

VESTAVIA HILLS COMMUNITY SPACES PLAN

MINUTES

**SUBCOMMITTEE: WALD PARK – MULTI-USE SUB COMMITTEE**

MEETING #1 – Friday, June 16, 2017, 8:00 AM

Vestavia Hills City Hall, Executive Conference Room

Present:

* Tommy Coggin, Sub-Committee Chair
* Jason Burnett, Parks and Recreation Superintendent, City of Vestavia Hills
* Mandy Burgess, Varsity Volleyball Coach, Vestavia Hills High School
* Patrick Davis, Varsity Boys Basketball Coach, Vestavia Hills High School
* Patrick Osborne, resident, City of Vestavia Hills
* Andy Bernard, Program Director, TCU Consulting
* Ken Upchurch, Principal in Charge, TCU Consulting
* Via conference call: Brian Davis, Public Services Director, City of Vestavia Hills
* Joanie Alfano, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor, City of Vestavia Hills

*Meeting #1 of the Wald Park Multi-Use Facility Sub Committee (WP-Multi-Use) was held at Vestavia Hills City Hall in the Executive Conference Room. The meeting began at 8:00AM and was led by Tommy Coggin. Coggin welcomed members present and added that Wade Kaiser, President of the Boys Basketball Youth Program is also a member of the committee but not present. Coggin gave committee members a packet of background information regarding WP and explained the purpose of meeting was to identify the goals and uses for WP-Multi-Use facility and the challenges it currently has. Coggin asked that committee members think about all scenarios and think big because it can be scaled back as space and funding dictates. Ken Upchurch asked for committee members to express all views – the good, bad and ugly so that the committee can address both positive and negative views associated with WP. Andy Bernard asked the committee to think about more than just the layout of the facility and to consider current and future needs.*

Coggin reviewed that Wald Park – Multi-Use facility will house non-sports programming currently housed at the Civic Center and Senior Lodge along with current and new gymnasium programming. Additional programming would include volleyball and other shared court sports. The Community Spaces planning committee has proposed three options to date, but the committee was asked to not be limited by what is proposed and to offer their ideas and suggestions.

COGGIN REVIEWED THE GOALS FOR THE COMMITTEE:

* Identify which building size of the 3 recommended sizes is the best fit for the programming to be provided.
* Work with Gold’s Gym (GG) sub-committee to determine the amount of shared meeting space needed at WP-Multi-Use facility in order to eliminate running a facility for just one meeting.
* Expand VH City youth court sports to offer volleyball. Decide if court sports for adult leagues/recreation programming is possible.
* Work with the WP Pool sub-committee to best handle the pool entrance, pool locker room and whether it should be shared or not.
* Decide on youth basketball programming needs of the facility and if what is proposed is too small or too large.
* Verify rough construction budget and operations budget.
* Try to verify if hour usage shortage of 1,774 can be decreased or eliminated.
* Determine if game room is needed in new facility.
* Determine if a playground is needed at the Multi-Use facility.
* Determine the concession stand needs at facility.
* Determine if Administrative offices are needed at the WP facility or will these be relocated to GG or is there a need for offices at both facilities.
* Determine if a fitness room is needed at WP.
* Determine flooring needs – wood floors vs. rubber.
* Discuss the types of youth camps the facility could attract and accommodate.
* Determine if the facility will be revenue generating or mainly a community only use facility.

COGGIN REVIEWED THE CHALLENGES OF THE PROJECT:

* Determining the space and size of courts and the location of the site.
* Working with the pool sub-committee for safety and functionality.

COGGIN ASKED FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS INPUT:

* Camps/Revenue and Community Use
  + Mandy Burgess stated that she would like to see the facility accommodate community camps but still allow residents/regular members to come and use the facility. Burgess expressed that the ability to have camps is another opportunity to build community involvement.
  + Brian Davis added that he would like to see the facility have the ability to host camps and generate revenue.
  + Coggin asked if a goal for the facility would be similar to what Hoover offers with their Multi Sport Camps where residents can enroll their child for a week and the camp offers basketball, swimming and other activities. Jason Burnett added that currently camps are offered weekly by instructors but not for the entire summer (chess camp, art camp, dance camp).
  + Upchurch asked the committee to consider what the community needs are versus the revenue components and to identify what the facility shortages are and how that can be improved.
  + Burgess added that the WP facility is extremely dated and that VH is losing out on amazing opportunities to generate interest in multiple sports; to have the city rec center be a community recreational facility with the ability to have multiple uses. She said she would like to see the facility be large enough to attract large tournaments. Burnett said that currently the city and the board of education work together regarding use of facilities and gyms and it would be good to have youth programs and multi-use facility work together.
* Distance
  + In regards to proximity, TCU asked how important is it for parents to be able to park, drop a child off at WP and go to GG without having to move vehicle. Does the current distance between facilities need to be addressed?
  + Patrick Osborne stated that residents do look at facilities in other cities (Trussville for example) and feels that residents would want a large, “one-stop” facility.
* Prioritize Broad Scope vs Focused Upgrade
  + Upchurch asked the committee to consider that the broad list of projects being proposed versus the money available and decide if the money be spread over all the areas so that everyone gets a little of what they want versus consolidating the projects and resources and some may not get anything. Burgess said that because VH is landlocked she felt that making the facility the best we can is important. Osborne added that residents will complain about distance to Liberty Park. Davis added that convenience factor comes into play when people complain about drive time, but if facility is top notch, then the drive time is just what it is.
  + Upchurch asked the committee their thoughts regarding priority of WP multi use facility in the whole plan. Burnett said the current facilities are outdated and that he felt that the concentration of funds does need to be for multi-use facility and pool upgrades. Coggin added that he felt this is the one area that needs to be done and would be a priority for where funds should be spent.
  + Upchurch stated that the City Council wants the community’s input regarding the plan. He challenged committee members to contact and encourage residents to attend the open meetings. TCU wants to facilitate conversations with the community and determine needs and then the committees will prioritize projects.
  + Coggins asked for the committee to review the information packet and come back with a list of priorities and needs. The next meeting will be a time for debate/discussion with the public to determine their thoughts. There will be a third meeting that the public can attend to debate and decisions will be made about the direction of the plan. The goal is for all meetings to be complete by August 1.

Coggin thanked the committee for their attendance and input and said he would email the dates for the next two meetings.

The committee adjourned at 8:50AM.

VESTAVIA HILLS COMMUNITY SPACES PLAN

MINUTES

**SUBCOMITTEE: WALD PARK - BALLFIELD IMPROVEMENTS**

MEETING #1: THURSDAY 15TH JUNE 2017, 6:30 pm

VESTAVIA HILLS CITY HALL, EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM

PRESENT:

* Ken Upchurch, Principal In charge, TCU consulting
* Kevin Overton
* Rusty Weaver, City Council, City of Vestavia Hills
* Paul Head, City Council, City of Vestavia Hills
* Kirk McCulley
* Jared Smith
* Steve Taylor
* Brian Davis (via conference call), Public Services Director, City of Vestavia Hills
* Jeffrey James, Intern, Auburn University

Principal goals of discussion:

* Fields separated for people of different age groups
* Use of new field to generate revenue
* Importance of field 1 and possible modifications
* Heat on the field and how it could be controlled
* Importance of turf or natural grass on the field
* Expansion of fences on field 1
* Warmup space
* Development of flat land to create more space
* Possible relocation of field 1
* Capacity issues of baseball and softball fields

*Meeting #1 of Wald Park – Ball field improvements complex was held on the 15th June 2017. The meeting began at 6:30 PM at the Executive conference room of the city hall of the city of Vestavia Hills. The meeting was led by Ken Upchurch of TCU consulting*.

GOAL – MEETING #1

Ken explained the purpose of meeting #1 is to gather information, identify key points from the subcommittee and to get valuable input for the project. He also stated that the meeting is focused more towards prioritizing the needs for the project and it is an information-based meeting.

Ken stated that Meeting #2 will include public discussion and Meeting #3 will be a debate-based meeting, which will be useful to allocate resources and prioritizing needs.

At the beginning of the meeting Ken provided blank cards to all members present and asked them to write about any issue or item that needs to be discussed about Wald Park ballfield improvements.

SEPARATING THE FIELDS

Rusty discussed how the fields can be separated so that people of different age groups could get maximum benefit from the fields.

FUTURE DESIGN – REVENUE OR MORE BENEFITS TO CITIZENS

The committee discussed whether the park should be focused on creating more revenue or providing benefits for the citizens.

Paul prefers the focus remain on a park offering “more benefits for the citizens.”

RE-LAYERING OF FIELDS

No further discussion at this time

TURF vs. NATURAL DIRT AND GRASS and USE OF FIELD #1

Jared commented:

* Field 1 should be given more importance.
* Field#1 needs to be re-done.
* Baseball should be played on grass and dirt.
* Kirk commented:
* Field #1 is being underutilized.

HEAT CONCERNS

The committee discussed the heat issue in the ground and Rusty expressed concern over children getting sick because of the turf’s tendency to absorb heat, which raises the playing area temperature.

Kirk said that heat can be an issue for children playing games in the summer and Brian suggested irrigating the field to reduce the heat.

PLAYING SURFACE OPTIONS

The committee discussed the issue of turf vs. natural grass on playing fields. Paul said, for children in the 5-10 year-old age group, turf is better. He said the majority of the players are in the >10 year-old age group and 80 % of these players play from February through mid-May--it would be best to focus on the 80%.

Jared discussed the benefits of a hybrid surface.

AREAS FOR WARM-UP AND LOCATION OF FENCES

Kirk said, on behalf of Parks and Recreation, that there are no spaces for warming up and the 7, 8 and 9 year-old kids use the sidewalks to warm up, which creates major disturbances for the people walking on the sidewalks. Kirk suggested shortening Field 1.

NEED FOR MORE SPACE

The committee discussed the need for more field space. Ken suggested the development of flat land to provide more playing space.

Paul suggested Field 1 be relocated.

The committee discussed the use of Berry fields for softball and baseball.

Ken noted the capacity issues for baseball and softball.

Ken collected the committee comment cards and said he would review them.

Ken confirmed the date and time of meeting #2 will be July 12 (6PM) and Meeting #3 will be July 27(6PM).

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.

VESTAVIA HILLS COMMUNITY SPACES PLAN

MINUTES

**SUBCOMMITTEE: Wald Park – Premier Green SPACE**

MEETING #1 –Tuesday, June 20, 2017 7:30am

Vestavia Hills Civic Center, Room 2

Present:

* Raynor Boles, Project Manager, TCU Consulting
* Kevin Overton, TCU Consulting
* Jeffrey Downes, City Manager, City of Vestavia Hills
* Steve Ammons, Premier Green Space Subcommittee Chair
* Tommy Dazzio, Community Spaces Plan Lead Committee
* Laura Woodruff  
  Katherine Gorham
* Kim Hauser, Vestavia Hills City Schools
* Brian Davis, Public Services Director, City of Vestavia Hills
* Jason Burnett, Parks and Recreation Superintendent, City of Vestavia Hills
* Melissa Hipp, Asst. to the City Manager, City of Vestavia Hills

*Meeting #1 of the Wald Park – Premier Green Space (WP-Green Space) was held at Vestavia Hills Civic Center in the Room 2. The meeting began at 7:30am and was led by Raynor Boles of TCU Consulting. Boles explained the purpose of Meeting #1 as an information gathering session to be followed up by two other public meetings. The purpose of Meeting #1 (“Informational”) would be for TCU to learn more about the priorities, “why’s,” and “what if’s” of the components of the Community Spaces Plan presented to date. Throughout the meeting he reemphasized that Meeting #1 would be an opportunity for subcommittee members to share their wants and needs, and that information would be translated into designs by the architects. Meeting #2 (“Debate”) will be a time for the public to provide input about the details being presented, and Meeting #3 (“Decision”) will be a second opportunity for the public to give input as the decisions are made about what will be included in the project design. He explained that budget validation would take place across the three meetings. He mentioned the target timeframe for Meeting #2 would be shortly after July 4.*

The subcommittee discussed the premier green space in relation to playground, dog park, and connectivity needs. (Skate park ideas were discussed briefly, with group consensus that it was a low priority.) While the group discussion began with the dog park topic, the group prioritized playground over dog park needs. Emphasis was placed on the opportunities to make the green space premier due to its unique topography advantages, and the need to invest in it as a regional attraction. The design should be intentional with landscape architecture to capture and blend elements of the topography, as nobody in the region has the same opportunity.

DOG PARK

* Members listed various other dog parks that might serve as models for Vestavia’s dog park: Blount (Montgomery), Red Mountain, Hoover, Alabaster, Huntsville. The group consensus was that Hoover’s park is right-size, and that separation of large vs. small dogs is desirable. The group did not feel that an obstacle course is strongly needed.

PLAYGROUND

* Members discussed having separate playground vs. slides/play feature in the green space. The group discussed various concerns with the existing wooden castle playground and how those concerns should be taken into consideration with the new playground:
  + Hidden spaces – parents need visibility of children
  + Fenced –need playground area enclosed in fence for school use
  + Features – needs to have slides and swings, ability to incorporate education desirable
  + Access – parents need to be able to reach their child within the playground.
  + Technology – charging stations, wi-fi (infrastructure issues may impact availability)
  + Restrooms – need to have multiple stalls
  + Pavilions desired.
  + NO: wood, monkey bars (broken arms), requirement to cross a street to access from school or parking

PARKING/DRIVING ISSUES

* Existing parking/driving issues were discussed. Concerns were expressed about the elementary students needing to cross the road to get to the playground. The situation of limited parking resulting in drivers having to turn around in the small lot where people are crossing was described (drivers don’t seem to know what to do for playground parking). The idea to have pocket parking and shift parking to Gold’s Gym and rely on the sidewalk/trail to connect was discussed. It was confirmed that the current school construction project will not change parking but may impact parking/traffic during construction.

SITUATION, NEED FOR GREEN SPACE

* Situation of the playground and green space in relation to other features of Wald Park was discussed. The consensus was that a dedicated green space is needed recreational use, “boot camp” classes, and event staging rather than using an athletic outfield. Desire to use the high topography as a vantage point to watch events and ball games was described. Parents want to be able to watch both children in the playground and athletic practices at the same time. The playground play/features need to be a safe distance away from baseball fields. (It was also mentioned that baseball will need a warm-up area away from the public.)

CONNECTIVITY, AMPHITHEATER/OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

* The group shared desire to use the elevations of the green space as an amphitheater and outdoor classroom. The plan to connect via trail/sidewalk from City Hall and Gold’s Gym was described.

TRAILS

* Recreation vs. exercise needs were discussed:
  + Some flat areas and switchbacks to accommodate beginning runners
  + Wide enough to pass
  + Paved – concrete is too hard, and unpaved washes out
  + Level to prevent trips
  + Perimeter path, ideally no path around the ball fields
  + Some path weaving in and out of other areas is desired
  + Not needed – training equipment

SECURITY

* Priority was placed on lighting, and security cameras are desired but should not be publicized. Strategically placed push button/blue light phones desired. While the question was raised whether there is a need to fence all the park, the other security items took priority in discussion.

The meeting concluded at approximately 8:30am.

VESTAVIA HILLS COMMUNITY SPACES PLAN

MINUTES

**SUBCOMMITTEE: WALD PARK - REDEVELOPMENT OF CITY’S SWIMMING FACILITY**

MEETING #1 - Wednesday, June 14, 2017, 11:30am

Vestavia Hills City Hall, Executive Conference Room

Present:

* Raynor Boles, Project Manager, TCU Consulting
* Andy Bernard, Program Director, TCU Consulting
* Earl Lawson, Subcommittee Chair
* Brian Davis, Public Services Director, City of Vestavia Hills
* Jason Burnett, Parks and Recreation Superintendent, City of Vestavia Hills
* Candi Cole, City of Vestavia Hills
* Phillip Wood, Birmingham Swim League
* Monica Carroll, Vestavia Swim Association
* Melissa Hipp, Asst. to the City Manager, City of Vestavia Hills
* Jeffrey James, Intern, Auburn University
* Reynolds Sorrell, Intern, The University of Alabama

*Meeting #1 of the Wald Park – Redevelopment of City’s Swimming Facility Subcommittee (WP-Swim) was held at Vestavia Hills City Hall in the Executive Conference Room. The meeting began at 11:30am and was led by Raynor Boles of TCU Consulting. Boles explained the purpose of Meeting #1 as an information gathering session to be followed up by two other public meetings. The purpose of Meeting #1 (“Informational”) would be for TCU to learn more about the priorities, “why’s,” and “what if’s” of the components of the Community Spaces Plan presented to date. Throughout the meeting he reemphasized that Meeting #1 would be an opportunity for subcommittee members to share their wants and needs, and that information would be translated into designs by the architects. Meeting #2 (“Debate”) will be a time for the public to provide input about the details being presented, and Meeting #3 (“Decision”) will be a second opportunity for the public to give input as the decisions are made about what will be included in the project design. He explained that budget validation would take place across the three meetings. He mentioned the target timeframe for Meeting #2 would be shortly after July 4.*

Subcommittee members described their priorities and desires for the new pool facility, with prompts by Boles and Bernard for design features not mentioned by the group. Topics discussed were as follows:

* Conceptual drawing vs. Actual needs – Boles asked the group to describe their needs in comparison to the conceptual drawings that have been presented in the Community Spaces Plan thus far. The drawing served as a starting point for the conversation, but the subcommittee explored many ideas that varied from the drawing, e.g. two or three separate pools vs. the two part pool in the drawing.

MULTIPLE USER GROUPS

* The sizes, depths, and features of the pool ideas were discussed for both how they would be needed to accommodate certain groups and how they might limit use for other groups:
  + Summer – residents, day cares, classes
  + Competition, possible year-round competition
  + General community use

POOL AS A REVENUE GENERATOR, REGIONAL ATTRACTION

* The City pool is already drawing users away from Lifetime Fitness by its diving accommodation (1 meter diving board and 15 ft diving well) and by being well maintained. Doubling capacity for such use as well as larger tournaments was discussed.

POOL DEPTHS, LENGTHS, AND PERIMETER NEEDS, ZERO ENTRY AND STEPS FEATURES

* The subcommittee consensus was that a two or three pool design would be desirable. Currently there are three pools at Wald Park: 1-1.5ft deep baby pool, 2.5-3.5ft wading pool, and 15-5ft pool.
  + Training pool – Frank Brown Park was considered by the group as a base model for how the training pool might be designed. The group discussed ways zero entry and steps could be incorporated as well as four 4ft lanes so that the pool could be used for warm up during competition. Possibility of minimizing the zero entry width in order to make room for the 4ft warm-up lanes was considered. A square design was preferred over the cone shape of the Frank Brown pool. The training pool would be separate from the competition pool so that the larger pool could remain open should the training pool need closed, e.g. vomit or fecal matter in the pool. Also discussed was leaving the training pool uncovered, whereas the group desired a semi-permanent structure over the competition pool.
  + Competition pool – The subcommittee discussed depths and perimeter needs for a 50 meter competition pool. In discussing competition requirements, the consensus was to make the training pool the zero entry pool and not have a zero entry area in the competition pool.
    - 15-5-7ft depths – It was determined that one end needed a 15ft depth for a diving well, and one 1meter diving board would be sufficient. 5ft center depth would allow the pool to meet touch depth requirements for the community, and 7ft depth opposite the 15ft well would allow diving off both ends of the pool. 5ft depth was discussed as an allowable turn-around depth for swim competitions; also discussed was the need to be able to dive from starter blocks along all sides of the pool, i.e. for relays. Starter blocks would be movable.
    - Twenty lanes 25 yards in length would be needed for summer swim meets. These lanes would run across rather than the length of the pool and might run at each end, i.e. not across the 5ft depth center.
    - Training pool would need to meet the warm-up requirements for competition. Crossplex experience (of not taking warm-up into consideration during design) was discussed.

AMENITIES

* The subcommittee mentioned the following as desirable at the new pool facility:
  + Outside rinse shower, plus more (6-8 each M/F vs. current 5 each) showers
  + More toilets, proper drainage
  + “All Wet” design – all areas able to be used by wet persons
  + Splash features (fountains/squirt) around the training pool, but no play features (slides, etc.) that would increase need for lifeguard staff
  + One location – pump rooms, storage, etc. same building as offices, locker rooms, etc.
  + Restroom/locker room to serve pool only, i.e. prefer tennis to have separate facility
  + Semi-permanent structure to allow year-round use of competition pool
  + Movie screen, jumbotron/electronic scoreboard, PA, outdoor wi-fi all desirable
  + Live stream capacity
  + Portable, scroll-in bleachers to seat 200+; important to have bleachers scroll in while not in use, so that kids do not play on open bleachers.
  + Privacy wall vs. fence around the pool – wall would not be see-through and would keep leaves and grass clippings from getting into the pool.
  + Lighting- night swim, competition needs
* Concessions -
* Staff – Space, Increased Capacity and Program Needs –
* Building Components -
* Security
* Other

At the close of the meeting, Boles and the subcommittee proposed the dates of July 12th (11:30am) and July 25th (5:30pm) for Meetings #2 and #3, respectively. Boyles asked the subcommittee to email him if they had additional ideas. The meeting concluded at 1:25pm.