

Meeting Minutes Committee on Ad Hoc for Market Landing Park

July 17, 2023

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Meeting Recording: https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/N-g-mQSysEJoD4EDjCvTUbzd9GvAoj_dc3NPbUfHtHUYNnz68wBUSXWrYmo9kzu.lw-vaTyKovco5hH4

Members

Cllr. Heather Shand, Chair
Cllr. Jim McCauley, Ward 5
Cllr. Ed Cameron, At-Large
Cllr. Sharif Zeid, Ward 1
Cllr. Connie Preston, At-Large

Other Participants

Mike Sullivan (WFT)
Matt Piezniak (WFT)
Clerk Richard Jones
Andy Port, Planning Director
Ethan Manning, Finance Director

Agenda

Discussion of the Waterfront Trust, NRA Dissolution

Meeting called to order at 7:00

Chair Shand reviewed the prior meeting actions and mentioned DPS direct Amarault and Parks Manager Mike Hennessey are invited to the meeting in August.

Cllr. McCauley – I'd like to make a comment if that's ok. You know at the last meeting we spent some time talking about why decisions took so long and most of it was a degradation of trust that went along. I have to say the recent action that's were taken have eroded the trust in this committee. We got less than truthful information for our planning office about timelines in general, right or wrong, we acted on it. That's only part of the story here. We allowed ourselves as a committee to go against the core principals which is integrity. We agreed to keep this in committee and we didn't. I do want to note that the dynamics of this committee have now changed and I think you will see some actions.

Director Port speaks to contractor mobilizing the week after Yankee Homecoming

Cllr. Preston – When will boardwalk be closed? Dir. Port – Bulkhead to be completed in winter.

Cllr. Zeid – now that the contract is signed, how many parking spaces will we be left with? Need to understand, “back of the napkin,” how much maintenance are we talking in this phase? Asks for Sasaki's point of reference for maintenance of the park.

Cllr. Preston asks similar question and asked that Mike Hennessey attend the August meeting.

Cllr. McCauley speaks to the city and WFT being the ones who truly know what the costs of maintaining the park will be.

Clerk Jones speaks to the amount of parking that will remain in Phase 1A which is more than what was initially anticipated.

Dir. Port speaks to the lots that will be paved and remain gravel during and after Phase 1A

Clerk Jones speaks to the current gravel lots and how they operate.

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Cllr. Zeid speaks to the current amount the city provides the WFT, “if 4 acres is 90k then is 6 acres 135k?”

Mike Sullivan (WFT) – Speaks to what is maintenance of the park currently. Budget now is for the 2 acres ~7000 ft²

Cllr. Cameron asks what the typical average cost per acre is and looks for logic behind the costs.

Matt Peizniak (WFT) - % of what’s currently being maintained..high annual costs. 90k shouldn’t be the base but 100-120k per year. Speaks to irrigation. States the park is more like 150-160K currently and will need more after Phase 1A.

Clerk Jones speaks to expenses and how the current parking is \$1/hr. Recommends looking at parking rates.

Cllr. Zeid requests Dir. Manning provide numbers for east and west lots.
Dir. Manning - annual rev is \$215k/yr. 90k is riverside/waterside revenue.

Matt P. –what can be done on the revenue side?
Clerk Jones speaks to the number of permits that are annualized for employee permits.

Cllr. McCauley – Maintenance is not just with cutting grass. Parks and DPS are behind in maintaining other parks in the city.

Mike Sullivan – Revenue of 90k is just over 50% of the current budget. SLS is the standard and is around 17% of their budget. All the little things add up. WTF has always been conservative fiscally. Sasaki has a benchmark for industry averages.

Cllr. Zeid – August meeting is the time to talk numbers. Wants to discuss how the maintenance will be financed in addition to finding ways to keep money in the bank for capital expenditures in the future. -East/West lot revenues, WFT numbers from prior three years. Makes the point the city wouldn’t be using general funds to support maintenance.

Clerk Jones – many expenses are being put on the lots. Speaks to the bond on the garage that parking revenue supports, ~400k.

Dir. Port – Agrees we need costs vs. revenues for the parking system, rates for each of the lots. Spekas to prior parking consultant efforts.

Cllr. Zeid speaks to the purpose of downtown parking. Clerk Jones speaks to managing what we have and then speaks to park effort. Doesn’t want all funds to go to the Waterfront park while the downtown degrades.

Cllr. McCauley – most of the effort is coordinating with lots of different groups, not just SLS. Remember city plows the walkways in the winter months.

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Clerk Jones – speaks on managing two different rates.

Conversation goes to defining quality requirements.

Dir. Manning talks to how WFT went out to bid with SLS. All agree that staying the course with SLS for the next few years makes sense while Parks and DPS get their footing.

August meeting will be a review of the current financing of the park and what needs to be the the efforts for maintenance for post Phase 1A.

Public Comment

Jane Snow, 9 Coffin Street

- Wants to know how many parking spaces are in the city so we truly understand what we're losing in revenue from the Market Landing Park.

Meeting adjourns at 8:10

Cllr. Preston states she will not be in attendance for the August meeting.