



Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan Update

September 7, 2004 Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Chair Doug Varn, Kathy Stohr, Rickey Sain, Sr., John Mullins, Kurt Mackey, Susan Kurtenbach, Gail Moran, Patience Nelson, Mary Kay O'Grady, Laura Kaufman, Jessica Bullock, Marty Bracco

Staff: Gary Balling, David Kindler, Diane Stanke, Lisa Lightcap

Visitors: Holly Anderson

- I. Welcome – Doug Varn called the meeting to order at 7:10pm. Gail made a motion to approve the minutes of June 28, 2004. Rickey seconded the motion.
The Cap the Ike discussion was deferred until the display boards arrived

II. Project Update – Doug Varn

Doug Varn asked the group to please review the draft documents. Any substantive comments should be given to Lisa Lightcap who will forward the information to Leisure Vision. Kathy Stohr asked about how trending information is tied into the whole report. Gary explained that this information is leading up to the final report. Laura Kaufman wanted to know trending information specifically as it relates to Oak Park. Kathy wants to “connect the dots” between survey results and national trends.

Gail sought confirmation that the information we now have is not the final report and that the PDCC will be able to review the final report before the consensus workshop. (Later in the meeting this was confirmed.)

Governance Draft: Doug explained PDCC deliberately has not discussed or come to a conclusion on governance so as not to get ahead of Leisure Vision. Part of the governance plan asks for an action plan. We need to discuss what happens after October 25. Doug asked the group to consider whether they would like to go forward with the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. He explained the Park District needs some consistency with community input and would like to see some PDCC members continue on in the process. If you are interested, contact Doug.

Doug asked each working group to complete a report following the outline he included in the meeting packet. We need a record of what each group discussed and considered. This information should be submitted by October 25.

The Communications Subcommittee needs to meet to develop a message to be communicated once the consensus workshop has taken place. The PDCC is responsible for accountability in the comprehensive planning process. Once the plan is in place, Gary Balling hopes for ownership from the PDCC who will be expected to do community outreach.

Kathy Stohr inquired as to what will be the final recommendations? Where is the District going? What are the issues? She wants to discuss key issues at the consensus workshop rather than dwell on small issues. Doug assured the group that they will have a draft report by around October 1 so the PDCC has time to read, digest, and prepare their own comments and questions.

III. Governance – Patience Nelson

Patience gave an overview of the Governance Subcommittee's decision-making process. She explained four models were given to the subcommittee by Leisure Vision. The Subcommittee evaluated each model using the 15 factors provided by Leisure Vision. The Subcommittee regrouped and prioritized these factors, then each was assigned a weight. They applied the factors to each of the four models, eliminating two hybrid models due to accountability and sustainability issues. A Village-operated parks and recreation department and an independent Park District were the two models left. The subcommittee moved toward the independent Park District model because such a system would be run by Parks and Recreation experts who can implement a vision. In the opinion of the Governance Subcommittee, this seems to be the best governance model.

A Governance Plan was reviewed by Patience:

Model – Independent PD recommended by subcommittee and Leisure Vision

Action Plan – Blueprint (how to) transition to new governance model – needs to be action plan that subcommittee and Leisure Vision agree on.

Sustainability

-Raising and managing resources

-Consultant recommendation

-Other options?

Patience believes sustainability should be part of Action Plan, not a separate step.

Leisure Vision recommended the Village of Oak Park give the Park District money (village transfer money) for the next three years. Leisure Vision community center operating costs will decrease within the next three years so each year less money is allocated to operating expenses and more money is allocated to capital projects.

Patience believes there are many different ways to achieve sustainability. She thinks Leisure Vision should have provided a number of options instead of just one. Another option she discussed was to allow the Village of Oak Park and the Park District to develop an Action Plan and other options to raise revenues and ultimately achieve sustainability. We need more options than the one Leisure Vision has provided.

Gary explained that the Leisure Vision solution is difficult because our fund balance is so low. Taking away \$1.5 million annually from the operating budget will be tough.

Doug said he wants the PDCC to come to a consensus on a model of governance and agree that we need an Action Plan.

Gary explained that village transfer funds are spent on the 7 recreation centers, Dole Center, and Senior programs. He went on to explain the governance issue dates back to 1955 when the first report on this subject was issued; in 1967 another report was

issued; this topic was also discussed in the 1980's. Even when the Park District and the Recreation Department were two separate entities, they were under funded. The tax dollars used for the Village transfer are already being collected.

Jessica asked if we are going to ask Leisure Vision for more options or if this should be left up to the Park District Board.

Patience said options for sustainability should be congruent with the vision statement which is not completed.

Kathy said the Village transfer needs to be addressed.

Laura stated that if the Village agrees that the model recommended for governance is the independent Park District model then the Village is committed to helping the Park District become sustainable. David said his conversations with VOP Trustees regarding this issue are accompanied with a discussion of money however the Village can't support the Park District forever. We need to come up with a financially responsible agreement.

Doug asked the group if they supported the independent model of governance. He received a unanimous response in support of this governance model.

Laura stated that the PDCC needs to emphasize to the Village that they expect the VOP to help the Park District become independent and viable.

Doug will draft a consensus statement regarding consensus of the group regarding governance. He acknowledged the option presented by Leisure Vision was not well received by the group.

David reminded everyone that the reason we hired independent consultants was to look at issues in a new light.

IV. Internal Spaces – No report

V. Benchmarking – No report

VI. Outdoor Spaces

Gail and Mary Kay are interested in this subcommittee. They will meet on September 20 for a Standards Workshop with Carol Yetken and Ron Vine.

VII. Survey – No report

VIII. Cap the Ike Report.

Gail and Kurt represented the Cap the Ike Commission and presented three concepts which were discussed by the group.

Meeting adjourned at 9:37pm

Upcoming Meetings:

Standards Meeting (tentative) October 6, 7pm, Administration Center

PDCC Meeting, Saturday, October 23, 8am, Oak Park Conservatory

Consensus Building Workshop – Monday, October 25, 6:30-9:30pm at Village Hall in Room 101.