

MINUTES
JAMES CITY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
Building A Large Conference Room
101 Mounts bay Road, Williamsburg, VA 23185
July 21, 2021
4:00 PM

A. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Barbara Null called the Development Review Committee (DRC) meeting to order at 4 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Present:

Barbara Null, Chair
Jack Haldeman
Frank Polster
Rob Rose

Staff in Attendance:

Tom Leininger, Senior Planner
Alex Baruch, Senior Planner
Josh Crump, Principal Planner
Alister Perkinson, Parks Administrator
Katie Pelletier, Community Development Assistant

C. MINUTES

1. March 31, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Jack Haldeman motioned to Approve the March 31, 2021, DRC meeting minutes.

On a voice vote, the Motion passed 4-0.

D. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. James City County Parks Master Plan Update

Mr. Tom Leininger addressed the Committee and stated that staff has been working over the past year on master plan updates for three parks in James City County (JCC): Upper County Park, JCC Recreation Center Park, and the Warhill Sports Complex. He said the JCC Parks Master Plan update was placed on the Agenda as a discussion item, similar to the Shaping Our Shores Master Plan update process a few years ago. Moving forward, he said staff will look at the existing Special Use Permits (SUPs) for each park to determine if any amendments might be required.

Mr. Leininger introduced Mr. Alister Perkinson, Parks Administrator, and said he would provide additional details on the master plan updates and next steps for each park. Mr. Leininger said staff would be happy to answer any questions following Mr. Perkinson's presentation.

Mr. Perkinson addressed the Committee and said his team had been working with staff from the Planning Division, General Services, and divisions of Parks and Recreation. He said the team met several times and used documents such as the 2017 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. He said they gathered feedback from the public and staff and also held a month-long public input period. Mr. Perkinson said the team was pleased to receive 172 completed surveys, and they were able to incorporate a lot of the feedback. He said he would speak about each park to explain the additions, and he welcomed the Committee's thoughts as they begin to work through the approval process.

Mr. Haldeman asked if the DRC would make suggestions and the Planning Commission make recommendations or prioritize items.

Mr. Perkinson replied that the individual items would go into the Capital Improvements Program (CIP), so there would be a chance to prioritize them then. He said the current discussion and point in the process was for a long-term planning document for future, full build out. He said it would take five, 10, or 15 years to implement some items.

Mr. Perkinson discussed Upper County Park. He noted it is one of the original and oldest County parks. He said an existing, approved master plan for this park does not exist, but there was a draft, outdated plan from the early 1990s. He said they leaned on the 2017 Parks and Recreation Master Plan which showed a lack of certain amenities for such a community park. He said there is currently an outdoor swimming pool, picnic shelters, sand volleyball court, basketball court, and some mountain biking trails. He said the park lacks community centers, gymnasiums, indoor pool space, and hard-surface trails. He said they propose to replace the existing toddler pool with a splash pad and to add a half-mile, paved, multi-use trail loop.

Mr. Haldeman asked why the trail would be paved.

Mr. Perkinson replied that paved trails are easier to maintain and best for meeting the Americans with Disabilities Act. He added that a new community gymnasium building at Upper County Park would have similar amenities to the Abram Frink Jr. Community Center and would include two full-size courts, a workout area, and possible office space. He said that pickleball and tennis courts would be added next to the existing basketball courts, and there were also plans for a fenced-off, off-leash dog area, and an archery range to support Parks and Recreation programming. Mr. Perkinson said additional parking would be added to support these amenities.

Mr. Frank Polster asked what projects were already in the 2022-2026 CIP.

Mr. Perkinson replied that the splash pad and paved trail loop were already listed in the five-year CIP.

Mr. Polster commended the efforts toward equity in the JCC Parks Master Plan update. He asked for any available statistics on who is using the facilities.

Mr. Perkinson said the County does conduct visitation counts. He noted Upper County Park is very busy during summer months, particularly with large groups. He said the park's utility throughout the year should increase with more trail and gym users, and the pickleball and tennis courts would also meet growing needs.

Mr. Polster mentioned the potential for any nearby development to connect to the park's trail system.

Mr. Rob Rose asked about expanding the pool capacity.

Mr. Perkinson said the team would consider that, and the adaptation of the unused toddler pool into a splash pad could also help. He said they have also discussed finding a way to cover the pool in the winter to provide more pool space for groups.

Mr. Rose noted a separate lap pool is very popular at other locations.

Mr. Perkinson agreed and said the Upper County Park pool is 25 meters in size and has spaces for lap lanes.

Ms. Null asked about the additional parking location.

Mr. Perkinson showed the general area for expanded parking but noted that the parking would be better illustrated during the site plan design phase.

Ms. Null commented that the park is difficult to find.

Mr. Perkinson replied that updated signage is planned and currently in the permitting process.

Mr. Perkinson then discussed the James City County Recreation Center Park, surrounding the Recreation Center on Longhill Road. He noted there was also no master plan for this park. Mr. Perkinson explained the park was largely developed, with the exception of a previous James City Service Authority (JCSA) water tower area.

Mr. Perkinson described the approach to add passive amenities to the area. He explained that closing a road would create a more walkable park, without impacting traffic or parking access. He said they also added an expansion to the existing skate park and added another off-leash dog area, picnic shelter, restroom facilities, and parking to support those amenities.

Mr. Perkinson said the plan also includes a potential expansion of the recreation center at the other end of the park. He said the largest change would be the water tower site, and there had been conversations with both JCSA and Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA) on any impacts to operations.

Mr. Polster commented the former water tower site was included in Workforce Housing Task Force discussions. He said he was glad the site would be put to good use.

Mr. Leininger noted that this location would benefit from the Longhill Road project, bike lane, and multi-use path.

Mr. Rose asked about the issue of access. He said he was encouraged to hear there was an existing bus stop. He asked if access and connectivity were considered for each of the County's parks.

Mr. Perkinson said the County had worked with WATA in the past to establish bus stops and access. He also mentioned the County's Greenway Master Plan.

Mr. Haldeman noted that, while a sufficient number of parks exist, there are certain parts of the County that are underserved, such as the Grove area in the southeast. He said the County had begun to address this issue in the CIP but more could be done in the future.

Mr. Rose commented mapping is able to show the relationship between levels of median income and distances to the nearest park.

Mr. Perkinson said the County had performed a Grove Community analysis to identify the

needs of the area and amenities such as swimming pool and public river access.

Mr. Perkinson discussed the 2016 Warhill Sports Complex Master Plan. He said the team took a different approach for this park since there was an existing master plan. Mr. Perkinson noted the County partners with over 20 youth sports organizations at this location. He said the team met with these groups first to receive their feedback and identify their needs as users. He stated the biggest issues were the lack of full-sized baseball fields and the need for more lighted fields for evening use.

Mr. Perkinson said the team did not propose radical changes for Warhill Sports Complex. He said they used an existing traffic management plan to help guide decisions, due to the very busy nature of the park. He said the team did not feel the park could support the traffic and number of fields originally proposed for simultaneous use in the 2016 plan.

Mr. Perkinson reviewed the updated map for Warhill Sports Complex. He discussed changes to fields, parking, synthetic turf, and traffic patterns with the connector service road.

Mr. Polster asked if the road would be resurfaced.

Mr. Perkinson replied yes and said that General Services has a maintenance project this year for minor repairs.

Mr. Polster asked about an existing service or access road in the back near the dam.

Mr. Perkinson said any improvements or additional amenities would not interfere with access or any existing roadways or pathways. He said details would be considered more in the site plan phase.

Mr. Polster discussed a connection between Lafayette High School and the park area.

Mr. Rose asked about the removal of a planned bike park from an older plan.

Mr. Perkinson said the bike park was proposed on an older plan but removed due to a lack of interest by a former private group. He said a running center was also planned with a private group but moved to Jamestown Beach Event Park last year during the Shaping Our Shores Master Plan update.

Mr. Perkinson said the largest addition to the Warhill Sports Complex would be a premier baseball and softball stadium complex, adjacent to the football and soccer stadium complex across the street. Lastly, he said the plan update would include representation of the Williamsburg Community Growers garden area, the County grounds maintenance facility, and the 757swim club pool.

Mr. Polster asked about a connection from the Season's Trace neighborhood into the park area.

Mr. Perkinson said the multi-use walking trail does have several community-built paths that connect to the neighborhood for school use.

Mr. Polster said the plan was to include a direct path from the school to the park facilities.

Mr. Perkinson said he would take the topic back to his leadership who might be more familiar.

Mr. Haldeman asked when the JCC Parks Master Plan update would be presented to the

Planning Commission.

Mr. Perkinson said they hope to present the plan by the fall.

Mr. Leininger said the group would next meet with Planning staff to determine what SUPs or requirements might be necessary.

Mr. Perkinson thanked the Committee for its comments and said he would take them back to his team.

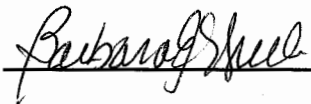
Ms. Null asked if there were any additional questions.

F. ADJOURNMENT

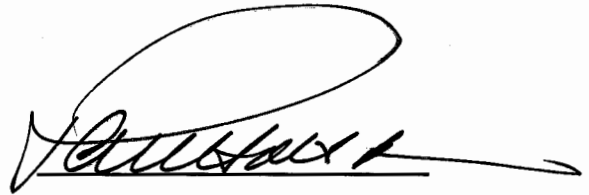
Ms. Null thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Mr. Haldeman motioned to Adjourn the meeting.

Ms. Null adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m. after a unanimous voice vote of 4-0.



Ms. Barbara Null, Chair



Mr. Paul Holt, Secretary