

Meeting Minutes for March 7, 2016

Diane Fenton called the Recreation Commission meeting to order and welcomed everyone

In Attendance: Tonia Winn, Mary Critzer, Jim Williamson, Cord Hall, Brad Epperley, Charlton McCoy, Diane Fenton, Mike Saylor, Mike Harris

Last month's minutes approved

Citizen Comments: Jeff Rollin with the NRV lacrosse club along with Coach Katie Williamson attended the meeting to see the Master Plan. Their Lacrosse league has increased over 20% in the last five years and with that increase they are in need more fields to play on. They are glad to see that there will be 3 multipurpose fields that are used for any activity.

Mayor Barber called the work session between Town Council and Recreation Commission to order.

Brad wanted to thank everyone for coming out to the meeting and the Gay & Neel consultants for their hard work. Brad introduced Trevor, John, Kyle and JD who have been working on the Master Plan for us. Trevor discussed the process of the Master Plan from this past summer to where we are at now. It has been a long process but it is here. The park is over 50% passive; for active recreation the multipurpose fields are the number 1 priority and the softball field is second priority. Within the plan they did a HB2 funding application to prepare for the future roadways. Kyle explained the roadway from the conceptual Master Plan. There is a plan to buffer the entire border around the park. The gas line does cause some issues. Trevor explained that the gas line ran through the center of the park. It is an important gas line for the New River Valley. The utilities will have to cross under the line and the roadways will have to be perpendicular of the gas line as well. They have changed multiple grades to get away from the line. The town will have to pay for moving about 150ft of the gas line. In July they are shutting part of that line down to run some test on it. We are hoping to be able to get done what we need to get done with the line at this time as well. This will be a very financially smart decision to move the line at this time.

Trevor turned the meeting over to Kyle to discuss the different areas of design within the park property.

The entrance of the park will be loop road. The core area which is the primary entrance of the park will have 2 grass areas to the right of it with the amphitheater. The amphitheater has a fireplace, family area; it is somewhere to hold events. The amphitheater can also be used as a large picnic pavilion. The destination all accessible playground and splash pad will be fenced in with restrooms and a rental area/room. Cord Hall asked if the fencing will be the same throughout, there will be fencing in this area to make it more child proof. The core area parking will support that destination adjacent to the 4 volleyball courts, picnic area and the green area. The dog park is on the right side at the end of the loop road.

The dog park will be split for large and small dogs. There will be shared restrooms with those areas. In this section there will be a maintenance area with a pole barn. At the Trail Head across the connector road there will be parking with access to the Huckleberry Trail. Harry Collins asked about how many parking spots would be available at the park, there will be about 400-450 parking spots and there will be a grass area to have for additional parking. Henry Showalter started discussion on the athletic fields. He didn't know the town wanted a softball field. Brad mentioned that the softball field was a need in this area because we do not just have a specific field for softball. The idea came from the public input meeting and the recreation commission. We geared most of the priority to the multipurpose fields. Steve Huppert wondered if the softball field could be used for a World Series, it could be used but it is not ideal. Harkrader Sports Complex is the ideal place to use for a Baseball World Series. All the multipurpose fields will be turf and used for any activity. The paint on the field does not have to be permanent. If we have different activities, we would use different colors to justify which activity it is. Someone mentioned about having lighted fields, there are plans to light the fields. Henry Showalter asked how we are going to divvy up time for different activities. Brads vision is going to be the multipurpose fields will be used more for rectangular sport activities. For scheduling purposes Chuck Muncy does this now with all sports. We want to meet the citizen's needs. Cord Hall mentioned that softball would not need to use rectangular field majority of the time because they would have a field. Tonia mentioned that we really need to have a softball field. Henry Showalter mentioned that when Harkrader Sports Complex was proposed it was proposed as multipurpose fields. Brad mentioned that these artificial turf multipurpose fields would enable us to do a lot of things that were supposed to be done at Harkrader. Brad mentioned that he was not here when Harkrader was developed so it is difficult to speak on that process. However, Harkrader is now primarily used for baseball due to the grass infields. This is not an ideal surface for softball as they prefer skinned infield (dirt). It would be very difficult to use the natural grass outfields for multipurpose as it would deteriorate the sod and make the playing surface non-aesthetically pleasing in addition to providing safety risks. This is not something that you would want at your primary tournament headquarters. With that being said though the layout of the Truman Wilson Park gives us 3 multi-purpose artificial surface fields that will accommodate as many teams and programs as we can put on there. Whether it be soccer, lacrosse, football or other. This is a true multipurpose opportunity. The lone softball field gives the softball players a field designed specifically for them. Many cases folks are mislead by connecting baseball fields with softball fields. There is a difference and we do not have a softball specific field in the Town of Christiansburg. The Mayor mentioned about the revenue the artificial turf will bring in and it is part of the business plan. Having facilities like this take care of the citizens with the different events that would be going on in the area. It was brought up whether the maintenance shed was going to have enough space for all the equipment. There will be pole barn for all the equipment to be placed under. There is also a press box between multipurpose field 1 and the softball field with restrooms and space for equipment. Space in between the fields for spectators was brought up as well, there will be portable benches placed for spectators and players. The passive area has a storm water pond, 3 meadow areas, picnic pavilions with parking and restrooms.

Kyle turned to the meeting over to JD to discuss the buildings.

All buildings are low maintenance materials with timber frame and cement siding. The amphitheater can have a portable stage that will overlook the pond along with a fireplace and 2 family restrooms. The hilltop pavilion is located on the highest point of the property. The maintenance building will be similar to the one at Harkrader Sports Complex. It will have a break room, office, bathroom with a shower, and space for equipment. The pole barn will be 40x50 with open spaces. The small pavilion is 12x12 with restrooms. The building at the playground and splash pad will be 2 buildings under one roof. On the left near the playground there will be a family restroom, an office and room to rent. On the right near the splash pad there will be 2 extra-large family rooms for changing to enter the splash pad, restrooms, and a mechanical room. The Multi-Purpose Fields Complex Building which will be located between multipurpose field 2 and the parking lot will have restrooms to the right, concessions to the left along with 2 family restrooms. The Softball Press Box is located between multipurpose 1 and the softball field will serve both fields. The first floor will have supplies for fields, 4 single use family restrooms, and an umpire locker room. The second floor will be like a normal press box that wraps around to both fields with windows. This building will have a deep overhang for shelter, so spectators can be seated under out of the weather. Multipurpose field 1 will be the priority game field for any sport or activity. Coverage for fields 2 and 3 would be temporary scoreboards along with benches. We would run conduit under the turf for access to power for the score board and public address. Harry Collins mentioned having a first aid area. There will be staffing at the park. With this staffing available people could come and go. Blue Safety phone towers were mentioned, they have been talked about in the Bikeway committee meetings along with wifi throughout the park. We will be looking into getting surveillance cameras in the near future. The time of the park hasn't been discussed but at this time all of our parks are dawn to dusk. There is a possibility that there could be basketball goals placed in some of the parking lots.

It will take about 2 months or more for the Business Plan to be ready, looking into May/June. The estimated hard cost for the park is \$27-\$33 million dollars. This dollar figure does not deduct grant possibilities along with other sponsorships that could decrease the overall cost to the town. The gas line is phase one of this project. It will take about 2 weeks for this to be done. The decision for this needs to be made by the end of April. The cost could be higher with phases. Henry Showalter said the phases and no-phases will be discussed and that council was very serious about this park.

Meeting adjourned. Next month's Recreation Commission meeting will be April 4, 2016.