

CITY OF MCKINNEY, TEXAS
PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY BOARD
Thursday, September 8, 2011 4:30 p.m.
Parks, Recreation and Open Space Administration Office
1611 North Stonebridge Drive

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Advisory Board of the City of McKinney, Texas, met in regular session at the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Administration Office on Thursday, September 8, 2011 at 4:30 p.m.

Board members present were: Chairman Manson (Sonny) Fee, David Clarke, John McCaskill, Peter Bailey, Jay Ray and Leslie Warren. Board member absent was Chris McHale. Staff members present were Parks, Recreation and Open Space Director Lemuel Randolph, Parks Maintenance Superintendent Tim White, Interim Recreation Superintendent Ryan Mullins, Parks Development Superintendent Steve Brainerd, Senior Parks Planner Jenny Baker and Administrative Assistant Sharon Lewis. Also attending was Oak Hollow Golf Course General Manager Dave Willey.

Chairman Fee presided calling the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

Chairman Fee began the agenda with the following action item:

On a motion by Board Member McCaskill, seconded by Board Member Bailey, the Board unanimously approved the following consent item.

11-25 Minutes of the Regular Parks, Recreation and Open Space Advisory Board Meeting of August 11, 2011.

Chairman Fee continued the agenda with the Regular Items.

11-26 Information/Discuss on Division Reports.

Division Reports for Golf, Parks Maintenance, Recreation and Parks Development were reviewed by the Board.

Golf: Golf General Manager Willey responded to questions from the Board. Mr. Willey stated the tees are decent considering the long term heat and lack of rain we are having; and revenue

Recreation: Mr. Randolph announced that Charlie Bryant is no longer with the city and Ryan Mullins is Interim Recreation Superintendent. Mr. Mullins announced that the Family Fall Festival at the Community Center will be moved indoors this year due to the weather in the past few years.

Parks Maintenance: Parks Superintendent White responded to questions from the Board. Mr. Warren asked how many times graffiti is in the parks. Mr. White stated an average of 2-5 times per month. He stated that Park Maintenance employees try to remove the graffiti within 24 hours depending on the type of graffiti and the wording; we don't close the parks due to graffiti.

Regarding water restrictions, Mr. Bailey asked if the city had to follow the same guidelines as residents. Mr. White stated yes the city has to comply with the same watering restrictions as residents.

Mr. Randolph stated that we have received a number of comments on watering the medians and rights of way as there will be water in the streets which sometimes is due to the wind, testing the irrigation, etc. The majority of the median complaints are addressed to medians that are maintained by HOA's contractors and Mr. White responds to the HOA's if there is a problem. Mr. Randolph stated that it is an on-going issue and we encourage the public to let us know if they see a problem.

Parks Development: Mr. Brainerd responded to questions from the Board regarding land acquisition of the 4-acre tract west of SH 5, north of Wilson Creek, on the opposite side of the channel from the Greens of McKinney golf course. The City is purchasing the tract for the continuation of the Wilson Creek hike and bike trail to the southeast. Mr. Brainerd announced that the completion date of the tennis complex is January 15, 2012. Regarding Sonntag Park, Mr. Brainerd stated that it is on hold due to the lack of staff and funds to maintain the park. The aquatic facility is pending direction from City Council.

Mr. Randolph stated that the City Council's primary objective was to make sure that the Gateway Project was satisfied before moving on to the aquatic center which is a high priority but not a top priority. The City Council has suggested a scope of work decision by the end of this calendar year for the aquatic center and that scope will be dictated by available funding within the budget. We are hopeful that we can move quickly with design once Council has made that decision.

Board Member Fee stated that citizens need to let the Council know what they want included in the Aquatic/Recreation facility.

Board Member Ray stated he noticed on Finch Park-Phase IV that the park roads will be removed. Mr. Brainerd stated that the traffic engineer was consulted and asked if paint could be applied to the roads to provide space for walkers/joggers on the asphalt surface to accommodate both pedestrians and vehicles. The park roads are being used for parking when park visitation is heavy. Mr. Brainerd stated that during a Streets Symposium recently, one of the solutions that were shown was a mix of pedestrians, bikers, and automobiles. The speed limit on Finch Park roads is 15 miles per hour; so the solution may be a mix of park road users.

A public input meeting was held approximately 10 days ago regarding the medians on US 75 and Industrial Boulevard, Mr. Brainerd stated that they met with the Texas Department of Transportation to let them know what citizens want to see.

Mr. Randolph announced that a public input meeting will be held on October 22nd at 6 p.m. to discuss the park at Gray Branch.

Board Member McCaskill inquired about the property adjacent to the school on College Street with football goals on the north and south end. There is an effort by some in that area whose intent is to prevent the sale of the property by MISD. Mr. Brainerd stated that Jay Crum has become actively involved in this piece of property by going to the Texas Attorney General on the basis of the Freedom of Information Act to force MISD to respond to inquiries regarding the sale of the property and its intended usage. MISD is stating that the purpose of the property's sale is to raise money for the school district. Chair Fee reminded the Board that neighbors bought an area around Valley Creek Park so it could be preserved so that could be an option for the neighbors around MISD's football practice field on College Street.

11-27 Citizen Comments.

Steven Spainhower, 2801 Palo Duro Canyon, McKinney, Texas 75070 addressed the Board. First, his son participated in the Punt Pass and Kick that

the Parks Department had and he thought it was a great event. This is the first year to hold it. It was well attended. Staff handled it really well and he thanked the PROS Department for having it and hopefully it will be held again. It was great to see the community involved in it.

He said he wanted to encourage the staff to make sure that they try to put out as many public notices as possible through multiple sources during the planning stages of projects so that we don't run into a situation like we have had at the skatepark where all of sudden folks didn't know about meetings, they got lobbied up because of that and they had a heck of a time. We want to make sure you give folks plenty of time on any issue to formulate their plans to present things to the staff that matter to them. I have met with staff of the city and some homeowners this week taking away the feeling that there is an open golden opportunity for additional discussions, so I would encourage the Board to consider tabling the action on that until we hear back from staff with some additional proposals. I think I asked them at the last meeting about considering the west side of the park, didn't really quite get an answer on that kind, but would like to know for sure what the cost would be if they are considering a west location as opposed to the alternate location by the library on the east side of Gabe Nesbitt. The alternative site seems to be a pretty good idea. My concern is that homeowners on Hillsdale in addition to the homeowners on Eldorado Parkway are now in line of site with the skatepark. I'll tell you that if you put that skatepark at the proposed alternative site across from Evans Middle School, those 12 and 13-year old kids are not going to go down to the pass-through under Eldorado or up to Hillsdale. When school is out, they are going to run those 45-50 feet across Eldorado. That is a very high traffic zone even though there is a school speed limit there, we put a signal light up there to slow folks down, I think we are inviting a traffic nuisance issue under court law. There are numerous communities with plenty of attorneys out there that will say, hey, you should've been able to foresee putting it there. You are inviting kids to cross the street, human nature being what it is. I know there is additional cost in moving it to other places, we want to make sure we look at that and not necessarily spend

money if we don't have to spend money, and we might need to go to Council and ask them, because of what we want to build, for a few more dollars. I want us to have a first-class skate park. I want to take my son there, but I don't want it to affect the quality of life of residents and I don't want it to put the city in a position of having additional liabilities by creating a traffic nuisance by being too close to Eldorado. So, that is just my two cents and I'd like you guys to consider that as the Board; I think staff has that in mind to think about. I think there is some additional work to be done in planning and we would look forward to hearing back from staff and what the plans are and the costs are for considering alternative locations, other than the two that are before the board now. Those are my comments and thank you guys.

Chair Fee asked Mr. Spainhower if he thinks it would have a negative impact on the quality of life of that neighborhood to put the skatepark at the proposed location.

Mr. Spainhower stated that at the present location there is a row of eleven houses that back up to Eldorado Parkway. Those homeowners are all against it being at the primary location because their concern is noise. I know that the city's construction manager for the Parks Department did a noise study; although, it's hard to say that the first noise study was valid, being done on a Thursday evening during the hottest day of the year when the Allen skate facility was probably not as heavily used as would normally be expected. The homeowners have been to other skate parks in other cities at other times during cooler weather when there were a lot more people, so I think if we do a noise study we need to do more than just 1-hour between 8 p.m. and 9 p.m. on one of the hottest days of the year. I think we need to do a time allocated noise study to include weekend days, late afternoons, light, take traffic into consideration and bounce that against what we have and not just take TxDOT's figures that publish the average noise level on a City arterial road. Let's conduct a thorough noise study so those homeowners can't come back and say, "Well, we just took one little old hour and use that as a means to say that you really didn't do everything". Let's just cover all of the bases and make sure. I think staff needs more time to

analyze that; we also need to analyze the cost of moving the skatepark. In order to get what we really need and not affect the quality of life or safety of people using it, we may need to spend a few extra dollars. We want a first class skatepark. We want places for our kids to go in the community rather than running off to another community. We want them to be brought into the park; not just a drop off and leave type of thing, which is probably what you will get if you use one of those sites.

Chair Fee expressed his thoughts based on Mr. Spainhower's presentation. It seems reasonable that there should be a more in-depth study of noise and I say that because that would be a reasonable thing and a low cost to analyze. My concern is that a fear factor of future events which may not be real is in the minds of the eleven neighbors that live adjacent to Eldorado Parkway. They perceive more impact than would really exist with a skatepark there. It may not be bad at all.

Mr. Spainhower stated he agreed. His neighbors would probably disagree with this, but we can engineer some solutions. Parks placed a berm between homeowners and Serenity Park with a berm adjacent to Berkshire Road. If we engineered solutions such as that it would help. The design of the park was probably a little different from what you probably had in some of the other cities. So, we need to address some of those concerns because there are serious concerns. If we can move the skatepark and redesign a few things that may not be absolutely necessary, possibly the impact will be to raise the cost just a few more dollars. I know staff stated they would like to have 12 parking spots for that particular feature of the park. My thought process is that the cost of parking lots is pretty high, if we could move the skatepark and put in a ribbon of concrete as an extension of the hike and bike trail, that would reduce costs. Part of moving the skatepark involves creating the expense of another detention pond because you can use the existing detention pond at the proposed skatepond site. If you choose an alternative skatepark site, you add the additional cost of detention ponds. But, again, we are trying to work this in within your budget that is very very small; and I'm sorry, but if we want to have a skatepark, we need the money

to make it work, surely we can find a few more extra dollars somewhere to either redesign or do some innovative things to make this a world class park that may position it a little different so we don't have the homeowners being adversely impacted. And I agree with you they may be feeling that there is going to be a problem based upon the decision of the location, but I'm not sure.

Mr. Fee said that his understanding was that the alternative site would cost an additional \$400,000 for the same skatepark recreational value. That is not what you refer to as being a small allotment of dollars.

Mr. Spainhower said he agreed.

Mr. Fee said that if it is just a fear factor or a matter of analyzing and realizing that it is okay to put it at the proposed site, he could not personally see spending \$400,000 to just eliminate the possibility of fear.

Mr. Spainhower said he would agree; that that is the reason why he said staff needs more time to analyze to be more meaningful; we've got to do that because we know there will be costs. Some of the cost could be adjusted by redoing some things or looking for additional resources. But we've got to make sure that if we put something there, that it is not going to adversely impact the neighbors. No one ever thought the flag poles at Evans Middle School would cause a problem, everybody living in Palo Duro Canyon has complained to me to do something to stop the banging in the middle of the night. Now you can put a noise study out there and it's not going to be anything louder than that popping. At 3 o'clock in the morning with those things going clang, clang, clang, it's a problem; okay. Now we aren't going to have skateboarders out at 3 o'clock in the morning but if there are a lot of folks out, a couple hundred skateboarding at 10:30 at night, it's not going to be quiet; we need to analyze that.

Mr. Fee said that another thought is to limit the skatepark hours with a curfew at 9 p.m.

Mr. Spainhower agreed.

Mr. Fee stated that there are all kinds of things that could be possible.

Mr. Spainhower agreed.

Mr. McCaskill stated that it would also be very useful for all sides to put out factual information and not misinformation. There has been a great deal of misinformation put out and it seems to harden positions. It does not make for an easy compromise position. It is requested that those responsible for the purveyance of false and misleading information cease and desist. It is not helping.

Mr. Spainhower said he agreed whole heartedly. There is a negative portrayal of the Skateboarding Committee that is not helping; and while they are probably not friends, they all play basketball, they also go swimming, okay, so we can't really say it's different than any other physical activity that they do.

Mr. McCaskill said as a case in point, that we have graffiti in other parks, the fact of the matter is that the Allen Skate Park is shut down from time to time because of graffiti, which is a punishment to the community. Graffiti is not exclusive to skateparks. If the City of McKinney responded in like kind to graffiti, a number of park facilities would be shut down for clean-up.

Mr. Spainhower said we haven't had that in McKinney. We have a group of citizens who generally respect the parks.

Mr. McCaskill responded that we do experience graffiti. It's not fair to say, "Well, the skatepark has been shut down, but you don't get ball fields shut down; you don't get soccer fields shut down, you don't get this shut down, you don't get that shut down. But you know, heck they burned the Finch Park toilets down. So I don't know that they burnt the toilets down at Allen Skate Park".

Mr. McCaskill said that valid rational concerns are certainly worth considering, it should be given full transparency so comments are able to be made and rational decisions made. Hying fear and fear-mongering for lack of a better term is not helpful and probably is and really does a disservice.

Mr. Spainhower agreed. I have not seen any of that happening recently by whoever was doing that. They must've gotten that word.

Mr. McCaskill said no, it is still going on.

Mr. Spainhower said he had not seen it come across his desk or door here lately. I'm a Crime Watch Captain of Stonebridge Community and I try to keep

an eye out for what is going on. If I see or hear that, be assured I would be against that. Anyway, I just want you guys to consider that. I thank staff and Steve for staying and talking with some of the neighbors on their concerns; an open door policy is fantastic and works well in any department in the city and I just encourage you guys to continue that as you go forward so we basically have had an area of opportunities on both sides before any decisions are made.

Chair Fee thanked Mr. Spainhower for his comments.

11-28 Consider/Discuss/Act on a Recommendation for the Skatepark Site.

Mr. Randolph stated that there is additional work that could be done in respect to things like noise in particular that relates to the noise in comparison to the Eldorado traffic which has not been done specifically and Allen Skate Park as an example which will provide us with a reference point as information is available. The police department is prepared to provide their assessment regarding potential concerns about security and safety of either site that has been discussed. We want to be available to go through all of that information before we submit our recommendation

Mr. Bailey made reference to a CD that was sent to the Board members from Mr. Jody Sutherland in regards to the skatepark site. Mr. Bailey said he was not able to view it and asked if any of the other Board members were able to see it.

Mr. Randolph stated that he had not seen it.

Mr. Fee said it was apparently an amateur video taken by Mr. Sutherland with his phone or some other sort of device so he was not sure what type of information without any information on it is questionable. If he wants to present that, he is welcome to present that at another forum next month or whenever.

Mr. Clarke said Mr. Sutherland spoke with him, stating that his thought processes behind the CD were to capture as closely as possible, typical operating noise levels at the Skate Park in Allen over a 7-minute time period. Unfortunately, with the equipment he had, he was not satisfied with the results and it wasn't perfected to a level that he was trying to achieve. His concerns seem to be in the noise relative to the proximity of the park to homes and also

certain elements of inappropriate behavior that was going on, i.e., cussing and things like that.

Mr. Fee said he can definitely feel free to have another meeting to share his views, present another video of his findings or verbalize his findings.

Mr. Clarke said he thought Mr. Sutherland was satisfied with what we are taking into consideration, the concerns and discussions with the Police Department and other folks within the city to achieve the right decision for both sites. We are taking additional time to evaluate that.

Mr. Bailey asked if there is any movement to have the PROS Advisory Board involved as a couple of the Board members have been to the Allen Skate Park recently, or if we should do this in a formal way. Also, Mr. Bailey said he could not find the Stone Canyon area.

Mr. Fee said the Stone Canyon neighborhood is next to the proposed skatepark. Mr. Fee said he believes it is misnamed; that it is really Palo Duro Canyon.

Mr. Spainhower said the entrance sign says Stone Canyon but a lot of people refer to it as Palo Duro Canyon. It is north of Eldorado.

Mr. Randolph said it is west of Evans Middle School on the north side of Eldorado Parkway.

Mr. Fee said he visited the Allen Skate Park on a Saturday, a hot day, and he did not see anything or hear anything that disturbed him; that it is in a remote location. Will Mitchell of the City of Allen Parks Department shared with Mr. Fee that the City of Allen wished they had not put the skatepark in such a remote location. Mr. Fee said when he got out of his car in the parking lot, he could not hear anything but an airplane once in awhile or someone get off of their skateboard. Walking up to the skatepark from the parking lot, if you didn't know what you were looking for, you might not hear a whole lot. His impression was that there wasn't much to worry about in having a skatepark.

Mr. Warren said you could definitely hear when a skateboarder fell off and asked if there was a surface that could be installed that could absorb the sound.

In his neighborhood you can definitely hear when a skateboarder falls off and they fall off all the time in his neighborhood.

Mr. Randolph said that was not part of what was discussed in terms of sound materials. He said we have done sounds and we can do others at various times and there are also national studies that kind of mirror what we have done. We can do that. He doesn't believe we are going to find the level of sound that is out of range. What he said at a previous meeting and restated again is that the sounds at a skatepark are unique to a skateboarder. The noise is not typical to other noise that are heard at any other activity. Skatepark sounds are going to be fairly distinct because your ears are not used to hearing it. It doesn't mean that they are initially louder than other sounds; it's just that they are different, like the clanging of the flag pole; that's a different kind of sound that gets your attention. Mr. Randolph is confident, based on our research already that the sounds we register will not be in a range that's generally higher than the traffic on Eldorado. When there is no traffic on Eldorado, there still will be sound areas but there will be times when the sounds at the skatepark exceed that of the traffic. We will provide that information. Our goal is to provide at peak so there is no reason to do it otherwise. There will be times when the evenings are busier; in warm weather the evenings are busier, the day time is not a time to go until it cools off.

Board Member Ray said he went to the proposed skatepark site on a Friday around 9 p.m. and the noise was not excessive by any means and especially in the parking lot where he was, it was probably a little closer than where these homes are. There was a good gap from the proposed park site and where the homes are when you look at it. Eventually Eldorado will probably be a 6-lane road, so it's going to be noisier. There is an alley between the houses and Eldorado as well because their garages are behind the houses so there is an extra gap. When he was at Gabe Nesbitt Park, it was not bad; you had a good mixture of people at the park; you had adults, kids, and in looking at the engineering with Trish Jackson of the city, he noticed that the bowl area was closer to the houses; so a lot of that noise is going to be contained within the

bowl as well. A lot of the material used is actually quieter than a lot of the more contemporary sites you hear a lot of complaints on; there are wood or metal type of ramps which would be a noisier than the proposed concrete. And I think you are right, if you look at a lot of the studies just on line, there really is encouragement to have it in or behind traffic area to keep the bad elements out and to make sure it is policed. So I think the staff has done a good job at actually looking at all of that. I do agree that we could do a few more noise studies to show we have done everything that needs to be done. On what I could see, I certainly did not have a problem with what I observed on Friday night, you had people in their cars, they're teenagers-you find that anywhere. I didn't see any bad acts or anything anymore than you'd find. I'm fine with it; just do a few more studies.

On a motion by Board Member Bailey, seconded by Board Member Clarke, the Board unanimously approved to Table Item # 11-28.

11-29 Consider/Discuss/Act on a Recommendation for the Award of Construction Administration for Bonnie Wenk Park.

Mr. Brainerd stated that this is for Bonnie Wenk Park-Phase I, a 200-acre tract north of Virginia Parkway, east of Hardin Boulevard. It will contain our first dog park, amphitheater, parking; and it will feel like a state park. Mr. Brainerd recommended the Board approve LanArc Design at an amount not to exceed of \$52,500.

On a motion by Board Member Clarke, seconded by Mr. Warren, the Board unanimously approved the recommendation that City Council approve the City Manager to enter into a contract for the design and architectural consultation of the Bonnie Wenk Park-Phase I project in an amount not to exceed \$52,500.

11-30 Consider/Discuss/Act on a Recommendation for the Award of a Design Contract for the Comegy's Creek Under Grade Hike and Bike Trail Crossing of US 75.

Mr. Brainerd stated that approval from the Texas Department of Transportation for under grade crossings under US 75 have challenges for pedestrians to cross under US 75. Mr. Brainerd requested the Board to approve

a contract with HDR Engineering to design the Comegy's Creek under grade hike and bike trail crossing of US 75 for an amount not to exceed \$50,000.

On a motion by Board Member McCaskill, seconded by Board Member Bailey, the Board unanimously approved the recommendation that City Council approve the City Manager to enter into a contract with HDR Engineering for the design of the Comegy's Creek Under Grade Hike and Bike Trail Crossing of US 75 project for an amount not to exceed \$50,000.

In other business, Mr. Randolph thanked Sonny Fee for his service on the Board and stated we have benefited from his stewardship.

Mr. Bailey stated he and Leslie Warren have been reappointed to serve an additional 2 years on the Board. He also announced that Mary Will Craig for whom a park was named had recently passed.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

Manson (Sonny) Fee, Chairman
David Clarke, Vice Chairman