



MEETING DATE:

September 30, 2015

TIME:

3:30-5:30 PM

PLACE:

Fishers City Hall
Central Conference Room
1 Municipal Drive
Fishers, Indiana 46038

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Rodney Retzner, Cecilia Coble, Corby Thompson, Tim Russell, John Amos, Jocelyn Vare, Natalie Temeya

Members Not Present: Cathy Ferree

Others Present: Caleb Gutshall, Rachel Johnson, Leah McGrath, Connie Nimmo, Todd Gillian, Maria H.

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- “Park systems bring added value to the City.” – Tony Elliot
 - Parks add higher quality of life, encourage health/wellness, offer a community gathering space, provide conservation of ecosystems, increase property value and attracts tourism.
- Review of the draft plan
 - Section 1: Vision and Plan Overview
 - The presented document has been approved by the Parks Advisory Board.
 - Accessibility can be defined as easy to get to or meeting ADA requirements.
 - The final draft of the Parks Plan will reflect Fishers 2040’s smart, vibrant and entrepreneurial vision.
 - Section 2: Community Profile and Needs Assessment
 - The community needs connective trails that are safe to cross.
 - For example, a safe solution to crossing 37 may be a pedestrian bridge.
 - Geist Reservoir would be a great location for trails and parks, however most of the parcels surrounding it are private and difficult to acquire.
 - Some current sidewalks will become a ten-foot, asphalt trail.
 - Most residents are within a five-minute drive to a park.
 - Major needs in the community include walking/hiking/biking trails, small neighborhood parks, large community parks and natural areas and wildlife.
 - Satisfaction levels of facilities, etc. are clustered in community.
 - Citizens may not use City amenities, but private neighborhood amenities.
 - Areas east of I-69 lacks amenities, such as soccer fields, neighborhood parks and play equipment.
 - As sports and trends change, the amenity needs and use may change.
 - Residents near Richey Woods were dissatisfied with the amount of parks trails in the area. This could be because there isn’t safe pedestrian access to the park.
 - The addition of amenities are only necessary if comparable amenities aren’t easily accessible in neighboring communities.
 - Section 3: Parks Inventory
 - Accessibility and dog friendliness isn’t indicated on parks inventory.
 - All dogs are welcome in all Fishers parks provided they are leashed and waste is disposed of properly.
 - All parks (public and private) are not accounted for.
 - Neighborhood parks are often owned and maintained privately. School parks and playgrounds are considered a public amenity through a partnership with the City.
 - Parks are typically acquired through purchasing or dedication of land.

- Development standards for open spaces will provide the community with the opportunity to better utilize land.
 - Carmel and Noblesville have a greater public City park space “ratio” than Fishers because they use various private parks in their calculations..
 - I-69 divides the City and limits accessibility to parks. Attention should be given to improve bike/pedestrian connections across the interstate
 - “(Rotary Park, located on 116th Street) should personify the community and what we stand for.” – Cecilia Coble
 - Park visibility is low for Rotary Park.
 - An inventory of neighborhood parks may provide a more comprehensive analysis of parks available to residents.
 - Private parks can be difficult to acquire because of maintainence.
 - Section 4: Environmentally Sensitive Areas
 - Sensitive areas can have trails, compostable restrooms and other low impact amenities but no buildings.
- Review of draft plan goals
 - Goal 1
 - ADA equipment (gliders), sensory activities (sandboxes), signage in multiple languages and amenities for vision and hearing impaired will better serve the needs of the community.
 - Activities for all ages is crucial to getting residents to explore the park system. Many park amenities cater to young children. Activities like Frisbee golf and running trails are needed.
 - Amenities for all seasons (warming shed) is important as residents use parks in colder months.
 - Goal 2
 - The addition to a community sports facility is needed as the YMCA is too crowded.
 - Docking stations, bike racks and hydration and tool stations will enhance facilities.
 - Goal 3
 - Parks need more shade and trees.
 - Mature trees should be preserved by inventorying, determining health and creating policy to protect them.
 - American elm trees are pristine in Fall Creek.
 - Campaigns like flagging the biggest tree in the area are good for awareness.
 - Goal 4
 - Adopt-a-park and sponsorship programs will increase awareness and help with maintenance by parks.
 - Goal 5
 - Projects like St. Vincent Hospital’s fitness park, which provides educational elements that motivate, should be accessible by trails.
 - Goal 6
 - Overgrown tree roots pose a safety concern for bicyclists, rollerbladers, etc.
 - Goal 7
 - Geocaching and other hobby organizations will connect residents and encourage them to gather in parks.
 - “Create a rich environment for people to do their ideas.” – Jocelyn Vare
 - “Where adventure meets nature... Meet everybody where they are.” – Leah McGrath
 - Goal 8
 - Online feedback portals make it easier to address maintenance concerns.
 - State of the parks report will keep residents “in the know.”
 - Goal 9
 - Add action item to partner with regional health network.
 - Goal 10

ACTION ITEMS

- Make necessary changes to draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Sections 1-4, to reflect decisions made at meeting – Staff
- **Review Sections 6-11 by October 13 – All Members**
- **Bring feedback from October 7 tour (if attending) to next meeting – All Members**

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- [Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Sections 1 and 4, Excerpt](#)
- [Measuring the Economic Value of a City Parks System](#)