

CITY COMMISSION WORK SESSION MINUTES
January 20, 2009

The meeting of the Winter Park City Commission was called to order by Mayor David Strong at 3:05 p.m. in the Commission Chambers, 401 Park Avenue South, Winter Park, Florida.

Members present:

Mayor David Strong
Commissioner Margie Bridges
Commissioner Phil Anderson
Commissioner Beth Dillaha

Also present:

City Manager Randy Knight
City Attorney Trippe Cheek
Deputy City Clerk Nancy McLean

Absent:

Commissioner Karen Diebel

Parks and Recreation Master Plan Discussion

Parks and Recreation Director John Holland provided a powerpoint presentation on the overview of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. He gave an update on the five master plans: Central Park Master Plan; Golf Course Evaluation; Mead Garden Master Plan; Parks and Recreation Master Plan; and Fleet Peoples Park Master Plan.

Central Park Master Plan

Mr. Holland explained that this was an in-depth study of the history of the property and carefully constructed recommendations for future improvements and renovations. The Central Park Citizen's Task Force was comprised of more than a dozen citizens who provided strict overview and management of the master plan development. He spoke about the written master plan highlights and accomplishments on the west and east sides of the railroad.

He answered questions about maintaining the existing park components and character with renovations and minor improvements. He explained that the CRA funding of \$450,000 will provide for the replacement of the sidewalks, irrigation, park electrical and lighting system, sod, tree planting and improvements to the Central Park stage. Mayor Strong commented that he would like to see a breakdown of costs and how they apply to these elements before they start spending money. Mr. Holland agreed to bring back a full cost analysis.

Commissioner Dillaha commented that as a City we want to determine what kind of stage we need based upon the kinds of activities we have. She suggested that the Parks Department create the needs for the stage and if someone wants to participate financially, it will be the City's plan as opposed to others having their own ideas that may not meet the City's needs.

Mayor Strong commented that even though this has been through the process he believed the Commission should take another look before they move forward. Mr. Holland stated that they were hoping to start after the Winter Park Sidewalk Art Festival. Mayor Strong commented that there is no reason they cannot start, but he wanted an outline of how the money is spent.

Golf Course Evaluation

Mr. Holland explained that Kitson & Partners LLC, were contracted to examine and evaluate the 9 hole golf course management, maintenance and design. They were to provide recommendations for improving the facility as recreational golf business. Their suggestions covered a wide range of ideas from building a new pro-shop clubhouse on the New York Avenue property to hiring an in-house equipment mechanic. They were presented in 3 options: a) minimal, b) moderate, and c) aggressive all based upon costs. He stated that due to the costs involved option a) was selected by default. He commented that staff is preparing a proposal to relocate the pro-shop into the lounge area of the clubhouse building. The front room of the clubhouse would continue as a smaller rental facility and would add daytime options in addition to evening and night. Mr. Holland and City Manager Knight answered questions.

Mayor Strong commented that he wanted to know how much of a greens fee increase would be required to cover the budgetary deficit. He commented that he would like to cover that gap so it's a break even operation and look at this as a goal in next year's budget. He added they can always back off if they find they are losing business because of it.

Commissioner Anderson asked about the process of updating the Central Park Master Plan. Mr. Holland responded. Commissioner Anderson suggested a decorative parking lot and to replace Parking Lot A. He commented that he views master plans as being accomplished in 5 years. Commissioner Dillaha suggested that they postpone changing the plan for another year so they do not take an exorbitant amount of time redoing a Central Park Master Plan until more things are certain. She addressed her preference of focusing on other priorities.

Commissioner Anderson commented that they should look at what they really want to execute going forward, if there is a timeline, and if it fits into our long term operating budget. Mr. Knight explained there is no funding for these master plans for the most part. He addressed the lack of funding for capital projects for the last 8-9 years, unless it was from grant funding until they created room in the budget this year. Commissioner Anderson addressed the CRA plan and the need for a plan for the power and water/sewer companies and for parks to be laid out over a 5 or 10 year period. Commissioner Dillaha commented that in the meantime there is a need for maintaining what we have to a certain level and they need to allocate money to keeping Central Park looking nice as a maintenance type of expenditure.

Mead Garden Master Plan

Mr. Holland explained that the design firm of PBS&J worked closely with the City, Friends of Mead Garden and the Winter Park Garden Club to complete the master plan for the renovation and restoration of the historical gardens. The primary design concern for Mead Garden was to restore and maintain the native habitat. He addressed the 7 design objectives and accomplishments. Mr. Holland answered questions on the Memorandum of Understanding, restoring the native habitat and controlling invasive plants, the new environmental and visitors center and improving the arrival sequence

and circulation. Mayor Strong commented that it would be great if both the Garden Club and Mead Garden would come an agreement as to what should be done.

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Mr. Holland explained that this is an overall view and evaluation of the parks and recreation facilities. It provides direction for maintaining an acceptable level of service and facilities for today's citizens and the future. He commented that the City's comprehensive plan states that a master plan should be done every 10 years and the last master plan was completed in 1994. The new comprehensive plan recommends that the master plan be updated every 5 years. He also spoke about the master plan recommendations and accomplishments. Mr. Holland answered questions.

Commissioner Anderson commented that he would like to have a discussion on expanding the recreation facilities to include 8 new multipurpose fields, 1 basketball court, 6 boat ramps, 4 fishing docks and 1 linear mile of trails. Mr. Holland commented that when all of this started coming together the economy was thriving and a lot of things may change. He stated it is possible it may be pushed back in the future for a population with this type of growth in the next 20 years.

Commissioner Anderson commented that the multipurpose field shortage was acute based on the competition for sports activities. He commented that it troubles him that we have softball fields that are predominately used by nonresident groups when they may have resident needs that should be addressed first. He believed this was a good tool to show where to reallocate space. There was further discussion on ways to reallocate space and on the boat ramps. Mayor Strong commented that he would like Mr. Holland to make the judgment about agreeing or disagreeing with the recommendations and whatever he agrees with, determine how they are going to accommodate that.

Fleet Peeples Park Master Plan

Mr. Holland stated that this 23 acre park facility is currently serving as a "dog friendly off-leach park". The park has a support organization called Friends of Fleet Peeples Park (FFPP). FFPP have provided the services of local landscape architects and have provided a master plan of the park property. The master plan has been received by the Parks and Recreation Commission and accepted by the City Commission with contingencies that include an executed memorandum of understanding and the implementation of an entry fee system.

He explained the action to date and answered questions. Commissioner Bridges commented that they are continuing meetings between the Parks Board and the FFPP Board with the idea that the Memorandum of Understanding is being worked out for clarification for all of the responsibilities of each party. Mr. Holland commented that the Parks Board had a meeting last week and Kim Allen made a presentation regarding the concerns of environmental hazards. He stated that they are looking into that and will have possible work sessions and follow up with the FFPP to try and have some type of understanding. Commissioner Anderson commented that they should ensure that the environmental concerns are understood. He spoke about the intense use of the park and maybe that can be managed through fees or limitations or that the conclusion might


be that the intensity is not an issue. He commented that he would like to see the dogs continue to have access to the waterfront, but they need to address the environmental issues that surround that.

Mayor Strong agreed with Commissioner Anderson and commented that another issue that should be added is whether or not the Lake Trail is something they want to revise in terms of Fleet Peoples. He commented that he wanted to see these issues addressed between of FFPP and the Parks Board and the Commission can resolve it if they cannot come to an understanding.

Commissioner Dillaha commented that Mead Garden is an on-leash area and there are dogs that are constantly off-leash and it is becoming a problem. She stated they need to make it clear that this is not an off-leash area and it is supposed to be a botanical garden and a habitat. Mr. Holland stated there are signs being made and will be placed appropriately. Commissioner Bridges commented that it is an educational process and suggested placing an article in an Update newsletter.

Mayor Strong commented that he wanted Mr. Holland's evaluation of our overall master plan park utilization and wanted feedback within the next few months. He also stated that he wanted to look at the shortage of multipurpose fields in the master plan in the next few months and asked Mr. Holland to return with the Central Park cost analysis.

The meeting adjourned at 4:38 p.m.



Cynthia S. Bonham, City Clerk