

**CITY OF WINTER PARK
CITY COMMISSION WORK SESSION
April 27, 2009**

The Winter Park City Commission work session was called to order by Mayor Kenneth Bradley at 6:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers, 401 Park Avenue South, Winter Park, Florida.

Members present:

Mayor Kenneth Bradley
Commissioner Margie Bridges
Commissioner Phil Anderson
Commissioner Beth Dillaha
Commissioner Karen Diebel

Also present:

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

Mayor Bradley commented that there will be a public hearing in the near future regarding this matter. He stated that there seems to be conflicting variations of the master plans and it needs to be addressed. He wanted resolution as a Commission and to ratify a Fleet Peoples Park master plan to move forward.

Parks and Recreation Director John Holland explained the process to date. He gave a presentation titled "Fleet Peoples Park addressing environmental concerns and reaching consensus on City-based recreational needs." He discussed the environmental concerns of controlling storm runoff into Lake Baldwin, controlling erosion of park property, establishing aquatic vegetation on the lakefront and overloading the off-leash park capacity. He also spoke about the criteria of off-leash and on-leash areas; the proposed project cost summary; and the conclusions and recommendations. Mr. Holland answered questions. Commissioner Dillaha asked for the labor costs. Mr. Holland stated that he would provide that information.

Mayor Bradley believed that there are two master plans on the table; the one approved last year by the Commission and the Parks and Recreation Commission and the substantial modification to the plan.

Commissioner Dillaha stated that they accepted the master plan that was presented, the Parks board worked on it and a committee was formed to address the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). She commented that after the completion of more research, it caused the board to take a different action and make a different recommendation. She stated that was the reason why the recommendation is different than a year ago. She added that this is a multi-use park and how the previous plan was configured would have eliminated a lot of the uses because they are not compatible. She stated that she received a letter from City Lakes Department employee Tim Egan regarding compatible and non-compatible uses. She commented that they need an off-leash dog area 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (24/7). She explained Mr. Egan's concern of mixing uses and believed that was not safe as far as exposure to kids using the park after it has already been used as an off-leash dog park.

She stated that part of this plan is to accommodate multiple uses within the park, allow for an off-leash dog park to be accessible 24/7 and to have the other side of the park for other uses 24/7 which would be a compromise to accommodate the different uses.

Commissioner Anderson recollected the Commission directing the Parks Board to handle the environmental issues and to start the negotiation of the MOU with the Friends of Fleet Peoples Park in a manner similar to Friends of Mead Garden. He stated the combination of the two directives ended up with due diligence being done on both sides. He believed the process became complicated by the environmental issues and things that were discovered by the environmental review. He addressed the inability to reach a conclusion between the two parties on how to resolve those issues because they had fundamental differences immerge based on the research they conducted. He stated that he was concerned about the operational uses of the park and there should be discussion on the appropriate acreage and other uses that could be accommodated. He added that it is a shared space between Orlando and Winter Park and was committed to making sure the beach use co-exists. He wanted to learn more about monitoring of the E. coli. Mr. Holland responded that they will continue to monitor this twice a month.

Commissioner Dillaha commented that initially she was not in favor of the plan but she walked the property and realized that it was a large space and it was fair. She commented that the goal is to accommodate all these uses on this property and believed it could be done. She stated that she wanted to challenge Orlando to use some of that massive acreage they have to supply 4 or 5 acres for the people who live there. She commented that those in Orlando or Baldwin Park should go to the City Council and say they need a dog park in their neighborhood as well. She added that they should not be hosting a regional dog park and that their responsibility is to provide uses for Winter Park citizens and to provide beachfront access and all the multi uses. She stated they could come up with a fair plan that suits everyone's needs by having it smaller. This would be more manageable from a cost standpoint and with keeping track of where the dogs are. She commented that most cities have carrying capacities with a certain amount of dogs per size of the park which is a good idea. Commissioner Anderson suggested improving the dog wash and having it in the budget. Mr. Holland stated they are working on ways to improve it.

Commissioner Diebel commented that she had issues with the two different master plans being presented and understanding how they are supposed to find middle ground when there are so many varying opinions on both sides.

Commissioner Anderson commented that the goal over time is to have a passive monitoring situation for the park. He suggested a daily fee and wanted to see an enforcement package such as a citation or fine strategy. He also wanted to know if there is a dangerous animal response program. He asked about the MOU and commented that it was a fundraising document.

Commissioner Bridges explained the outline of the MOU and that the Friends of Fleet Peoples Park Board and the Parks Board met together to delineate the responsibilities and to determine the costs. She stated the boards would meet annually and prioritize the work and commented that funding and fees are critical components. She also addressed that they have not discussed the health and safety of people or animals and that the fees were a methodology by which you could control healthy dogs being in your park. She commented that the dogs would enter the park based on registration that they were vaccinated. She stated that the registration would be part of the resident or non-resident fee.

Commissioner Bridges addressed further concerns. She commented that in 2008, Mr. Egan sent the Parks Board a recommendation related to dog use at Fleet Peeples Park on Lake Baldwin. She read portions from the letter which is attached as part of the minutes.

She stated that she continues to be in favor of dogs being allowed to use the water access but struggles with the science and the reports from the Health Department stating that the two uses present issues for us to deal with. She explained that they need to be careful when they do this and they need to have good park design for both the dog and people park. She commented that this it is incumbent upon them to give this park a good analysis and attention so they create the best possible park. She wanted to continue to seek good partners to find citizens and neighbors who will help maintain that standard once we implement the park. She stated that if they agree to it being this type of park then she wants to see this Commission and future Commissions agree to continue funding it.

Commissioner Dillaha commented that this is very important and requires a lot of due diligence and that she put together information that she wants the Commission to review. She added that she would give this to the Clerk's office to pass on.

Discussion ensued about scheduling future Commission meetings regarding Fleet Peeples Park. Commissioner Diebel commented that the Commission could provide direction on the acreage/percentage of the use of the park and see if that needs to be different than what has been advocated, alternative uses of the park, and the funding of what we need to start those initiatives. She added that this is where the Commission can begin to resolve these two different master plans going forward on this issue which have been highly discussed.

Commissioner Anderson commented that these were core starting points and he also wanted to look at how much of the waterfront goes to boating versus the dog park. Commissioner Diebel advocated discussing this at the May 26 meeting to see if they can come to a consensus and to define the work from there. Mayor Bradley agreed to schedule this for the May 26 Commission agenda and commented that they will schedule a public hearing from that point forward.

The meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.



City Clerk Cynthia Bonham