



The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met at the Administrative Office Building located at 5841 Brookshire Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28216 at 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Present:

- Scott McClure, Chair**
- Brad Pearce, Vice Chair**
- John Barry**
- James Brown**
- Larry Huelsman**
- Joe Pata**
- Kirk Otey**
- Beverly Lawston**
- Brenda McMoore (arrived 8:10 p.m.)**

Absent:

- Owen Furueth (sick)**
- Jeff Tarte (business)**
- Michael Noble (business)**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Scott McClure, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The Park and Recreation Vision Statement was read by Commissioner Wilson.

The Park and Recreation Mission Statement were read by Commissioner Huelsman.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

(1) Introductions

(2) Proclamations and Awards

(3) Public Appearance

- a. Kevin Metcalf, NW Nature Preserve District Manager, introduced Ed McLean and John Misenheimer. Mr. McLean and Mr. Misenheimer, representing the Catawba Valley Scottish Society (CVSS), ask that the name of the site they operate to be officially named "Rural Hill". They explained that over the years Rural Hill has been referred to as Rural Hill Farm, Rural Hill and Rural Hill Plantation. Based on historical documents, the name of the site is simply

Rural Hill. The official name will help with efforts to brand the site and to promote events and programs as well as create consistency.

Motion was made by Commissioner Pearce to accept the official naming of Rural Hill as "Rural Hill", which was seconded by Commissioner Pata and approved unanimously.

- b.** Don Seriff, Natural Resource Manager, introduced Lisa Gaffney to explain and provide information regarding the request to rename the Center for BioDiversity Studies to the "Dr. James F. Matthews Center for Bio Diversity Studies". Dr. Matthews, a retired professor of UNC Charlotte, was instrumental in the conservation and creation of natural areas throughout the county.

Motion was made by Commissioner Brown to endorse the renaming of the Center for BioDiversity Studies to the Dr. James F. Matthews Center for Bio Diversity Studies, which was seconded by Commissioner Wilson and approved unanimously.

(4) Program Presentation

- a.** Mario Chang, Sr. Fiscal Administrator presented the Board with an FY09 Budget Request Summary/Update. (**Note:** The handout provided by Mario Chang is included in the PRC minutes binder housed in the Director's office.)
- b. 2008 Master Plan Presentation:** Leon Younger of Pros Consulting and Ron Vine of ETC Institute and members of Park and Recreation staff presented the 2008 Comprehensive Master Plan to the Park Commissioners. Leon said that when the Master Plan process began, three key themes were identified that the plan would be built around:
- Conservation and stewardship
 - Parks and greenways
 - Recreation programs and facilities.

The purpose of the plan is to:

1. Guide and direct the Department over the next 10 years
2. Update the nature preserves plan
3. Update the greenways plan
4. Identify the gaps in park and recreation facilities across the county and in the towns
5. Identify remaining pieces of land that could be acquired for parks and nature preserves
6. Establish what to do with the land banked properties
7. Develop a program plan for the Department
8. Establish park and facilities amenity standards and needs
9. Establish a capital improvement plan for existing assets

The Master Plan presentation was presented as follows with various concerns as noted:

- **Household Survey:** This was covered by Ron Vine. Some of the concerns expressed were: voting status of those surveyed, the

percentage of African Americans included in the survey versus Caucasians, how the need for teen programming expressed in the survey compared to the need expressed in the community meetings, and balancing the survey results against our obligation with regard to the growth of our community over the next 10 years. Jim Garges noted that it will be important to continue doing surveys and to update the Master Plan on a continuing basis with the first update to be done in 4 years.

- **Standards Sheet:** Leon went over the information contained in the standards sheet and stressed its extreme importance. The main concerns expressed were how public and private facilities played into the inventory.
- **Green Printing Process:** Leon covered the green printing process which included establishing a critical habitat protection map and evaluating the land banked property and determining what designation they should have in meeting the community's needs. Concerns expressed were: changing the use of land from one park type to another from the original plan suggestion, understanding the state dedication process of natural areas and the understanding of what is included in the "development" cost for a nature preserve.
- **Greenway Master Plan Update:** Julie Clark, Division Director of Greenway Planning and Development, covered the action plan associated with the Greenway Master Plan update. The main objective in the first 5 years will be to determine where the county can put greenway trails on the ground on land currently owned by the county. The next 5 years will be focused on land acquisition. The goal is to have 61 miles completed by the end of the 10 years.
- **Park Facilities and Gap Analysis:** Leon went over the park facilities and gap analysis involving a two step process of evaluating existing facilities and prioritizing needs.
- **Capital Improvement Process – Maintenance:** Jeff Robinson, Division Director of Specialized Park Services, shared the Capital Maintenance Plan of the Master Plan, which spells out the projected maintenance and repair of our facilities and the projected replacement schedule for major amenities over the next 10 years.
- **Capital Improvement:** Lee Jones, Division Director of Capital Planning, shared the CAN process for new developments and improvements to existing facilities.
- **Land Acquisition:** Steve Law, from Real Estate Services, shared the methodology for identifying and acquiring land.

At the conclusion of the presentation each commissioner gave their individual thoughts and concerns regarding the endorsement of the Master Plan as presented.

- Kirk Otey - Supported – would like to see the facilities gap analysis to fully address facilities and programs provided by non-public entities and other partners of the PRC.
- Joe Pata – Supported – concern regarding if the endorsement of the Master Plan is also a financial commitment
- Larry Huelsman – Supported – concern that the land need and associated money had not been presented to the PRC
- John Barry – Supported – sees the Master Plan as a blueprint and not a limiting document that will provide guidance over the next 10 years
- Mary Wilson – Supported – praised staff and the consultants for the excellent work done on the Master Plan and sees it as providing a methodology as opposed to nailing down numbers
- Brad Pearce – Supported – the plan provides a sense of where we can go; the possibility to create a better park system and to leave a positive legacy.
- Brenda McMoore – Supported – felt that it was a great plan and blueprint that can be fine tuned as we move forward. Would like to have information provided on the specifics of ranking in her district.
- Beverly Lawston – Supported - felt honored to be a part of the process, would like to have information provided on the concerns expressed by the commissioners before going before the BOCC.
- James Brown – Supported – sees the CNA and Master Plan as living documents that will change over time
- Michael Noble – Supported – (Michael was contacted via phone for his endorsement)
- Scott McClure – Supported – felt that if we are going to be professionally recognized as an enthusiastic partnership of elected officials, staff, employees and the community, then the Master Plan must be endorsed by the PRC.

A motion was made by Commissioner Pearce to pass a resolution endorsing the Master Plan as follows, which was seconded by Commissioner Wilson and approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Director and staff of the Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department (the "Department") have engaged various consultants for the purpose of preparing an updated Master Plan for the Department and its resources (the "2008 Master Plan"); and

WHEREAS, the Director and others have presented details of the 2008 Master Plan to the Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Commission (the "PRC") at its regularly scheduled meeting on April 8, 2008 for review and endorsement for presentation to and adoption by the Mecklenburg County Board of County Commissioners (the "Board"); and

WHEREAS, after presentation and discussion, the PRC has endorsed the 2008 Master Plan at the April 8, 2008 meeting and desires to present its recommendation to the Board.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the PRC endorses the 2008 Master Plan and strongly recommends that the Board votes to approve and authorize the Department to adopt the 2008 Master Plan.

Jim celebrated by presenting the PRC and team with T-shirts that recognized the 2008 Master Plan and recognizing Deputy Dot Law for the hard work she had done on the Plan to make it all work.

Leon concluded by thanking everyone involved in the process. He said he had worked for many cities and counties but that this was the best group and most responsive group he had ever worked with. He expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to work with the Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department.

Staff Reports and Requests

(5) Appointments –Advisory Councils – Applicants

CPD III: Appointment for CPD III was deferred to the May, 2008 meeting by Commissioner Otey.

NEPD: In the absence of Commissioner Furuseth, appointments for the NEPD were deferred to the May, 2008 meeting by Chair McClure.

(7) Advisory Council – Committee Reports

(8) Director's Report

Director Garges, deferred the Director's Report due to the late hour.

(9) PRC Chair Report

(10-12) Consent Items

All items were received as information and approved.

Staff Reports and Requests

Adjournment

Having no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 10:25