



CITY OF FOREST PARK
MAYOR & COUNCIL
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES
August 30, 2018 6:00 P.M.

Call to Order: The Special Called Meeting of Mayor and Council of August 30, 2018 was called to order by Mayor Angelyne Butler at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Angelyne Butler, Councilmembers Dabouze Antoine, Latresa Wells, Kimberly James, Allan Mears

Councilwoman Sandra Bagley absent

Also present were City Manager Angela Redding, Director of Finance Ken Thompson, Interim Director of Planning and Zoning Fredalyn Frasier, IT Director Darren Duke, City Clerk Shalonda Brown, City Attorney Michael Williams

Starr Park Master Plan Presentation: Greg Kaiser introduced Christina Hassle who is also from Lord Aeck Sargent and Carlos Perez with Perez Planning and Design. He stated they will be giving an update on the Starr Park Master Plan and to give some design options to get some consensus in order to finalize their master plan.

A copy of the summation was given to everyone on the Dais to show the connectivity between the park and the neighborhood, the park and Main Street and the park and the remaining of the city.

Carlos Perez stated the purpose was to develop a plan for the park itself and the neighborhood around it with the intent to revitalize that area. The scope was written to understand what the needs of the city residents are and to use that initiate a potential program and improvements for the park. He stated they spoke to approximately 460 people throughout the process including an advisory committee, experts from the metro area on parks and open spaces and at very special events (including spring festival and public workshops), stakeholder interviews and staff interviews. The next approach was data analysis and the final approach was observations based off of professional experience.

Carlos stated the first big finding was the idea of providing new affordable diverse recreation programs and activities. He referenced the chart and gave the top priorities list: Community Special events, Teen programs, movies in the



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park, athletic special events (5K, marathons etc..) GED continuing programs, Nature Programs, Youth Fitness & Wellness and Adult Fitness & Wellness.

The next big findings were to renew the city's parks and recreation facilities and a lot of that applies to Starr Park. He stated some of the facilities are old and need some investment and they found that through the process. He referenced the chart and gave priority activities list: walk, jog, run, exercise, stroll in the park, walk and curb their dogs on the leash, riding bikes, interact and play in splash pads and play pickup games. The third recommendation was to increase park and recreation resources. Carlos stated they wanted to share the concepts with Mayor and Council to get an idea on which concept to move forward with.

Mr. Kaiser stated they never really got a real consensus on which way the city wanted to go. He stated a walking trail and splash pad was agreed on. So he stated they are there today to get direction on where the city wants to go. During his presentation he showed various options. He stated Starr Park is at a crossroads and you can either fix up what you have or something new can be created that might address different needs.

Councilwoman James asked if there is a way to have a combination of active parks and urban parks because some of the issues that they are having is the running out of space for teams that want to be here. Greg Kaiser stated yes. He stated they are trying to present examples of Active, Urban and Hybrid. He stated he hopes to get an idea from Mayor & Council on the direction they want to go in because there are many different directions. He stated the city has Fort Gillem as a resource which is an untapped possibility. He stated Fort Gillem can easily absorb every single sports field you have in Starr Park. That would be an opportunity to take from Starr Park and relocate to Fort Gillem to create a destination for travel leagues. He stated they don't want to remove anything from Forest Park they want to try and service the community as best they can.



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Mayor Butler stated she knows that outside funding is an option for the completion of this project, but one of her concerns is that the options presented would be so grandiose in nature that our budget will not support it. She asked which option is more in tune with the city's current budget. Mr. Kaiser stated there are two ways to answer that question. He stated if you would take the Active Park which is the cheapest and take what is there now renovating it by doing some select demolition and selective clean up that would be the fastest return, but for the Urban Park or Hybrid Park you would phase it out in sections over a 5-8 year period of time and you would get to an ultimate goal of the new master plan. For the immediate dollars, the Active Park would be the most immediate change/return.

Mr. Kaiser displayed the options and explained what each had to offer:

1. Active Park - maintain as much as the existing athletic program as possible , but remove some of the programming to make room for new programming or flexible space. The things that would be coming out would be picnic shelters, restrooms, and the 3 smallest ball fields would be removed. Based on the renovations of Kiwanis Stadium there will be relocation of the baseball fields to another location, the walking trail would be renovated (widened and lengthened) and the amphitheater would be renovated in place. The baseball fields that would be taken out would be replaced with multipurpose lawn, the perimeter wall of the stadium removed for a more open feel. The big ball fields would stay the same, T-ball field turns into a small dog park, the senior center is transformed to a teen center that will have basketball courts, sand volleyball etc. Hines Ward Pass would be narrowed and provided some parking to minimize the effect of that road and possibly turn it into an art project for the community. Where the picnic shelters were it would become more flexible open lawn space. The walking trail has become longer and now it's a third of a mile, a splash pad was added, the soccer field stays where it is, the senior center is relocated with a community garden available.



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Mayor Butler stated instead of having the senior center and teen center segregated, why not have a multi-generational facility. She stated during school, the seniors can have access and during the summer the facility could be shared. Greg stated that you could use the existing building as is. Mayor Butler stated perhaps since it would be multi-generational it could be used as shared learning between the generations.

Councilwoman Wells stated she doesn't think that the younger generation would want to share a facility.

Councilman Antoine thanked the team for coming. He asked how many people were surveyed and gave you opinions. Carlos stated from all of the events that they have had it was over 460 people. Councilman Antoine stated you are aware that there is about 19,000 people that live in the city. He stated it's not a fair evaluation. One of the concerns that he has is that one plan is you don't want to bring in too much and the other plans will totally change the city. Councilman Antoine stated his focus is since we have a population of people that are low income he is not in favor of a plan to drive people out. If there is a plan that can improve and cause people to stay he will support that plan. He stated the city has aging population and the plan has to target the seniors.

Carlos stated that is why the project is focused on 3 elements: citywide analysis, the design of Starr Park and surrounding neighborhood recommendations. He stated the neighborhood recommendation will not be discussed tonight because they wanted to focus on Starr Park, but part of these are policies that will help make sure people are not moved out. Mr. Kaiser stated the goal of the park plan is to spur interest, development and investment into Starr Park, the neighborhood and to the city itself. He stated though it's a demographic in Forest Park there is potential for new families to come in and the city to grow. Mr. Kaiser stated if you cater to one demographic then you are turning your back on others. He stated they are trying to be inclusive.



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Councilman Antoine asked who is a part of the planning committee. Mr. Kaiser stated the design team who is before you today, were contracted by the city planning office and the previous city manager started the process and ultimately the governing body will ratify any ideas that they come up with.

Councilman Antoine stated the reason he asked is because there are some surrounding cities that are redeveloping their downtown and he wanted to know if they have worked with any of those cities. He stated those cities have events that attract over 7,000 individuals. Carlos stated that is why they are trying to mirror some of those concepts.

Councilwoman James asked if it could be explained more about what the idea is for the Veterans Memorial and also Hines Ward Pass. Mr. Kaiser stated for Hines Ward Pass the plan is to narrow the road because it is so wide right now with travel lanes and head in parking. He stated wide roads encourages speeding, so they want to discourage it as a cut through. He stated vehicular traffic is still allowed through Hines Ward Pass they just changed the curb lines and brought them in and made it narrower. It will still be parking on the street just not continuous. He referenced another area and stated the idea is to make it a civic art project where people, kids, community groups can come in and execute muralist or artist ideas. It won't be permanent therefore, it can be changed every couple of years and that gets people excited. The Veterans Memorial he stated they were not really prescribing more to it than a location. He stated they wanted to keep it in the park.

2. Urban Park – Mr. Kaiser stated in the next plan Kiwanis Stadium and all of the ball fields are removed. The ball fields at the county owned land are removed, miniature golf, amphitheater, tennis courts are removed. He stated the pool will remain soccer fields, picnic shelters are still there. M. Kaiser stated the senior center will just be renovated and Hines Ward Pass. He stated with the new plan they are trying to create a true flexible civic space and what that means is that they have taken the vast majority of athletic



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program uses and pulled them out and relocated them to Fort Gillem. He stated that will free up the bulk of the park to be reutilized as gathering space, flexible use space and a slightly different program space. Georgia Avenue will now cut through the park and Hines Ward Pass is still cutting through the park, but they have diminished the capacity for cars to drive through. Mr. Kaiser stated in an effort to connect to the adjacent neighborhoods on either side, they are using the Bridge Avenue median and pulling it into the park on the north and south sides. The central tree planting on Bridge Avenue will cut across Lake and Starr Park itself. He stated they've talked about the paving of Hines Ward Pass from asphalt to something nicer with the idea being if you have a farmers market or spring festival all you will have to do is put up a few cones and it will no longer be a street it would be a plaza. The cross access from Hines Ward is a large green lawn area in which they have anchored the west end of the civic space with a new amphitheater performance stage, the senior center will remain in the same location and there will be a teen center. He stated similar to the other plan they tried to focus around the teen center, so there would be basketball courts, volleyball, and a possible skate park. On the senior center side there would be community gardens or more manicured green space. Mr. Kaiser stated where Kiwanis Stadium was once sitting it would become a dog park sitting in the corner. The wall would be removed to give the park an open feel. The splash pad element becomes the focal point in the park and becomes more of a sculpture element. If there is an event at the amphitheater, you will have the ability to stage a couple thousand people. The splash pad could be turned off and you can block off the street and it would give you additional space. There will be additional gathering space, restrooms and picnic area. One of their bigger moves is the extension of Georgia Avenue and opening up the other end of the park for future development (mixed-use, commercial, retail etc). The soccer fields stayed the same, kept the parking the same for the recreation



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center and city planning office, but by extending Georgia Avenue it created a new front edge to the park. The walking trail has been extended to a half mile and more natural space was introduced. The museum house could be repurposed.

Mayor Butler asked Mr. Kaiser is he at liberty to discuss cost or can an estimate be given. Mr. Kaiser stated no because that is a pretty time consuming process and that will be in the next phase of the project, once they have chosen the direction they would like to move in. He stated the options that they are showing may not fit in the budget and they would have to be phased. During the first stage they would try to do something that would get an initial return on your investment dollar. That would get people excited once they see the change and at that point you could discuss possible fund raising, corporate sponsorship or SPLOST.

Councilwoman Wells stated she likes both plans and the second option is perfect, however the baseball fields would be completely gone, she wanted to know is there a way to incorporate them in that plan. Mr. Kaiser stated the next plan would do just that. He stated even in the Urban Park you could adjust to fit the baseball field. He stated the program elements are just ideas based on what they've heard and from the feedback that they have received.

3. Active-Urban Park – Mr. Kaiser stated what they have tried to do is combine the two and preserve some of the program developments but at the same time reorganize the geometry of the park to be more of a civic space. In this version Kiwanis Stadium stays where it is and gets renovated in place. Some of the green space was taken out and put in parking to support not only the stadium but the relocated ball fields. He stated they wanted to reactivate the other end of the park as an active recreation zone. The senior center will change to a teen center. He stated the same would be for Georgia Avenue where it cuts across except now a brand new senior center will be added. The soccer fields will be future senior housing. The soccer field would be taken out. He stated a



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statement piece can be added that would take you to a huge active lawn, the walking trail will be a half mile, the pool stays where it is. The amphitheater would be relocated to create a more intimate performance space. The splash pad would be a recreational amenity as well as a civic marker. There will be plenty of perimeter parking.

Councilwoman James stated that she has a couple comments. She stated she is leaning towards the idea of combining the 1st plan and last plan. She stated she doesn't know where we stand as far as baseball fields at Fort Gillem. She stated they want to move forward with making progress in Starr Park. She doesn't think removing all of the fields and moving them to Fort Gillem is the right thing to do. She stated she likes the walking path being extended.

Councilman Mears stated the bottom line is money and we have to be able to finance it. He stated the main thing that needs to be looked at is where we would go next to keep moving forward.

Councilwoman Wells stated that she liked the Active-Urban Park because you are not doing away with much and it's a good mixture of all 3.

Councilman Mears stated he agrees with Councilwoman Wells and that would be the moderate move to keep it from being overwhelming.

Councilwoman James stated she wants to combine some of the options from 1 with option 3 for example the walking trail. She stated she likes the active-urban however, with how the dynamics are on paper there are other things that need to be considered. She stated she doesn't want the baseball fields to go away.

Mayor Butler stated option C with the consideration of expanding the walking track is the consensus of the council. Mr. Kaiser stated they would refine the plan and present the budget at a later date.



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Executive Session:

Councilwoman Wells made a motion to recess the Special Called Meeting to enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel, real estate and litigation matters. It was seconded by Councilwoman James. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

The governing body entered into Executive Session at 7:16 p.m.

Councilwoman James made a motion to adjourn the Executive Session and reconvene the Special Called Meeting. It was seconded by Councilwoman Wells. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

Agenda Items:

Resolution to Appoint ADR Member:

A request was made to consider a Resolution to appoint members to Architectural Design Review Board.

Councilwoman James made a motion to table the Resolution. It was seconded by Councilwoman Wells. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

Resolution to Appoint DA Members:

A request was made to consider a Resolution to appoint members to the Development Authority Board.

Councilwoman Wells made a motion to appoint Khan-Duog Le Tran, Alvin Patton and reappoint Lois Wright to the Development Authority Board. It was seconded by Councilwoman James. City Attorney stated for the record Ms. Tran would be filling the expired term of Roy Lunsford, Ms. Wright filling her own expired term and Mr. Patton would be filling the expired term of Don Wright.

Mayor Butler thanked the previous members for their service on the board.

Voting for the motion were: Councilman Antoine, Councilwoman James and Councilwoman Wells. Councilman Mears voted against the motion. The motion carried.



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Adjournment: Councilwoman Wells made a motion to adjourn. It was seconded Councilwoman James. Voting for the motion was unanimous.