

Work Session Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, February 21, 2012, at 9:32 p.m., Mayor Eva Galambos presiding.

STAFF DISCUSSION ITEMS

Recreation and Parks

1. Abernathy Greenway Project

Director Recreation and Parks Ronnie Young stated staff has reviewed and measured distances at the park between the playable art and the phase four parking lot. After considering citizen input and Council direction, staff revised the plan relocating the Spider Walk art piece to the east end of the park next to Wright Road. A set of restrooms with an extension pavilion will be constructed in the center of the park. The park plan has been revised to have only one set of restrooms on the north side of the park. From Brandon Mill Road to the restroom location is about 1,065 feet. From the restrooms to Wright Road is about 1,065 feet. The restrooms would be located in the middle of the park in close proximity to the playable art.

Councilmember Chip Collins asked what the distance is from the eyebrow parking lot to Wright Road.

Councilmember Gabriel Sterling responded the distance is 2,050 feet.

Councilmember Collins stated a concern is when visitors come to see the playable art, will they park in the eyebrow parking lot or on Wright Road. He asked how close the first piece of playable art will be to the parking lot.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated the first piece of playable art will be about 600 feet from the parking lot.

Councilmember Collins stated there is concern that the thirty-six parking spaces may not be enough for the usage of the park. He does not think that the parking lot on the other side of Abernathy Road will serve the north side of the park.

Mayor Eva Galambos stated there will be a demand for the playground area plus the playable arts area.

Councilmember Tibby DeJulio asked if staff has data on how many people visit Overlook Park.

Councilmember Dianne Fries stated a shuttle is required to bus people to and from the parking below the dam to Overlook Park all summer long.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated staff only keeps track of the number of visitors to the park on Saturdays and Sundays.

Councilmember Sterling asked what those numbers are.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated the number of visitors on the weekend can range from 400 to 500.

Mayor Galambos stated the Overlook parking lot is often full during weekdays as well.

Councilmember Karen Meinzen McEnerny stated Overlook Park, Old Riverside Park, Chastain Park, and the youth ball field are all built to attract visitors for usage. Abernathy Park was to be a mitigating park to buffer the neighbors. The eyebrow parking lot should be built now, but not the Wright Road parking lot. After the eyebrow parking lot is built, staff should keep track of the number of visitors to see if more parking is needed. This is a fair request in consideration of the neighborhood.

Councilmember John Paulson stated the thirty-six parking spaces will probably not be sufficient. He would like to build the eyebrow parking lot and then later decide if the parking lot at Wright Road is needed.

Councilmember Fries asked if screening of the parking lot will be part of the plan.

Director Recreation and Parks Young responded yes. Staff recommends relocating the restrooms near the eyebrow parking. Phase four has been designed and is ready to go to bid in another month when the GDOT consultants review the plan. The plan does not include a parking lot or restrooms on Wright Road. Protective fencing will need to be installed between the playable art and the street. Staff believes there will be an immediate need for additional parking at some location.

Councilmember Fries stated if a parking lot is not placed at Wright Road, the cars will park along that street. There will be a need for the parking lot and it could be screened. She does not want the Police Department spending time on illegally parked cars.

Councilmember Collins stated he agrees with waiting on the Wright Road parking lot, but it probably will be needed. There are no other options on the north side where a parking lot can be installed. He asked what the cost would be if the Wright Road parking lot is installed at a later date.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated he does not think there will be a big financial drawback to waiting.

Councilmember Collins asked how long it would take to construct the parking lot at Wright Road.

Director Recreation and Parks Young stated there are issues on the lot with stormwater drainage. Staff has not yet addressed those issues. Once the parking lot is designed, it would take about three months to construct, including the greenery barriers.

Councilmember DeJulio stated this park will be exceptionally high in usage with the playable art being at this location. He has no issues with not building the Wright Road parking at this time. The residents on Wright Road should be prepared that visitors to the park will probably park on Wright Road. He does not see any sense in the City towing the cars of Sandy Springs residents.

Mayor Galambos stated the City would like to keep track of the property values with the development of this new park. Past experience has shown that when a park is built, the adjacent property values increase.

Councilmember DeJulio stated properties around Chastain Park, Piedmont Park, and Central Park in New York City are some of the most expensive.

There was a consensus of Council to build the eyebrow parking lot and pavilion, but wait on the Wright Road Parking lot.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

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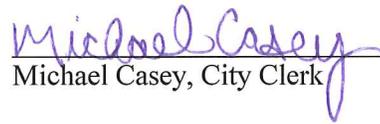
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Date Approved: March 6, 2012



Eva Galambos
Eva Galambos, Mayor



Michael Casey
Michael Casey, City Clerk