

## Henderson County Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

Tuesday, October 10, 12pm, AAC

In attendance: Jeff Donaldson, Chair, Corum Smith, Terry Maybin, Jen Hensley, Ralph King, Sue Myers, Phillip Ellis. County staff present: John Mitchell, and Laura Rice, Erin Hendrix, Tim Hopkin, Karen Saine, Bridgette Galloway, Matt Russell. Planning Department staff present: Autumn Radcliff and Stedman Smith, and Allen McNeil.

Meeting called to order at 12:11pm. The minutes from the September 13<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved with a motion from Terry, second by Jenn.

No public input.

John begins the meeting with an introduction of one of the new board members, Phillip Ellis, who was appointed by the County Commissioners. John and Phillip worked together on the environmental committee and both have young children. Phillip continues the introduction stating that he grew up in South Carolina and has lived in Western North Carolina for two years. He has a wife and two children and enjoys white water kayaking and anything that has to do with water or the outdoors.

John briefly describes the second new board member, Tricia King, by stating that she is a landscape architect, has done some work of the Greenway Trail, and has children who attend Mountain Community School. John reached out to each new board member individually when they were appointed and took Tricia to the Greenway to look at ways to mitigate the work required there.

New Business:

Parks and Recreation Update by John Mitchell:

- Tim got an award from the Tennis Association for all the work put into Jackson Park's tennis endeavors. The Advisory Board had much to do with the success of those efforts and we are appreciative.
- The Greenway is currently under construction. We know that it is not a long-term solution and that it won't solve the problems completely, but we are fighting for it until a long term decision can be reached.
- Tuxedo Park had its grand opening. There were about 30 people at the County Ribbon Cutting and roughly 60 people at the community celebration the next day. The County Commissioners were pleased and enjoyed themselves.
- The British Car Show was at Jackson Park on September 30<sup>th</sup> and had a great turn out.
- Edneyville Community Center had several fun events that in September and seems to be doing very well.
- Farm City Day was a success. Elected Officials and local dignitaries shucked corn and had a good time.
- Parks and Recreation participated in the Fiesta put on by Hola Carolina and passed out 400 soccer balls to children at the event on Main Street.
- The Monster House movie and the Halloween Carnival are set for October 21<sup>st</sup> with a big blow up screen and should be a great family event.
- UNC Asheville's Cross County Club is also this month and should have a good turn out of people.

#### Farm City Day Questions:

That's all, it's a busy Fall for Parks and Recreation. Jenn asks if Farm City Day had some vendors that didn't show up. It was very spread out and seemed to be missing people. Karen answered that all but one vendor showed and that sometimes the vendors don't set up exactly in the lines so it can look like someone is supposed to occupy the spot, but they aren't. Jenn asks if there is a way to condense the event so that it isn't so sparse. John says probably and that we are always looking for suggestions. He asks Karen how long we've been doing Farm City Day. She says since 1996. Jenn asks when planning for the event starts. Karen answers, in March. Jenn asks If we can condense the number of vendors and Sue asks what vendors we allow and if it's been opened to the public or non-profits. Karen states that non-profits don't pay for table space and for-profit businesses pay \$25 for a spot. Most vendors are local. Sue suggests that Farm City Day contact vendors who didn't get spots at the Apple Festival. Can we reach out? Karen says she doesn't know of a way to do that.

John asks Karen to do a presentation about Farm City Day at the next Advisory Board Meeting to help answer the questions of the board. Jenn agrees and asks how many people attended this year's event. Karen estimates that it is around 12,000 – 15,000 people. It is very spread out and they've tried different counting methods but there is just no way to get an exact number. Jenn says that those numbers are very surprising to her. Sue agrees and says that she knows it's spread out but that the number seem high. Suggests that we open it up to more people like those from the Garden Jubilee. Terry says that the space of the event can be deceiving and the numbers sound appropriate to her. John reiterates that he will get Karen to do a presentation next meeting. He views Farm City Day as a success but it is the responsibility of the board to give us direction. Terry states that attendance might have been low this year because of the weather. Sue asks if they still have a Farm City Day Parade. Karen responds that they do not.

#### Appellate Nominations:

Jeff asks if there is anything else from the Parks and Recreation Staff. There is not. Jeff instructs that appellate committee nominations are needed. If someone loses rights to use any of the parks, they are entitled to an appeal of that decision. Committee members should have already been in place, so this needs to be done soon. We will need nominations for 5 members and we will vote on them. Terry will bring them to the next meeting.

#### Etowah Concessions:

John says that the board has approved an MOU that has been sent to the Lion's Club. There were some issues that the Club had that they will put into writing and send back the updated document. It should be to the Board by the November meeting. We will review it and if it meets the standards we will approve it.

#### Planning Department:

Autumn informs the board of a survey that will be placed on the website at the end of the month that has usage questions about the county parks. They have gotten feedback from the Parks and Recreation staff and are finalizing the questions. They are working on what to do with the public input once they have it, but will finalize that during the winter months once they have the surveys back. They have been conscious of bias in the questions, making sure they aren't leading, and that the questions

are useful. The process can sound easy but involves lots of work. There are only a few open-ended questions and they are starting on demographics so that they can see who we are planning for.

Allen begins his presentation with unconfirmed 2016 Consensus numbers which are mostly accurate for the area. Gives us a broad overview of our population which stands around 144,209 with a median age of 47.2. There is a graph of the population by age group that states that 29% of the population is between 50-69. 23% is between 30-49. The numbers are based on a 5 year interval. In 2010 the population was 106,740, which is population growth of 40,000. The median age in 2010 was 45.4. Jenn asks if the numbers are from full time residents. Autumn answers that they are from anyone who spends more than half of the year in town. Jenn asks if the numbers include seasonal residents. Autumn says that there is no good way to capture that demographic. John suggests Samples and a spot check of people in and out of the facilities. Jenn says that Flat Rock Park collects that kind of data but that they are a different type of entity. John says that we need to continue to think about samples of our population. Autumn suggests that they take the survey to the core parks.

Sue asks how the demographic numbers have affected schools. Scott says that enrollments are up overall. Sue asks how many graduate verses new enrollments in the last couple years. Scott says that we have about 100 new kindergarteners and we typically graduate 900 seniors. Allen asserts that all age groups have increased since 2010, but the 30+ age group is still the largest. 69-74 age group has had the highest increase in population at around 1% growth. Ages 5-9 have experienced a decrease by -0.5%. The data collected and represented here is an overview with popular trends and just gives us a general idea of the populations that we are serving. Jeff asks to clarify, is 50% of our population over 30 and how does that compare to larger cities like Charlotte? Allen hasn't got specific numbers on other cities but knows that Charlotte and Raleigh have much younger populations of people.

Autumn states that we need to keep in mind the availability of other forms of recreation. What does the county provide and what is lacking in the area? They are looking at a historical overview of county parks for specific info to put in the plan and start setting the stage and looking at the direction we are headed in terms of growth. Phillip asks how age groups correlate to the master plan. Autumn responds that different ages use the parks as different resources. Younger users need programs and playgrounds while more seasoned users play tennis, use the Greenway, and engage in more passive activities. It helps to know what our population wants to use our parks for. Demographics give us an idea of who uses the parks. Allen says that surveys help us know which program is growing so we can make projections for future use.

Closing:

Jeff says that the numbers are eye-opening and everyone agrees. He asks for last remarks. John makes an introduction of Erin Hendrix who has taken over the Administration position in the Park Office and will be in the meetings as a permanent attendee. Johns mentions her previous work history as well as her military service and states that she will be an asset to the department. Jeff reminds everyone of the volunteer appreciation dinner and asks everyone to attend. With no further comments, meeting is adjourned at 12:46pm.