



Office of the City Manager
5200 Emerald Parkway • Dublin, OH 43017-1090
Phone: 614-410-4400 • Fax: 614-410-4490

Memo

To: Members of Dublin City Council

From: Marsha I. Grigsby, City Manager 

Date: October 31, 2013

Initiated By: Michelle Crandall, Assistant City Manager
Fred Hahn, Director of Parks and Open Space
Matt Earman, Director of Recreation Services

Re: CSAC – Proposed Items of Interest

Summary

During the Community Services Advisory Commission's (CSAC) October 8 meeting, the Commission discussed items of interest to bring forward for City Council's review and approval. The Commission currently has only one prior assignment yet to be completed. The following are CSAC's proposed items of interest.

River Trail – River trails provide directional and informational signage highlighting points of interest for those canoeing and kayaking along river corridors. Several areas along the Scioto River provide an opportunity for this type of amenity. As part of this assignment, CSAC would research, discuss and bring forward recommendations regarding the establishment of a river trail along the Scioto River.

Baby Boomer Strategic Plan – City staff has been working on the development of a strategic plan focused on recreational programming and volunteerism needs/wants of Dublin's Baby Boomer population. This plan would be brought forward to CSAC for review and input.

DCRC Space Needs Analysis – Staff will be engaging a consultant to complete a space needs analysis of the DCRC, looking at current and future community demographics, current programming statistics, alternate space availability within the community, and local, regional and national programming trends. A portion of this analysis will involve community input and focus groups. CSAC would participate in the community feedback process and also would provide input regarding the final report findings.

Outdoor Fitness Equipment Site Selection – Included in the current five-year CIP is one set of outdoor fitness equipment. Placement of this equipment in an area that will ensure routine use is important. CSAC would provide input regarding site selection.

Geocaching Mapping and Registration – Geocaching is a popular outdoor treasure hunting activity where participants use GPS-enabled devices to navigate to a specific set of coordinates and attempt to discover geocached containers at that location. Numerous geocaching sites currently exist throughout Dublin's many parks and open spaces. As part of CSAC's assignment, the Commission would research mapping/registration best practices and recommend a process and associated policies.

Bicycle Friendly Community Initiatives – Staff is in the process of reviewing feedback from the League of American Bicyclists related to the City’s recent Bicycle Friendly Community application. This internal working group plans to draft a multi-year plan to continue the City’s efforts related to creating a bicycle friendly community. Input for this plan would be gathered from former Bicycle Advisory Task Force Members, Bicycle Ambassadors and Consider Biking. A final draft of the plan would be brought forward to CSAC for review and input

Recommendation

Staff is recommending approval of the Community Services Advisory Commission’s proposed assignments. Should you have questions regarding this memorandum, please contact Fred Hahn at 410-4706 or Matt Earman at 410-4568.



Community Services Advisory Commission

October 8, 2013

Minutes

Commission Members: **Present:** Mindy Carr, Mel Ehrlich, Derek Graham, Christine Gawronski, Todd Keiner, Steve Stidhem
Absent: William Sherman

Staff Members Present: Michelle Crandall, Director of Administrative Services
Matt Earman, Director of Recreation Services
Fred Hahn, Director of Parks & Open Space

Guests: none

I. Call to Order

Ms. Carr called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

II. Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

None

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Copies of the June 11, 2013 and the September 10, 2013 meeting minutes had been distributed by email to CSAC members for review. Ms. Carr asked if there were any comments or revisions. There being none, Ms. Gawronski moved to approve both sets of the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Keiner. All in favor, the June 11, 2013 and the September 10, 2013 minutes were approved.

IV. Review Items of Interest List and Discuss Potential topics to present to City Council

Ms. Crandall explained that the commission has already completed all of the assignments on the 2013 Items of Interest list, except the topic of reviewing public art guidelines. This task was assigned by Council and Sara Ott is the staff liaison assigned to this project. Sara will provide more information as it is available. This project has not been high priority at this time, so it is not ready for the commission to review at this time. The task of reviewing the public art guidelines will be carried over to the 2014 items of interest. The commission needs to start thinking of new assignments for 2014 to work on. Staff has discussed a few topics for the commission.

Baby Boomer's Strategic Plan

Mr. Earman notified the commission that staff has been working on a strategic plan to better engage the baby boomer's age group. Staff has been working on the demographics, focus groups, programming and marketing. Once the strategic plan is complete, staff would like to bring it to the commission for review and comments. The boomer's age group consists of those born from 1945-1965.

River Trails

Mr. Hahn said the City is working towards a river trail. It has yet to be determined if it will include only City landmarks or areas outside of the City limits. This river trail will include various points of interest that will be identified throughout the City to easily access and visit while on the river.

There will be various landings and put in/take out points along the Scioto River. One location will be along Riverside Drive in the park under I-270. Another area, which is in the planning stages, will be constructed next year within Amberleigh Park. This commission will be asked to provide input and ideas for the river trail.

Bicycle Friendly Community

Ms. Crandall said the City of Dublin has tried three different times to obtain the designation for a "bicycle friendly community" and this last time we were approved a designation at the "bronze" level. Staff will be announcing this at the October 14th Council meeting and the media release will be on October 15th. There are still some recommendations from the Bicycle Advisory Task (BAT) Force that need to be discussed and implemented. Staff will continue a work plan for the next few years so that we can resubmit for a silver status next time. We still have some work to do as far as infrastructure, connectivity, racks, repairs, etc. This commission will provide input and review the work plan also.

The question was raised as to why there are some locations that have paths and bike lanes. Ms. Crandall said some cyclist want to be able to ride on the roads instead of a path. This is also a part of the criteria in becoming a bicycle friendly community.

Ms. Crandall said there is no longer a BAT Force in existence, but there are still some participants that are interested in helping when needed. We may ask some of these individuals to work with CSAC when topics of discussion come up in this group.

Community Recreation Center Space Needs

Mr. Earman said staff is working on a comprehensive feasibility study for the Dublin Community Recreation Center. This is to identify the future space needs for the recreation center to include the demographics, trends of the industry, etc. over the next 10-15 years. Staff will also look at what the private sector is doing. This will be an opportunity for this commission to provide valuable input and also to review the draft report once complete.

Outdoor Fitness Equipment

Mr. Hahn said funding has been approved for the outdoor fitness equipment in 2014. Mr. Hahn passed around a brochure with information regarding different types of equipment and also an example of what Circleville, Ohio has added in their park system. The outdoor fitness facility in Circleville is comparable in cost to the funding approved by the City. Staff would like the commission to think of suggestions for possible locations. Staff is looking more at a cluster of equipment similar to Circleville, rather than having it spread out. Some of the desired criteria for the first set of fitness equipment would be to have it in a high visibility location, with parking already in place and access to bike paths. The surfacing would more than likely be a loose rubber surface rather than poured in place, due to the cost.

Mr. Stidhem commented that Kaltenbach Park has a great facility and seems to be used often. He asked if staff has any locations in mind. Ms. Crandall also commented that Washington Township has added some fitness equipment in Homestead Park also. Mr. Hahn replied that staff has discussed the area by the recreation center where there is overflow parking. It is very close to one of the most commonly used bikepaths.

Mr. Graham asked if that would help or hurt the idea if the recreation center is so close. Mr. Hahn replied that there are many path users that are not recreation center members. He was not really

sure how the rec. center would affect the outdoor equipment usage. Mr. Earman commented that one thing to keep in mind with placing it so close to the recreation center is that instructors may be more likely to want to schedule usage of the equipment for classes. We want to encourage the public to use it for everyday use rather than programming it.

Ms. Gawronski commented that Avery Park would be a great location. There is already parking available, heavily used bikepaths within the park and it would be nice for parents to be able to use this type of equipment while their children are at soccer practice, etc. They will be in the same location as their children. Mr. Hahn commented that Avery was a good location also because there is already a built in user group.

Mr. Ehrlich said the fitness equipment in Circleville is considered a specific destination point. People go there specifically to use the equipment.

Mr. Stidhem also added that this type of feature would be great to put in a park with a climbing wall. When the commission discussed obstacle course, fitness equipment, etc. we discussed that it needed to have the "fun factor" and the equipment itself doesn't sound like it would be exciting, but add a climbing wall and it would make it a fun destination point for people to go to.

Ms. Carr commented that the Bridge Street Development would be a great location. Mr. Hahn said it would be, but staff has it in the budget for 2014 and that development won't be ready for a few more years. If this idea is well received, staff could look into adding it there also when it is developed.

Mr. Hahn also commented regarding the Bridge Street Development Plan, there will be an open house for the public on October 22nd at OCLC regarding the public improvement along with developer's proposals. Mr. Stidhem asked if staff could provide a brief overview for the commission at the next meeting.

Mr. Stidhem also commented that M.L. Red Trabue would be a good location for fitness equipment. There seems to be some open space available with a bikepath and available parking.

Ms. Crandall commented that staff would provide a map for the commission and we can further discuss locations at another upcoming meeting.

Mr. Hahn also added that budget will not be available until January 2014, so we still have some time to make decisions on locations. He asked the commission to think about some other locations and we can bring the topic back up for further discussion.

Discovery Place

Mr. Ehrlich provided photos and brief presentation on the idea of the City partnering with COSI to build a Discovery Place in Dublin, Ohio similar to the one located in Charlotte, SC. Charlotte built one in 2010 and it has such a positive outcome they constructed another one in 2013. He encouraged everyone to visit the website: <http://www.discoveryplace.org/>. It is a two-story building which has many different elements for children including gardening, fire station, automotive center, arts/crafts, shows, doctor office, brick plant, Nascar section. He would like to see something like this in Dublin. Businesses could help fund it. Fees are \$8.00 person, including children and there are memberships that range from \$100 - \$130 (For one location or both). There is not food at the Discovery Place and free parking.

Ms. Crandall said staff could approach COSI and see if they have any interest in something like this. She does not feel the City will move forward with this type of project, as it seems to be more of a private based business. She also commented that Mr. Earman works with COSI regarding programming at the recreation center also.

Mr. Earman added that staff has been working with COSI and there have been some very successful programs. He said adding more programming through COSI could also be a part of the feasibility study recommendations also.

Geocaching

Ms. Carr said her husband has been working with Mr. Hahn on geocaching. She wanted to know if the City was interested in pursuing this and if so, this could be a topic for this commission to provide input for.

Mr. Hahn said the City is interested. This is a topic that needs to be further explored and there needs to be some formalized guidelines regarding this. There has been an interest in this and staff often gets requests to place items in our parks, but we really need to set some guidelines and restrictions for safety reasons. There are some great unfamiliar areas within parks to place items, but there are also some dangerous areas such as cliffs, etc.

Ms. Crandall commented this also could be worked into the recreation programming also. The Dublin Arts Center has had great response to the Riverbox program.

Mr. Earman commented that the City needs to provide permitting for it and keep an inventory so it doesn't get out of control.

Mr. Hahn concurred with Mr. Earman. There need to be controls in place and restrictions for safety reasons. A good example is Indian Run Falls. We don't want someone placing it in a dangerous location and have others venture in these locations looking for it. We need policies in place and we also need to promote it. This commission could help develop policies and guidelines.

Water Quality

Ms. Gawronski said a few years ago CSAC discussed water quality on the west side of the river. She has heard there are issues with the properties on the east side of the river. She thought maybe this commission should revisit that topic.

Mr. Hahn commented that there has been stream analysis done on the east side of the river. In the near future there will be some type of presentation on water quality including the stream analysis. The City is revisiting the strategies of the surrounding areas. Not sure when the presentation will be ready, but there could be new information sometime soon on current analysis. Ms. Carr asked if we have available time if the commission should revisit this topic. Ms. Crandall said she is not sure if Council would want to re-open this topic for discussion.

Ms. Crandall said she would get the compiled list out to the commission. She plans to present to Council at the October 28th Council meeting for approval.

V. Next Meeting – November 12, 2013

The commission discussed assigning specific items of interest to commission member. If there is some research involved it works well to assign to a specific person to get the research done, but

everyone can provide input on the topics. The commission will discuss in more detail at the November meeting.

Mr. Earman said the soccer field use policy will be present to Council at the November 4th Council meeting, so staff is planning to present to the commission at the November meeting. Mr. Stidhem asked if staff has requested input from the public. Mr. Earman commented that these are similar to the agreements already in place for soccer. These policies are consistent with the City's policies regarding other services. The objective is to accommodate the recreational needs and Dublin residents first.

VI. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Marja Keplar, Administrative Assistant