

**MINUTES: SPECIAL CALLED JOINT MEETING WITH CITY COUNCIL, PARKS BOARD AND 4B DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
June 18, 2012**

PRESENT: Mayor Thomas Muir, Councilmember Marjory Johnson, Councilmember Russell Martin, Councilmember Scott Stephens, Councilmember Gary Bilyeu, Councilmember Rusty Patton, 4B Member Barbara Martin, 4B Member, Beverly Howard, Park Board Member, Chris Byrom, Park Board Member Bob Koger, and Park Board Member Mendy Echols

ABSENT: Tami Taber, City Secretary, 4B Member Jeff Springer, 4B Member John Payne, 4B Member Will Dutton, 4B Member Christy Crutsinger, Park Board Member Lee Allison, Park Board Member Cora Harner, Park Board Member Melanie Jacobs

OTHERS

PRESENT: Cheryl Price, Deputy City Secretary; Dennis Sims, Architect, Dunkin Sims, Stoffels, Inc.

1. Call Meeting to Order.

Mayor Muir called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Review and Discuss the Comprehensive Parks Plan.

City Manager Brice was recognized for introduction and advised that Dennis Sims is the Architect with Dunkin Sims, Stoffels, Inc. who has been working on the Comprehensive Park Plan. He is here to present the Plan and will run the meeting. He advised that tonight's presentation is a result of suggestions and staff work over the past several months. No action will be taken at tonight's meeting, this is a chance for the Council and Boards provide input.

Dennis Sims, Architect, Dunkin Sims, Stoffels, Inc. was recognized. He noted that all they do is park and recreation planning for cities. He presented the Future Parks Concept Plan on a powerpoint presentation for the following 4 parks and welcomed all input and suggestions from the Council and Board members as each park was presented.

SWITZER PARK

Mr. Sims noted that Switzer Park is the park where the current outdated city swimming pool is located. The pool would be filled in and its area would be replaced with a water feature -splash pad/spray ground area which requires no employee staffing. The spray structure can be turned on and off at any hours the city may choose. He noted that typically cities do not fence in these types of features. He advised they were planning on demolition of the existing concession building. The existing canopy will remain with some retro-fitting and possibly an additional canopy over the existing playground. There will be additional landscaping and a 45

space parking lot. Below is a copy of the preliminary proposed rendering presented at the meeting for Switzer Park:



Mr. Sims presented the “Opinion of Probable Cost” (below) of the Switzer Park improvements and noted that these are only rough cost estimates.

Opinion of Probable Cost:

1. Landscaping	\$50,000.00
2. Shade Structure	\$60,000.00
3. Spray Ground	\$250,000.00
4. 45 Space Parking Lot	\$90,000.00
5. Demo Ext. Building	\$100,000.00
6. Retro-Fit Ext. Shade Structure	<u>\$60,000.00</u>
TOTAL	\$610,000.00

The following suggestions, questions, and/or concerns were brought up by various Council and Board Members regarding the proposed improvements to Switzer Park:

The health safety of the water (e-coli) if the area was unsupervised. It was noted that the water would not be reused and drains into the sewer. Mr. Sims advised that

a majority of these types of facilities are not typically supervised. Mike Brice advised that the city would have workers monitor the park on a regular schedule.

There was concern on the hours of the park water features being open. It was noted that the hours could be set when the water features would be available. Also, when the water feature is activated it does not run constantly and is activated by a foot controlled button by the users which turns on the water feature for 10 minutes at a time. When no one is using the spray ground/splash area, there is no water running. The feature area is basically a flat area with a small slope to drain.

With no fencing there was concern of children running into the roads and/or parking area. It was noted that this is just concept and barriers could be included.

It was noted that the surface consists of non-slip textures.

It was noted that the original park was built with a grant from Texas Parks and Wildlife. Once you are tied in with Texas Parks and Wildlife funding, the facilities are locked in and anything taken out has to be replaced somewhere else and/or be of similar use. Because it is a "like use" the replacement of the pool with the splash/spray ground water feature would be an approved feature change. Replacement or change of any of the park features (Basketball Court, Practice Field, and Playground) that were included in the original grant cannot be removed or changed without approval from Texas Parks and Wildlife.

The condition of the sidewalks was noted. Mr. Sims advised the sidewalks/trails were not part of this plan. City Manager Brice advised that the sidewalk improvement plan would take care of the issues of concern regarding the sidewalks.

It was noted that the type of canopy they would use is basically a large type of umbrella; further discussion indicated the canopy has a lifespan of about 10 years under normal conditions (excluding large hail, wind storms, vandalism, etc.)

7 ACRE NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

This park is proposed to be dedicated with Phase III of the Sable Creek Subdivision. This park would be a neighborhood type park. The concept is that the size and the uses would specifically serve the neighborhood. Included amenities would be a multi-purpose court, a playground area with a pavilion, about 4000 L.F. of hike and bike trails; and a pedestrian bridge to connect the trails into the subdivision. He noted that some of the trails could be constructed of decomposed granite which is a different surface, color texture than concrete and could be something unique to the city. However, he did note that the park is located in a flood zone area and the danger of a future flood could take that granite out.

Mr. Sims noted that there is no parking planned for this park. He advised that typically in a neighborhood park there is no parking. The concept is that you walk to a neighborhood park. If you start putting parking in the neighborhood parks it might create precedence and all future neighborhood parks would want parking. It

was noted that the park at Quail Run does have parking and that it is rarely, if ever used.

Below is a copy of the preliminary proposed rendering presented at the meeting for the 7 Acre Neighborhood Park:

7 ACRE NEIGHBORHOOD PARK



Mr. Sims presented the “Opinion of Probable Cost” (below) of the 7 Acre Neighborhood Park improvements and noted that these are only rough cost estimates.

Opinion of Probable Cost:

1. Hike & Bike Concrete Trail / 4,000 L.F.	\$120,000.00
2. Playground Area with Pavilion & Paving	\$145,000.00
3. Multi-Purpose Court	\$40,000.00
4. Pedestrian Bridge	<u>\$50,000.00</u>
TOTAL	\$355,000.00

The following suggestions, questions, and/or concerns were brought up by various Council and Board Members regarding the proposed improvements to the 7 Acre Neighborhood Park:

Mr. Sims noted that typically in a neighborhood park there is no parking. The

concept is that you walk to a neighborhood park. If you start putting parking in the neighborhood parks it might create precedence and all future neighborhood parks would want parking. It was noted that the park at Quail Run does have parking and that it is rarely, if ever used.

A suggestion was made to bring in trees native to the State of Texas in for landscaping along the trails and have signs installed indicating the types of trees, etc. for educational purposes.

There was concern as to how it would be policed/monitored if there was no parking. It was noted that the park would be visible from the street. The police will be able to see the whole park from the road. There could also be curfew/hours set for the park so that there is no late night basketball games, etc.

There was some discussion about the medium mentioned for the trails (decomposed granite) and concern for maintenance and upkeep of weeds etc. He noted it is five inches deep and there is some maintenance.

The pedestrian bridge was mentioned and it was noted that the city owns a bridge we could use. Mr. Sims advised that there are plans in one of the other parks to use that bridge.

It was suggested to put the shade canopy over the playground. Mr. Sims noted there is probably enough money to add a shade canopy over the playground.

NEW PARK LAND EAST OF 35

Mr. Sims noted this Park plan is for the new acreage the City owns east of 35 across from the newly constructed Park and ball fields on the west side.

He advised that that the plan consists of the ball fields which were planned for Railroad Park; but, full ball fields couldn't be installed at Railroad for reasons he would explain later. He noted the location of the fields on the rendering and the reason they were located where they are is because of the flood plain area and the floodway area. He noted the plan is for two Baseball fields at 225' and four 175' fields for softball, etc. He advised that this is long term planning, with probable build-out of 50-60,000 residents you are probably looking at 10 to 12 fields to serve the City. Also, the draw for tournaments in the area would be great with this number of fields and their location. The floodway area can be used for practice space and soccer fields because there are no structures involved. The pedestrian bridge which the city owns will be used to cross over in the center over the low area, from the Baseball fields to the practice and soccer fields. It was noted that the bridge would be very visible in this location than in the previously presented neighborhood park. The park is currently planned with 450 parking spaces which is more than needed and can always be cut back. It could be built in phases, the first phase could be the entry, and three fields and half of the park and phase II could be the remaining three fields and the rest of the park. Mr. Sims noted that this park is the most costly of all of the parks presented tonight.

Below is a copy of the preliminary proposed rendering presented at the meeting for the New Park Land East of 35:

NEW PARK LAND EAST OF 35



Mr. Sims presented the “Opinion of Probable Cost” (below) of the New Park Land East of 35 improvements and noted that these are only rough cost estimates.

Opinion of Probable Cost:

1.	6-Plex Baseball Complex with Pavilion	\$1,700,000.00
2.	Practice Soccer Fields	\$30,000.00
3.	3,500 L.F. Hike & Bike Trail	\$175,000.00
4.	Playground Area	\$75,000.00
5.	450 Space Parking Lot / 300 Space	\$525,000.00
6.	Pedestrian Bridge	<u>\$50,000.00</u>

TOTAL \$2,555,000.00

The following suggestions, questions, and/or concerns were brought up by various Council and Board Members regarding the proposed improvements to the New Park Land East of 35:

It was noted that it would be nice to see the younger children's ball games at Railroad. Mr. Sims advised that he does not recommend the expense of putting the ballfields at Railroad because it was a landfill at one time and is unstable.

It was noted that a small storage building may be constructed on this side, but the other field would house the bigger equipment. It was noted that a pavilion could be constructed in the center of the fields as is on the west side of 35. They are going to have to work the location of the restrooms. It was noted they may be located north of the fields at the concession.

It was noted the extra parking is a good idea because it could also be a feed for the ballfields across the highway.

A question of access to the fields across the highway was brought up; and, if a flyover would be constructed. Mike Brice advised when this project is done the trails will be connected underneath the freeway instead of over which would provide for a more extensive trail system. The trail system was brought up and Mr. Sims advised that they were proposing some trails in the park plans. He suggested that the City pursue a Trail Master Plan for the future so when development comes in the City can make sure the plan for the trail system is included and constructed with future new developments. A Trail Master Plan looks at access considering thoroughfares, existing parks, creeks, hospitals, schools, etc. Mike Brice did note that the current sidewalk plan does connect all of the parks.

An amphitheatre was suggested similar to the one in McKinney. Mr. Sims said the idea of an amphitheatre has not been brought up, they have done several, it wouldn't have to be a Starplex, could be very simple, something they could look at doing. It was noted that the city does not own the hill which was suggested, as far as placement and seating for the amphitheater. It was noted the acoustics may not be the best being adjacent to 35.

It was noted that Porter Park was complete and all of the ball fields have been constructed there that could be.

Access was mentioned and it was noted there is currently already a path that is used to get onto the property.

RAILROAD STREET PARK

Mr. Sims advised that they thought about a lot of uses for this park, but it is restrictive because it is located on top of a landfill. We cannot penetrate or break the landfill. He noted that you would have a hard time getting anyone to seal a document to even put light poles on the property because it is not stable and you don't know what they are going into. This also would apply to construction. There is an existing building there, but you would not be able to get an engineer to sign off anything structural on the property. This really limits the project as to what can be

done on the landfill. This is the reason for moving the construction of the additional Baseball fields to the 35 Park area. It was noted that practice space is always needed. This Railroad Street Park would be a great facility for that. There will be three practice fields and a planned dog park. The dog park will be divided into two areas; one area would be designated for large dogs, and one area for small dogs, with separate entrances. Amenities would include doggie fountains, doggie mitts, signage, etc. He noted that dog parks usually become a very popular park and people do drive from other areas to utilize them. He concluded that they will not be doing much to the practice fields, that the improvements would mainly consist of the dog park with fencing, expanding the parking lot (150 spaces) and improving to a concrete access road.

RAILROAD STREET PARK



Mr. Sims presented the “Opinion of Probable Cost” (below) of the Railroad Street Park improvements and noted that these are only rough cost estimates.

Opinion of Probable Cost:

1.	150 Space Parking Lot	\$262,500.00
2.	Access Road	\$25,000.00
3.	Dog Park, Fencing, Signage, etc.	<u>\$100,000.00</u>
	TOTAL	\$387,500.00

The following suggestions, questions, and/or concerns were brought up by various Council and Board Members regarding the proposed improvements to the Railroad Street Park:

There were no issues brought up. There was brief discussion that it was a wise choice not to spend the thousands of dollars required for new ballfields at Railroad Street Park. It was noted the parking would be concrete. That this proposal may be the best use for the Railroad Street Park.

Mr. Sims concluded his presentation by soliciting any additional input or questions.

There was a question as to whether there was anything considered for Duck Creek Park. Mr. Sims advised that it was not considered. It was noted it was a very small park located in flood plain area which the city inherited, near the lift station. It was suggested that it would be a good location to put in a Frisbee Golf park. Mr. Sims advised that a Frisbee Golf park in not an expensive park to install.

Mr. Sims was asked what the thought was on making parks out of areas in the city where homes have been abandoned and/or deteriorated. Mr. Sims advised that the City could create pocket parks with the properties; however, advised to be careful not create too many because they become maintenance nightmares. He noted if they were done specifically in the downtown urban area that they may work, but would not advise making it a policy for the City.

It was noted that the handicapped have not been addressed and what would the cost be to have a handicapped park – a playground specifically designed for handicapped. Mr. Sims advised that specifically designed handicapped parks are not that much more expensive than a normal park. He noted an example of a standard \$50,000 park – the same park designed specifically for handicapped would run about \$65,000-\$70,000. He advised that every park area that they design has to be ADA Accessible by Federal Law and this has been a requirement for a long time.

There being no further input or questions Mr. Sims thanked everyone for their input and advised that he was going to take all of the information he received tonight back to the office and revise the plans and would and bring the information back with revisions.

Mayor Muir thanked Mr. Sims and advised the Council and Boardmembers that if they come up with any additional suggestions to forward the information to the City Manager, Mike Brice to provide to Mr. Sims.

3. Adjourn.

Mayor Muir adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.