New Castle County
Parks Task Force

Minutes of Meeting
Thursday, August 23, 2017
6:30 PM
Gilliam Building Multi-Purpose Room
67 Reads Way, New Castle, DE 19720

Attendees:

Parks Task Force Members
    Ed O'Donnell, Chair
    Romain Alexander
    Diane Baker
    Arabella Bianco
    David Carter
    Robert Ehemann
    Aaron Blythe

New Castle County
    Matt Meyer
    Aundrea Almond
    Brian Boyle
    Jason Miller
    Jane Rattenni
    Rich Hall
    Tracy Surles
    Mike Bowser

Public
    Bill Dunn

Materials guiding meeting discussion:
    NCC Long Range Park Acquisition and Development Plan 2017 (July 2017 Update).pdf
    Parkland Projections for MOT Planning District 2005-2025 (2009 Document).pdf
    MOT Parks Inventory and Planning.pdf
    The files are located in a Dropbox folder at https://tinyurl.com/yd6zsru5

I. **Welcome and Introductions**
   - Meeting called to order by chair Ed O'Donnell at 6:34 p.m.
   - Introduction and overview of agenda by Mr. O'Donnell
II. **Approval of August 3rd Minutes**
   - David Carter moved to approve the minutes of the August, 3rd 2017 meeting. The motion was seconded by Diane Baker and approved.
III. **Review of the "New Castle County Long-Range Park Acquisition and Development Plan" (2017)**
   - Presentation by Arabella Bianco

- Ed O'Donnell clarified that the document list of acquisition activity underway is not accurate and the task force still have a "blank slate" to work with.
- Ed O'Donnell stated that the plan states that MOT is underserved, as well as Red Lion and Rt. 4 areas.
- Arabella Bianco made a recommendation that if the county were to follow plan for .5 more of a reservation park they consider the Christina River area.
- Robert Ehemann – Are we looking at identifying a single regional or district park or areas to focus on and then ranking or prioritization? Ed O'Donnell and Dave Carter replied it might not need to be just 1 large park to meet the needs of southern New Castle County.

IV. Review of "Parkland Projections for Middletown-Odessa-Townsend Planning District 2005-2025" report
- Presentation by Arabella Bianco
- Dave Carter – With Rt 301, sewer status, and knowing approved and pending development we have a better idea of where the population is going than ever before for a planning purpose.
- Ed O'Donnell – For the first time ever population projections are showing a decline in 2050.
- Dave Carter mentioned he has been receiving a significant amount feedback on Facebook and social media on park planning including a high demand for active recreation in northern areas.
- Dave Carter and Robert Ehemann discussed the tools Robert has access to at DNREC to provide a grid analysis using more advanced analytics for determining an ideal park location.

V. Presentation by Dave Carter on "NCC Parks Planning in MOT/SNCC: A Preliminary Inventory"
- Presentation by Dave Carter
- Arabella Bianco pointed out how important a dialogue with land owners is during this process.

VI. Discussion
- Rich Hall mentioned that the task force recommendations and suggestions will be referred to in the comprehensive planning process which they are starting to look at internally in the Department of Land Use.
- Dave Carter requested a copy of the UDC code regarding open space set aside requirements.

VII. Next Steps
- Ed O'Donnell presented a suggestion by member Lorraine Fleming to divide into two subcommittees "Location" and "Amenities".
- Members discussed the need for a public input via public meetings later in the process.

VIII. Decide on next meeting
- Next meeting will be the week of September 18th after a doodlepoll is conducted to determine member availability.

IX. Public Comment

- Bill Dunn expressed interest on how to better enhance the parks we currently have. Expressed maintenance concerns for current parks including options to address invasive vines. Recommended a more robust park camera system to help reduce nighttime activity as well as better signage for visitors regarding parking options.

X. Adjourn
– The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.