



POPS Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

April 06, 2017
6:30pm-9:00pm
Courthouse Plaza

In attendance:

POPS Advisory Committee

- Caroline Haynes, Park and Recreation Commission
- Jane Rudolph, Department of Parks and Recreation
- Dean Amel, Urban Forestry Commission
- Heather Cocozza, Sports Commission
- Claire O'Dea, E2C2
- Lisa Grandle, Department of Parks and Recreation
- Carrie Johnson, At Large
- Jim Feaster, NCAC

Absent:

- William Gillen, APS
- Elizabeth Gearin, Park and Recreation Commission
- Janet Kopenhaver, Arlington Commission for the Arts
- Jane Siegel, Planning Commission

Department of Parks and Recreation Staff:

- Erik Beach
- Irena Lazic
- Bethany Heim



Summary:

On April 6, 2017, WRT and DPR facilitated a meeting with the POPS Advisory Committee to gather feedback on the first draft of the PSMP update and to discuss potential priority actions.

Aspects of the plan that were addressed well:

The Committee acknowledged that the document is long, but felt that the length was due to its thoroughness and level of detail. Members felt the graphics worked well and that the sidebars and call-outs were helpful to provide meaningful support to the policies in the document. Many felt that Strategic Direction 1: Public Spaces, the largest and meatiest element of the recommendations, was done well and reflects what the Committee has discussed over the past months. Suggestions for additional sidebars, callouts, or other highlights included the i-Tree Eco Study, the community's expressed need for spaces to support casual, impromptu use ("unprogrammed" spaces), existing public spaces in and near to high-density corridors, the various ways in which the County creates public space, recent innovative space-sharing or joint use ventures with APS and other entities, and a deeper explanation of the County's demographic diversity and neighborhood histories.

Aspects of the plan that need improvement:

Members agreed that the beginning sections of SD1 could be re-ordered to better showcase the Level of Service Analysis as a useful, data-driven tool the County will use to make decisions about new facilities.

A few items need more context and explanation: the Level of Service table (page 75), the difference between a park framework plan and a park master plan, the lighting standards, and the method and scenarios for using the Land Acquisition Criteria.

The Committee discussed options for further highlighting the concept of spaces that are intentionally designed to support casual, impromptu use ("unprogrammed" spaces) beyond its action step (1.3.1.). The discussion addressed the benefits and challenges of trying to map those spaces, the potential of choosing it as a priority action either for the whole document or in SD1, and adding language about these types of spaces in the action step concerning framework plans (1.2.2.).

The Committee also discussed ways to clarify the intent and function of the Land Acquisition Criteria. Members agreed that including some examples of recently acquired properties scored according to the criteria would be helpful. Additionally, in the context of the plan's stated goal of acquiring 30 acres over the next 10 years, some suggested it could be useful to include a recommendation to seek more funding for DPR's acquisition budget.

Prioritization discussion:

The committee discussed six potential plan priorities that were offered as initial options. While some—like acquiring 30 acres over the next 10 years—were widely supported, others were felt to be too process-driven or internal. It was decided that the plan's priorities should be visionary yet achievable, and should focus on what residents will get out of those actions (i.e. a new park, a better facility, etc.).



Another suggestion was to group priority recommendations by timeframe (short, medium, long, and/or continuous). Other ideas for priorities included planning for the creation of a new field house and tackling space constraints through creative uses of space and innovative acquisition mechanisms.

In addition to elevating a few (approximately 5–6) actions as priorities for the entire plan, members also liked the idea of selecting a few actions or action steps to highlight within each strategic direction.