



POPS Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary

September 14, 2016

6:30pm-9:00pm

Walter Reed Community Center

In attendance:

POPS Advisory Committee

- Caroline Haynes, Park and Recreation Commission
- Jane Rudolph, Department of Parks and Recreation
- Jane Siegel, Planning Commission
- Dean Amel, Urban Forestry Commission
- Heather Cocozza, Sports Commission
- Lisa Grandle, Department of Parks and Recreation
- Toby Smith, At Large
- Carrie Johnson, At Large
- Leo Sarli, Arlington Commission for the Arts (Alternate)
- Sarah Meservey, E2C2 (Alternate)
- Jim Feaster, NCAC
- William Gillen, APS
- Elizabeth Gearin, Park and Recreation Commission

Absent:

- Claire O’Dea, E2C2
- Janet Kopenhaver, Arlington Commission for the Arts

Department of Parks and Recreation Staff:

- Erik Beach
- Irena Lazic



Summary:

On September 14, 2016 WRT facilitated a meeting with the POPS Advisory Committee to get feedback on the actions and action steps to support Strategic Direction 4: Partnerships, Strategic Direction 5: Programs, and Strategic Direction 6: Engagement & Communication. WRT gave a brief reminder of the process and then quickly turned to the action plan language. WRT then presented the results of the benchmarking analysis that compared Arlington's open space system to four other cities across the country. Finally, the details of the Level of Service analysis were discussed.

Specific feedback from the Committee follows.

Strategic Direction 4: Partnerships

The Committee discussed the importance of setting clear and defined methods for communicating and working together with other County entities, such as Arlington Public Schools, as well as external organizations like the National Park Service. Particularly in terms of NPS, it was expressed that creating consistency and predictability of communications would greatly improve the relationship. In terms of the County's volunteer program, members felt that while recruitment could function better as a centrally coordinated activity, placement and training of volunteers should remain decentralized.

Strategic Direction 5: Programs

The Committee felt that the language describing programming of open spaces needs to be further clarified in order to communicate the fact that a higher level of programming would only be pursued in spaces that can handle more activity *and* are approved for more programming by the public. This clarification is needed in order to assuage concerns that intentionally unprogrammed spaces will be programmed. An emphasis was also placed on the need for flexible spaces that can be used for multiple types of active or passive uses throughout the day and throughout the year. Finally, a suggestion was made to add a new action step encouraging the County to partner with other entities or organizations in the development of new facilities.

Strategic Direction 6: Engagement & Communication

The Committee discussed the value of pursuing awards—instilling pride in the public space system, reinforcement of mission for staff, providing staff with opportunity to hone skills by writing grant and award applications, third party validation that the County is doing good work.

Level of Service

The Committee weighed in on the types of facilities to be analyzed through the Level of service process as well as the time standards for those that will be geographically analyzed. Some members noted that the analysis should take into account whether fields are accessible for community use.