

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 25, 2019

The regular meeting of the **Lewes Parks and Recreation Commission** was held on **Monday, February 25, 2019 at 7:00 P.M. in Lewes City Hall** in accordance with proper notification with the following present: Chairwoman Alison Kirk, Mardi Thompson, Christine Besche, Candace Vessella, Louis Papp, Rodney Robinson, Lorna Dempsey, Harry Keyser, Warren Golde, Ex-Officio City Councilman Rob Morgan, City Planner Tom West, and Recording Secretary Jackie Doherty. Barry Dunkin was excused. City Councilwoman Bonnie Osler was also present.

A. CALL TO ORDER & ANNOUNCEMENTS: *Chairwoman Kirk* called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. with the following announcements:

- March and April meetings of the Commission will be held in the Rollins Center due to renovations in City Hall;
- Parks and Rec budget hearing meeting on March 4th at 1:30 P.M.; February 26th 9:00 A.M. is the budget meeting for Public Art Committee and capital projects for the entire City;
- Thursday, March 14th at 1:30 P.M. will be the final budget meeting; Monday, March 18th at 6:00 P.M. will be the meeting for Mayor and City Council to adopt the budget;
- Information is available from Winterthur regarding signage planning for the parks.

Ms. Kirk stated she and *Ms. Thompson* met with Cunningham Game Time at the park to review the plans and playground area. The equipment will be ordered tomorrow with plans for the ribbon-cutting ceremony to be May 4th which is the day for the opening of the Historic Lewes Farmers Market.

B. MINUTES: **Presentation & consideration of the December 17, 2018 and January 22, 2019 regular meeting minutes and January 8, 2019 special meeting minutes.**

ACTION: *Mr. Papp* made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of December 17, 2018 and January 22, 2019 and the special meeting minutes of January 8, 2019 as presented; *Mr. Robinson* seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

C. COMMISSIONERS REPORTS: **Update on monthly activity, projects, and volunteer hours**

Mary Vessels & 1812 Parks: *Mr. Golde* reported the parks are doing well with the daffodils coming up.

Stango Park: *Ms. Vessella* reported Distinctive Landscaping was contracted to remove a failing mulberry tree located between the Rollins Center and the library near Adams Avenue and the crosswalk area. Also removed were four small pear tree samplings from the magnolia bed near the Children's Learning Garden.

Trees: *Ms. Thompson* reported she and *Ms. Kirk* are working on a grant from the Urban and Community Forestry and met with the urban forester last week to review plans for additional trees for W. Fourth Street.

Zwaanendael Park: *Mr. Papp* reported he did a review of all the flower beds from last year to see which of the beds were a success, and which ones were not to decide if changes are needed. Studied the 2019 offerings from main contractor, Murphy Johns, and wrote the plans for the beds in the park. Decided on some new varieties for better success; also added some varieties raised at the Lewes in Bloom warehouse that Murphy John does not offer. Plan to place my order next week for the Spring/Summer plantings.

Mr. Papp continued stating plans are to add some new varieties to the Hosta/Fern Garden and to replace some varieties that were unsuccessful to complete the entire bed planting. Will be working with the Delmarva Hosta Society, who planted the original garden, for their recommendations. Also, reviewed the landscape bushes that died last year. These will be replaced in the Spring with some new varieties that have been determined.

George H.P. Smith Park: *Ms. Dempsey* reported the Streets Department covered the trash cans to prevent them from falling over and all trash spilling into the park. Wood chips are being placed at the buffer for planting native shrubs, flowers, and grasses. It has been difficult because the park has been so wet. A group of volunteers (about 12-15 people) will be training at 10:00 A.M. on March 2nd with Thom Nobile to identify non-native species of shrubs, grasses, and trees.

Ms. Dempsey continued stating there has been one bid for the living shoreline to place soil and plant flowers. No one has been found who could build a pier to protect the edge.

Canalfront Park: *Mr. Robinson* reported he has been in contact with Distinctive Landscaping for repair and replacement of the turf destroyed last year. The weather has caused the delay, and the plan is to complete the work when the weather clears.

D. OLD BUSINESS

- 1. Update on Parks & Recreation FY 20-21 budget and capital improvement items:** Ms. Kirk stated more information will be available after the meeting on March 4th at 1:30 P.M. with Mayor and City Council.

E. NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Presentation & consideration of the Stango Park and Stango Park Extended vision plan**

Ms. Vessella reviewed the history of the plans for the property for all the parcels to look like others in the area giving it the look that one person had done all the plantings and not separate organizations. A project is planned for the railroad tracks between Stango Park and the library.

Ms. Besche added that the goal is to create a naturalistic look and arboretum-type setting to combine the existing look of the old Stango Park portion with the new library and trailhead.

Eric Wahl, Landscape Architect of Element Design Group and member of Lewes in Bloom, reviewed the Stango Park Vision Plan with a PowerPoint Presentation.

Mr. Wahl's presentation and discussion included:

- Views of the entire open space in Stango Park;
- Conceptual elevation of new stage area to be open; moved to face courtyard area or park area; parking realignment next to the stage; two declining pine trees need to be removed;
- Stango Park tree canopy to provide all elements to provide shade, wildlife food sources and habitat; viewshed from Kings Highway to the railroad corridor and trail walkway; plans for the DelDOT right-of-way to be a Piet Oudolf meadow; spaces allowed for art placement by Art in Bloom and benches;
- Garden for All Ages; new Children's Learning Garden; buffer along residential property and Freeman Highway; plans for placement of railroad cars; remove and contain bamboo at the trailhead near the residential area;
- List provided of the recommended species of trees.

Ms. Vessella stated the funding will be in phases, but no funds are available in the budget to begin this year.

Mr. Golde stated if grant money becomes available for the Garden for All Ages, the extended plantings could be incorporated. When the Virden property litigation is settled, regrading of the berm will be needed. Could the Commission request to develop the plan for regrading of the berm to keep the top soil.

Mr. Robinson stated Piet Oudolf meadow gardens require a very high level of maintenance as in Longwood Gardens.

Hugh Leahy, Library Board President, stated there are approximately 200,000 people going through the library each year. This is a very thoughtful plan and would be a valuable addition to the community.

- 2. Presentation & consideration of Showfield City Subdivision plan submitted by Davis, Bowen & Friedel, Inc. on behalf of owner Showfield, LLC. Review the plan and make comment to the Planning Commission related to existing or proposed open space, effect on any adjacent park areas or other natural features within the City.**

Ms. Kirk stated Parks and Rec will be reviewing subdivision plans to submit comments to the Planning Commission on issues regarding landscaping and how the development would affect open space and other natural features.

Ring Lardner, architect for Davis, Bowen & Friedel, was present stating the application is for 86-unit, single-family subdivision located on 35.71 acres consisting of two parcels. Nick Hammonds and Doug Lingo were also present representing the applicant.

Mr. Lardner's review and discussion included:

- Land is currently used for agriculture and does not contain open space; small wooded area that is not farmed will be preserved; parcel zoned R-2 with no plans for rezoning as open space; there will be 2.53 acres of open space for use by residents;
- Lots are located around the stormwater pond; another pond will be near Freeman Highway entrance; both ponds will discharge into White's Pond; grass buffer around the ponds;
- Stango Park is located within a 1/4-mile radius of the project with no impact on the park since Freeman Highway is the buffer separating the project from the park area; White's Pond is privately owned and maintained; natural features located west of Freeman Highway will not be negatively impacted;
- Street trees will be provided with plans to follow as the designs continue; HOA would maintain the street trees; landscaping plans around amenities features; will interconnect to Showfield County; all houses will be stick-built on the lots.

Mr. Lardner continued stating:

- Development will have their own HOA, bylaws; stormwater and roads maintained by the City; water and sewer by Lewes Board of Public Works; sidewalks on both sides of the street;
- Only residents with access to White's Pond will be Lots #22 thru #38; recreation facilities have not been decided including size of the clubhouse and pool; interconnection to the Junction Breakwater Trail in two locations; landscape buffers planned for the area between the trail and lots; homeowner would decide about fencing;
- A vehicle-access area of land will be provided to maintain the ponds; ponds will be maintained by the HOA; the smallest lot will be 10,000 square feet with Code followed regarding 65% lot coverage and setbacks;
- Open Space-A located between City and County Showfields will be a mowed buffer as on the County side; there is a 20' to 30' forested buffer planned for the bottom section shown on the County-side map with the same planned for the City side.

Ms. Thompson recommended there be visible, permanent markers placed between the lots and open space and trail right-of-way to prevent encroachment onto the buffers to keep the open space open. Recommendation should also include requirement for an established easement for equipment and residents to have access to Open Space-B

Mr. West stated the application will go before the Planning Commission for preliminary consent on March 20th. Mr. West reviewed the process needed for a major subdivision to complete the three phases.

F. **ADJOURN:** Ms. Kirk adjourned the meeting at **8:15 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Doherty, Recording Secretary
Lewes Parks and Recreation Commission