



**TOWN OF APEX
PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting Date: May 8, 2023

The Planning Board held their regular meeting on May 8, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. at the Apex Town Hall Campus, 73 Hunter Street, Apex North Carolina, 2nd Floor Council Chamber. Members present were, Board Members, Tommy Pate, Tim Royal (ETJ Member), Keith Braswell, Jeff Hastings (Historical Society Member), Ryan Akers (Wake County Member), Steven Rhodes and Alyssa Byrd. Members absent were Chair Reginald Skinner, Vice-Chair Tina Sherman and Member Daniel Khodaparast.

Member Royal called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Member Akers made a motion to make Member Royal acting Chair for the May 8, 2023 Planning Board Meeting. Member Byrd seconded. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Member Braswell gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC FORUM

Chair Royal opened the floor for citizens to speak on non-agenda items; no one came forward.

CONSENT

Item #1 – Minutes from the April 10, 2023 regular meeting. Chair Royal called for a motion. Member Soh motioned to recommend approval. Member Rhodes seconded. Motion carried with a unanimous vote.

PUBLIC HEARING

Chair Royal motioned to recuse Member Akers from Item #1. Member Soh seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Item #1

Angela Reincke, Parks Planning Project Manager

Manager Reincke, presented amendments to the Bicycle and Pedestrian System Plan Map to align with the Draft Master Plan for Parks, Recreation, Cultural Resources, Greenways and Open Space.

Recommendations were based on public input and requests for Greenway connectivity. The public was engaged through maps and surveys that were provided during public engagement and input opportunities for the Master Plan update.

Manager Reincke gave an overview of the 14 amendments to the Master Plan. The amendments are divided into three categories: (1) Additions to improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, (2) Changes based on the outcome of three feasibility studies completed on the priority greenway corridors, and (3) Additions based on existing or planned development. Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Staff and Planning Staff recommend approval of the proposed amendments.

Member Soh asked if any of these proposed greenways touch or dissect private property. Manager Reincke said the proposed alignments are always a guide for location. They usually follow a riparian area, sewer corridors or open space. The information was published as conceptual during our Master Planning Process. For us to actually start construction we would have to survey sites, meet with adjacent property owners and acquire easements or buying the property if we don't already own them.

Member Akers said it has recently come to his attention that the Town of Apex Utility Group doesn't allow the overlap of greenways and sewer corridors and they need to separate them. Manager Reincke said we will allow an overlay of the easement and there is a provision to where you can request an exception if the pavement needs to be closer than 10 feet to the actual sewer pipe. We know if there is an area where there's an existing corridor and there is no other way to expand it then we can request an exception. Member Akers asked for clarification on Amendments # 1, 6, 8, & 9.

Member Soh asked for the reasoning behind the proposed greenway running parallel to the American Tobacco Trail. Manager Reincke explained that the NC Rail Division is protecting the rail corridors so they limit how many connection points there are along the trail. They want them at least a quarter to half mile apart and they want them offset so it does not look like a main crossing.

Chair Royal opened the Public Hearing.

Bonnie Townsend, 701 Winter Hill Dr spoke on her concerns of the overall building going on in the area and potential for flooding.

Chair Royal closed the Public Hearing.

Chair Royal called for the motion. Member Braswell made the motion to approve. Member Byrd seconded. Motion carried with a unanimous vote.

Member Byrd motioned to bring Member Akers back. Member Soh seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item #2

Lauren Staudenmaier, Planner II shared that the Public Hearing for Rezoning Case #22CZ27 would not be presented. The rezoning case will be re-advertised and heard at a later date. The applicants were in the audience in case the board had any questions.

The board had no questions.

Item #3

Amanda Bunce, Current Planning Manager presented Rezoning Case #23CZ05 Pleasant Park. Manager Bunce gave an overview of the location and explained that the purpose of this rezoning is to zone the property to Conservation Buffer-Conditional Zoning (CB-CZ) and to propose some zoning conditions to give flexibility for the primary entrance signage and other wayfinding signage on the property. The first condition is to increase the color options of the wayfinding signage to include six colors. Our current UDO limits sign colors to four, plus black and white. The additional colors will help direct users to different parts of this large park. The second proposal is to increase the maximum height of the wayfinding signage to 10 feet, the height of the monument signage to 93 inches and the entry monument sign area square footage to 124 Square feet. The proposed rezoning is consistent with the 2045 Land Use Map and Planning Staff is recommending approval of this rezoning.

There were no questions from the Board at this time.

Chair Royal opened the public hearing for anyone to speak in favor or opposition of the amendments.

Thomas Zaffarese, 3325 Pleasant Plains Rd asked if there was going to be additional signage on Pleasant Plains Rd to make sure people go into the park without passing the park entrance. People are turning around in his driveway.

Manager Reincke said the very large sign that is proposed should be an eyecatcher to say this is where you need to turn in to the park. In addition, the emergency exit farther down Pleasant Plains Rd. is built with the idea that if people pass the main entrance they can turn around and head back. Currently the entrance roads are not connected to the park. We are working on those roadway improvements so at this time the entrance is not as obvious. The South emergency road exit is currently being used as a construction entrance while the other work is being done.

Chair Royal asked if the area will be well lit in the fall and winter. Manager Reincke said this will be well lit in those seasons so the park can be utilized after dark. Since Pleasant Plains Rd. is not lit, and there is a left turn lane into the park, it should be obvious that the entrance is there.

Jim Tschoke, 3305 Pleasant Plains Rd, is also seeing turn-arounds in his driveway and concerned that the emergency exit may be used for non-emergency entrance and exit when the park is open. Manager Reincke said there will be a rolling gate and it will be locked when not in use for emergencies.

Chair Royal closed the public hearing.

Chair Royal said this is a big park and agrees that any additional size and color utilization for this park is necessary. As far as curiosity traffic, we will not be able to stop all of it. Right now, we are trying to make sure the signage is correct for this project. It sounds like the entrance is not complete and that having the bigger signage will help locate the entrance.

Member Soh and Member Byrd agree that the bigger signage should help define the entrance. Member Akers wonders if NCDOT could put up a "Dead End" or "No Outlet" sign as most dead-end streets have that in place for EMS and Fire.

Chair Royal called for the motion. Member Byrd made the motion to approve. Member Rhodes seconded. Motion carried with a unanimous vote.

Item #4

Joshua Killian, Planner I, presented Rezoning Case #23CZ06 Hunter Street Park addition. Planner Killian gave an over view of the location and surrounding zoning. The rezoning is located at 1250 Ambergate Station. This property is about 1.7 acres on the north end of the current park and south of the Ample Storage property. The property is currently zoned Planned Unit Development-Conditional Zoning (PUD-CZ). The applicant is proposing to rezone this property to Conservation Buffer-Conditional Zoning (CB-CZ). The applicant is proposing an active park on this property. The proposed use is consistent with the 2045 Land Use Map (LUM). Planning staff recommends approval with conditions offered by the applicant.

Chair Royal opened the public hearing for anyone to speak in favor or opposition of the rezoning request.

JP Brehony, 103 Tracey Creek Ct. expressed his concerns. If the area is fenced, he would hope the access would be at the south side of the parcel. The cars are often speeding along N Salem St. so he does not want to encourage kids to bring their bikes through or try to cross that part of Salem St. The second concern is lighting. They are hoping the lighting is similar to the lighting at the skate park so it would be less obtrusive to nearby residents.

Chair Royal closed the public hearing.

Chair Royal asked about the entrance. Manager Reincke says that the park has not been planned at this point. We are in a conceptual stage right now so plans will continue to develop.

Chair Royal reopened the public hearing.

Deborah Brehony, 103 Tracey Creek Ct., is concerned that the available acreage is not big enough for bike trails.

Chair Royal closed the public hearing.

Member Byrd stated that she liked the creative use of the space.

Member Akers made a motion to approve Rezoning Case #23CZ06. Member Soh seconded. Motion carried with a unanimous vote.

NEW BUSINESS

Member Braswell motioned to recuse Member Akers. Member Byrd seconded. Motion carried with a unanimous vote.

Item #1

Angela Reincke, Parks Planning Project Manager presented the Master Plan for Parks, Recreation, Cultural Resources, Greenways and Open Space. Manager Reincke introduced Shweta Nanekar, Project Manager with the McAdams Company who presented the summary of the master plan. Ms. Nanekar explained the process for developing the plan. Ms. Nanekar gave an overview of the existing parks, indoor recreation and greenways. The project team identified gaps in the growing areas of the town where there will be a need for new parks and indoor facilities.

Staff is recommending adoption of the Master Plan. The Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Advisory Commission unanimously recommended adoption of the plan at their November 30, 2022 meeting.

Chair Royal asked if this is something we are looking at putting money towards as the Town, or is this more of a business development plan. Manager Reincke said the department uses the plan to guide most of the decisions we make. Manager Reincke said we take steps annually in assessing what residents want, what are the trends and how can we make facilities adaptive.

Member Rhodes asked if the facilities or venues would drive revenue with regional type tournaments. Manager Reincke said we have not done a lot of that at this point but there are revenue generating activities that could be considered along with adjacent municipalities for larger events and create events that utilize the facilities of all three towns so we have a corridor in Western Wake County available for those types of events.

Member Soh asked if the department is looking at both proposed and existing facilities. Manager Reincke said they are evaluating existing conditions and what we need to upgrade those facilities to our new standards. We have added four pickleball courts in the community center. When the Community Center was built we didn't even know what pickleball was. The Senior Center provides adaptive opportunities.

Member Byrd provided feedback on the 50-page Master Plan. Less pages makes it more usable and she loves the scorecard that makes it very actionable. It is a great guide for programming.

Member Byrd made the motion to approve. Member Braswell seconded. Motion carried with a unanimous vote.

Item #2

Angela Reincke, Parks Planning Project Manager presented the Master Plan for Parks, Recreation, Cultural Resources, Greenways and Open Space related to Parkland and Indoor Facility Search Areas. Manager Reincke gave an over view of the Master Plan Map and the three amendments to the map staff is recommending. The first amendment to the Map would be to eliminate the five (5) land dedication boundaries they are currently working from. Staff would like to remove those boundaries. The second amendment identifies seven (7) areas that would identify parkland search and areas of acquisition for expansion of services either active or passive. The third amendment would be to add four (4) areas for indoor recreation facilities.

The Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Advisory Commission recommended approval of these amendments. The votes were not unanimous however. The amendment to remove the five existing land acquisition areas passed three to two. The dissenting votes were concerned about the reduction in specifically targeted areas that are proposed. The seven amendments which located future park land search areas, passed four to one, for the same concerns about reducing the search areas and targeting individual properties versus a wider range of possible land opportunities. The four amendments that located future indoor recreation facilities passed unanimously. Staff recommends approval of the proposed amendments including the removal and relocation of areas identified for park land acquisition and the addition of areas identified as being needed for indoor recreation facilities concurrent with the adoption of the Master Plan for Parks, Recreation, Cultural Resources, Greenways and Open Space.

Member Byrd asked if the changes the Planning Board recommended earlier in the overall pedestrian plan would be included in this overall Master Plan map. Manager Reincke said that those changes along with these amendments, would make up the new Master Plan Map.

Chair Royal asked how this would work with the Future Land Use Map as some of these areas are in high density housing or commercial areas and now we are looking at potentially changing that to park land. Manger Reincke explained that the existing boundaries function in the same way and gave a brief description of the process when new rezoning cases are proposed.

Member Soh asked about how Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) helps in that process. Manager Reincke said the Town of Apex does work with WCPSS to identify spaces that can be used. If there are facilities that can be shared there are agreements made. There is not a lot of extra land around their facilities now.

Member Akers had comments/questions-

If the indoor area were to move within the identified cell would it have to come back to Planning Board or Council? Manager Reincke these are a starting point to target and they would not have to come back if they stayed close to those areas. The indoor facilities are in known spaces. We have a need to balance out the facilities. Some indoor facilities could be in more industrial areas. An example would be indoor volleyball, basketball, gyms and ropes course facilities are an example of facilities that could be located in more industrial areas.

Does the Town's desire for park land or facilities negatively effect the valuation for the landowner that wants to sell? Manager Reincke says that we have properties that they have acquired solely because the landowner wishes the property to remain open space or want the view of the ponds maintained. Manger Reincke provided background as to how value is established in the overall development process.

This plan addresses where we are in 2021-2022 versus where we were in 2013. The analysis and the population changes are substantial.

Member Braswell asked if the landowners within the areas identified as indoor facility areas have been notified that they are in those areas. Manager Reincke said the there have been may opportunities and open house type events where landowners may have been there or part of the discussion.

Manager Reincke reminded the Board that none of these areas outlined require anyone to do anything or take away their rights; this is a guide.

Member Byrd commented that we have demonstrated our ability to adapt and change. We can revisit these maps as necessary.

Chair Royal called for the motion. Member Byrd motioned to recommend approval to Town Council. Member Rhodes seconded. Motion carried with a 4-1 vote. Member Braswell voted nay for the reason that the maps identifying indoor recreation areas are too restrictive.

Item #3

Amanda Bunce, Current Planning Manager presented the following amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO):

Requested by Town Council-

Amendments to Secs. 4.3.3 *Use Table* and 4.4.4 *Supplemental Standards, Recreational Uses* in order to require a double gate for dog parks in private recreation areas.

Requested by Planning Committee of Town Council and Planning Staff-

Amendments to Sec 8.3.11 *Electric Vehicle Charging Spaces* in order to increase the amount of required Electric Vehicle (EV) charging spaces for apartments as requested by the Planning Committee of Town Council. Additional amendments to this section are proposed by Planning Staff in order to increase the amount of required EV charging spaces and EV-Ready parking spaces for certain uses and to modify the standards for EV charging spaces. This proposal also eliminates the cap on the number of required EV charging stations.

Member Byrd motioned to bring Member Akers back into the meeting. Member Braswell seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Member Akers asked if the accessible spaces are mutually exclusive for EV users and non-EV users or can the accessible EV space be used by non-ADA users. Planning Director Khin pointed out that this is best practice and not an ADA requirement yet.

There was additional discussion about location and best practices in regards to EV charging stations in future projects.

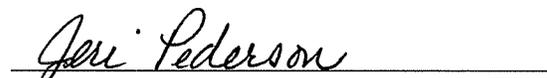
Member Soh motioned to recommend approval to Town Council. Member Braswell seconded. Motion carried with a unanimous vote.

Member Soh motioned to adjourn. Member Braswell seconded. Motion carried with a unanimous vote. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

The foregoing minutes are approved this the 12th day of June, 2023.



Reginald Skinner
Chair



Jeri Pederson
Lead Planning Technician