

**JOINT PUBLIC WORKS/PUBLIC SAFETY/PARKS & RECREATION
TOWN CENTER CRA ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
DESTIN CITY HALL BOARDROOM
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2023 - 5:30 PM**

1. CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGANCE:

Chairman Wood called the Joint Public Works/Public Safety/Parks & Recreation Town Center CRA-Advisory Committee to order on Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

<u>Members Present</u>	<u>Town Center Members</u>	<u>Parks & Recreation Members</u>
James T. Wood, Jr.	Lockwood Wernet	Sandy Trammell
John Green	Michele Sandstead	Daniella Piper
Tom Weidenhamer	Nikki Johnson Sweetser	Nikki Johnson Sweetser
John Stephens	Joshua Cowsert	Lisa Mason
Sam Perman	Dorothy Robinson	Leslie Schmidt
Curtis Smith	Delores Morell	
Marcie Bell		

Staff Members Present

Kim Montgomery Deputy City Clerk
Michael Burgess Public Works Director
Ryan Scott City Engineer
Lisa Firth Parks & Recreation Director
Ryan Reed Parks & Recreation Deputy Director
Michael Baird Parks & Recreation Supervisor

3. NEW BUSINESS:

A) Linear Park 30% Plans Discussion – DAG Architects Levi Weigand

Mr. Weigand introduced the staff who are working on the project and explained Mr. Patrick Hodges would be presenting to the committee members and the public.

Mr. Hodges explained the overall expanse of the project from the west end at 98 Palms, to the east end at Airport Road. He spoke of how they have tentatively designed the area that has the highest elevation as a piled boardwalk that gently slopes to grade, and how this plan helps to eliminate the extensive fill that was originally thought would be required. He also mentioned how as part of their earlier renderings, they had included benches and work out stations throughout the length of the trail, however, none of that is allowed per Florida Power and Light's (FPL) standards for use of the easement, for safety purposes. He explained they have made it clear that they do not want to have people lingering under the power lines so, they can only be implemented in the Jewel Melvin Park area.

Chairman Wood opened the public portion for comments.

Mr. Ron Sandstead asked how wide the trail is proposed to be. According to Mr. Hodges the path is 12 feet wide, which enables emergency and FPL utility trucks to access the pathway, when necessary.

Jason Fulghum asked about emergency vehicles being able to access the entirety of the trail and suggested that the turnaround shown on the plans be made larger so any vehicle could do so without having to back up to get out.

There was additional discussions regarding whether the park closes after sunset, like the others, and if so, how would the people that do in, be policed, if there is a plan for a gate.

Committee member Stephens of the Public Works/Public Safety Committee expressed concern about wanting to see emergency vehicular access made easily available.

Mr. Hodges stated that it would be a lot more expensive and stated that he is not sure that the budget would be able to accommodate that, but it may be able to be presented as an option and then the Council can determine if it's warranted.

Mr. Hodges stated that he is not sure that would be possible because without funding available to pay for the cost.

Mr. Burgess asked what modifications for the traffic signal at Airport Road would be required. According to Mr. Neal O'Connell of O'Connell and Associates Engineers stated that it would have to be redesigned and as part of the continuing effort, they would proceed with the redesign, taking in account the entrance at the west.

Public Works/Public Safety Committee member Smith questioned the purpose of the traffic rated boardwalk bridge at the eastern end of the proposed park instead of just building it to the grade. Mr. Weigand explained there is an existing stormwater outfall that is in place, and they don't want to impact it, and is a part of the reasoning of pushing the trail to the south side away from what has been permitted for the development that there. Mr. Smith suggested it would be easier, and more cost effective, to have the stormwater outfall permit reissued and replaced.

Committee member Cowser of the Town Center CRA Advisory Committee spoke of concern of trash accumulation along the raised areas and questioned what if anything has been considered at this point. According to Mr. Hodges, they have not but did note that he feels that the Parks department would be providing trash receptacles. Adding that they could add a type of catch netting around those elevated walking areas to prevent trash from blowing underneath them.

Committee member Sweetser of Parks & Recreation and Town Center CRA Advisory Committee spoke of how she feels this park, similar to the Dog Park should not have the closure at dusk like the other parks in the city because of the fact that it gets dark early at this time of the year and there could potentially be people that want to use the trail after dark to exercise.

Committee member Mason questioned if there are plans to have restrooms available along the trail and are dogs going to be allowed on leashes. If so, there are going to have to be dog stations available along the trail.

Committee member Sandstead asked if there is any movement on the grants that the Mayor and staff are pursuing to help fund this project. According to Mr. Jeff Cozadd, there is a desire to connect this up with the Florida Suntrail and applications have been made to try and get this project added to the list at the TPO level for some construction funds.

Parks & Recreation: Motion by Chairwoman Trammell for the Parks and Recreation Committee to recommend City Council accept the 30% conceptual design plans for the Linear Trail and add the addition of bathrooms and dog stations and approve that FPL will install the lighting. Committee member Sweetser provided the second. The motion passed with a unanimous vote of 5-0.

Chairman Wernet moved to adopt the plans and to send the 30% conceptual design plans forward to City Council with the additions previously recommended by the Parks and Recreation Committee, with Vice Chair Sandstead providing the second. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee member Smith of the Public Works/Public Safety Committee pointed out there is a 10-foot wide pedestrian pathway that does not have a connection at Mattie Kelly Blvd. and needs to be addressed. He pointed out the area on the plans where it shows the disconnection at the Rehab facility. Additionally, he feels that the stormwater permit should be revised on the east end of the trail so that the pedestrian bridge can be omitted, because of the high cost.

Committee member Bell stated that this plan is, to her, reminiscent to the Turkey Creek Park in Niceville and spoke of how they have an employee who rides the track on a golf cart and keeps the trash picked up and the kids in control, and suggested to have the Parks Department investigate how they may be able to handle that and any other safety concerns.

Committee member Weidenhamer spoke of the need to have better turnaround design for emergency vehicular access than what is now being proposed, to be included in the motion.

Committee member Green asked Mr. Scott what the anticipated cost is for this park. Mr.

Scott replied that currently they do not have that amount at this point of the project. However, the project is getting pushed as fast as possible because of the grant money that has already been set aside for the project, which expires next year.

Chairman Wood opened the hearing to the public, with no one coming forward to speak, he closed the public portion of the meeting.

Motion by Public Works/Public Safety Chairman Wood, seconded by Committee member Bell to recommend City Council accept the 30% conceptional design plans with the discussed additions of increase the evaluation of the emergency vehicular access and turn arounds along the route, have a vehicle rated option for the east end bridge, two costs, one with and one without, and have the sidewalk connection at Mattie Kelly corrected, as well as have an option for at grade walkway on the east end, one with and one without to choose from. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman of the Public Works/Public Safety Committee Jim Wood, second Parks and Recreation Chairwoman Sandy Trammell to recommend to City Council to accept the 30% Conceptual Linear Park Plans with the discussed amendments. The motion passed with unanimous support from all of the members on all three committees.

4. CONTINUING BUSINESS:

Public Works and Emergency Management Update

D) Stormwater/Floodplain Management Issues from the Committee or Public

Chairman Wood opened the public portion of the meeting for comment. With no one coming forward, he closed this portion to the public for the subject.

5. DISCUSSION:

➤ Committee Member Discussion and Updates:

Committee member Smith – Asked staff if there were any plans to continue repaving Scenic Hwy. 98 eastward past Cobia. Mr. Burgess informed him not for at least the next couple of years but that is also dependent upon funding. Committee member Smith noted that there is significant cracking, as well as in the same area that had the problem in the past.

Committee member Perman – Asked when the flashing lights were scheduled to be installed on the west end of James Lee Park. According to Mr. Burgess, they have encountered problems with the location because it would partially hang over on the roadway and the sidewalk therefore, staff needs to come up with some kind of alternative solution.

Committee member Bell – Asked about the amount of funds allocated and the status of the pedestrian flashing beacon lights she previously spoke of at a past meeting where they were asked to provide input for the Pedestrian Mobility Plan. She continued that she had requested two that are needed to be installed, one at Norriego Point Road intersection and one at the Moreno Point Road intersection.

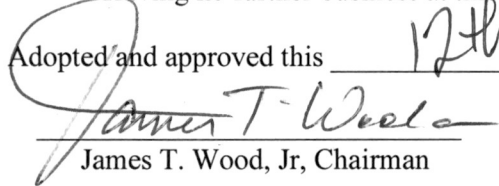
Chairman Wood stated that he already plans to bring this discussion up at their meeting in January.

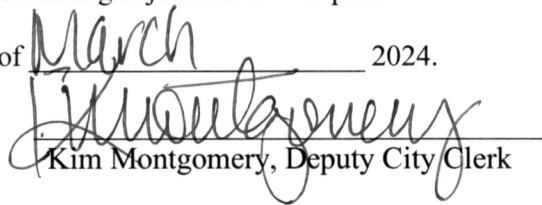
Committee member Green – Thanked staff for their hard work throughout the year and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

Having no further business at this time, the meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Adopted and approved this 12th day of March 2024.


James T. Wood, Jr, Chairman


Kim Montgomery, Deputy City Clerk