

**WHITE LAKE TOWNSHIP
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE**
Special Virtual Meeting
7525 Highland Road, White Lake, MI 48383
August 26, 2020 @ 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Carlock called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was called.

ROLL CALL: Andrea Voorheis – Township Board Liaison
Rhonda Grubb – Planning Commission Liaison
CJ Bratta
Kathleen Aseltyne
Merrie Carlock, Chairperson
Deb Deren, Vice Chair

Absent: None

Also Present: Justin Quagliata, Staff Planner
Sean O’Neil, Planning Director
Scott Ruggles, WLT Trustee
Hannah Micallef, Recording Secretary

Visitors: 1

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Aseltyne MOVED to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Grubb SUPPORTED and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote. (6 yes votes).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a. August 12, 2020

Mr. Bratta MOVED to approve the minutes of August 12, 2020. Ms. Voorhies SUPPORTED and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote. (6 yes votes)

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Trustee Ruggles was in attendance. He mentioned the Board met with the Civic Center Development Committee the day prior regarding the development of the Civic Center District. He would like to have his farm stand included in the plans for the future to put his produce stand permanently. Chairperson Carlock said the Stanley Park property might have restricted uses, but she’ll look into it. Ms. Aseltyne added she would support the idea of a farmer’s market for many different vendors to use.

NEW BUSINESS: STANLEY PARK PRESENTATIONS

a. Johnson Hill Land Ethics Studio

Mr. Mark Robinson was in attendance to give the presentation. He said Johnson Hill prepared Fisk Farm Master Plan five years prior. He presented a few additional examples of parks Johnson Hill has performed Master Planning for in the past. He also presented concepts for the park. Mr. Robinson introduced his team, Mark Johnson and Tyler Sprague. Mr. Sprague said he visited the site briefly.

Mr. Quagliata asked what are the biggest opportunities or challenges the site poses? Mr. Robinson said the fact that the site is an irregular piece of upland makes it exciting. Mr. Johnson said this is an opportunity to have a quiet passive park with nodes of activity, and to bring people into the wetland in an interesting way. The other piece is to hear what the community wants from the park, and getting the chance to translate those ideas into the park.

Mr. Quagliata asked what the experience Johnson Hill had with obtaining EGLE permits for potential driveways in the wetland area. Mr. Robinson said Johnson Hill is familiar with working with EGLE, but if it became too much, they would bring someone such as a civil engineer abroad to assist.

Ms. Aselyne asked how public involvement will be managed? Mr. Johnson said in their experience, a balance of good interaction and spending time with the public in small groups will help find what the real priorities are for the park. He added it's important to hear everyone's priorities.

Ms. Grubb asked about the overall success rate of Johnson Hill obtaining grants? Mr. Robinson said Johnson and Hill has had consistent period of winning grants over a 20-year period.

Mr. Bratta asked how many of Johnson Hill's past projects involved bodies of water? Mr. Robinson said several of the past projects have had water involved. Mr. Johnson said with such projects, the priority is usually how to feature and protect the water.

Ms. Carlock said there will be many consultants involved with that area, since Town Hall and Public Safety will have buildings close by in the future Civic Center District. She asked how would Johnson Hill work with consultants from the surrounding projects? Mr. Robinson said there would be collaboration and that would be taken under consideration carefully. He also added working with other consultants isn't unusual.

b. Beckett & Raeder

Brian Barrick, Caitlin Jackson, Kris Enlow, and Gary Cooper were present from Beckett and Raeder (BRI) to give their presentation. Mr. Barrick thanked Parks and Rec for the opportunity. He had a brief overview of professional qualifications, the team's qualifications, responsibilities, potential programming and needs. Ms. Jackson presented the phasing plan to engage the community and create the goals for the park plan, as well as applying for the MNRTF grant. She also presented a project timeline. Mr. Barrick presented examples of BRI's past works, including those that received MNRTF grants.

Mr. Quagliata asked what the biggest opportunities or challenges would be at the site? Mr. Barrick said everything listed could be achievable, and it is matter of melding of the site with programming, landscaping, and utility needs and doing so in within a budget appropriate for the Township. Mr. Barrick also added that BRI deals with EGLE permitting daily.

Mr. Bratta asked if BRI has done any private grant writing for park land? Mr. Barrick said they have, and an example is the Dixboro Road Trail that runs through the Mattei Botanical Gardens.

Mr. Barrick said with this site, it will be very strategic as to how it's organized. This way, low quality environments can be restored and the higher quality areas can be preserved. Ms. Jackson said there are many virtual community engagement tools, such as a survey or live webinar with the public. Voting exercises and Q&A can be done with this live webinar platform. She also noted BRI is very careful with security in regards to the live features, and it would be carefully controlled why still allowing the public to engage. Mr. Barrick said analog methods are paired with the virtual ones for those people who may not be technology savvy.

c. McKenna

Laura Haw, Adam Cook, Julie Connochie from McKenna and Mark Russell from Russell Design were in attendance to give their presentation. Ms. Haw described the qualifications and experience of the team chosen. Mr. Russell went over his experience in park design, and highlighted his work with wetland integration. Ms. Haw emphasized McKenna's experience with grant funding, including writing and administering grants. Mr. Cook discussed site understanding, and how McKenna would work around some of the constraints the site may pose environmentally. Mr. Russell went over the proposed scope of the project, from start to finish, including the goals and objectives of the project, and integrating the involvement of any future projects that may connect to the park site. Ms. Connochie discussed McKenna's approach for public engagement, and working with the end users of the park as well special interest groups. Mr. Russell went over the grant application piece, and how McKenna would try to fund all the costs associated with the full project with the grant itself.

Mr. Quagliata asked the McKenna team what the biggest opportunity or challenge with the site would be? Ms. Haw added some of the team had visited the site, and Mr. Russell added he thought the water and sewer aspect could be a challenge. He suggested composting toilets, septic fields or wells to remedy that issue. He emphasized being cognizant of the wetlands and making sure they stay clean from any waste run off. He said being sensitive to the environment, especially the trees are important too.

Mr. Quagliata asked about McKenna's experience with EGLE applications and permitting? Mr. Russell said McKenna has worked with EGLE in the past, but they have not crossed a wetland. He said the ability to do so successfully could involve getting an environmentalist or civil engineer on board. Mr. Russell said McKenna has done fishing piers before and have worked with EGLE. He said the beach will need help, and that will need EGLE approval as well.

Mr. Russell said that sensitive environments can be exciting, and they need to be accessible. The site can be used as a learning tool for younger people, and it's something to keep in mind during the master planning process.

d. Giffels Webster

Jill Bahm, Matt Schwantiz, Stacey Tobar and Matt Wojciechowski were in attendance from Giffels Webster (GW) to present. They each went over their professional backgrounds. Mr. Schwantiz discussed relative past projects GW had worked on. Ms. Tobar went over management approach and stated she would be the POC for the project, and how that would help keep the project's timelines on track. Ms. Bahm said GW was a part of the Township's Master Planning process, and how certain "nodes" lend to the Township's success. The Master Planning of Stanley Park would contribute to the Civic Center District as well, and compliment the area nicely. Ms. Tobar went over the Master Plan process and the steps that will be put into place to reach project goals. She also mentioned using a drone to capture more images of the site that may not be accessible on foot, and can be used to test the concepts for the park. Mr. Schwantiz spoke on the layout of the site, and it's topography. and configuring different features like entry, pathways, and water uses. He also remarked on not disturbing the trees, and having a subtle approach to preserve the site. Ms. Tobar said resident and staff input, definable goals, accounted budget items and a story board will bring the master plan to the public. Ms. Bahm said local businesses could even sponsor parts of the park, and it would help tie the businesses further into the community as well. Mr. Wojciechowski touched on GW's proficiency in grant application processes, including facilitating public input, drafting submission forms and following up with the grant providers. He also briefly went over the timeline alignment of a MNRTF grant in correlation with the Master Planning process.

Justin Quagliata asked what challenges or opportunity can be seen in regards to the site? Mr. Schwantiz said the opportunity is that the White Lake community has been invested in development. The park will need to be pedestrian orientated, and the park will be an anchor for the future Civic Center development. Ms. Tobar said one of the most intriguing things about the property is the unknown, and being able to work with the waterfront and the existing structure onsite.

Mr. Quagliata asked about GW's experience with EGLE permitting? Mr. Schwantiz said at any given time, they are working on 2-3 dozen active EGLE wetland permits. He said the biggest goal is to not fight grade, but to work with it.

Mr. Bratta asked about GW's experience with working with other private sector grants like the Kellogg Foundation or the Ralph Wilson Foundation. Ms. Tobar said yes, they have worked with them for stormwater management before. They have helped both private and public entities approach those types of grants.

OTHER BUSINESS:

a. Open Sealed Proposal Prices

All sealed bids were opened live via Zoom.

- Johnson Hill Land Ethics Studio
 - Master Planning Services: \$10,700
 - Grant Preparation Services: \$800
- McKenna
 - Master Planning Services: \$28,000
 - Grant Preparation Services: \$7,000
- Beckett & Raeder
 - Master Planning Services: \$20,000
 - Grant Preparation Services: \$4,500
- Giffels Webster
 - Master Planning Services: \$12,950
 - Grant Preparation Services: \$2,950

COMMUNICATIONS

- a. Member Comments
None.

Adjournment:

Ms. Carlock MOTIONED to adjourn the meeting at 9:43 p.m., Ms. Aseltyne SUPPORTED and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote (6 yes votes)

The next special meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 1st at 7:00 p.m.