

**WHITE LAKE TOWNSHIP  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE**  
Virtual Regular Meeting  
7525 Highland Road, White Lake, MI 48383  
**January 13, 2021 @ 7:00 p.m.**

Ms. Carlock called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was called.

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

Absent:            None

Also Present:    Justin Quagliata, Staff Planner  
                     Sherri Barber, Recording Secretary

Visitors:        Brian Barrick – Beckett & Raeder  
                     Caitlin Jackson - Beckett & Raeder  
                     Mike Powell, White Lake Township Trustee  
                     Liz Smith, White Lake Township Trustee

**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:**

**Ms. Aseltyne moved to approve the minutes of December 9, 2020 as presented. Mr. Bratta supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote, 6 yes votes.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

No one raised their hand from the public virtually to make public comment.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

a. Beckett & Raeder Presentation

Brian Barrick and Caitlin Jackson were in attendance from Beckett and Raeder to discuss their concept for Stanley Park. Mr. Barrick recapped the discussion from the December meeting and discussed the updated conceptual plan and the materials that would be used. The presentation also included a pricing estimate. Hard costs were the bids from the contractors, soft costs were what would be borne by the Township such as permits, design and inspection fees. Some of these costs may seem high, but they were “all-in costs,” including full assembly of items. The estimate totaled approximately \$5 million, and they estimated with grants we could get Phase 1 down to around \$800,000. Ms. Carlock asked for some definition on the term trailhead used for the presentation and suggested looking at a Land and Water Grant. Mr. Barrick discussed some various options to the park. He wanted to gather everyone’s thoughts on how to prioritize. It was important the park driveway be aligned to access the planned Civic Center development.

Mr. Quagliata stated the Accounting Department was still finalizing the December report. The Parks Fund balance was at approximately \$575,000 with the millage collection. There were insurance, utility, and maintenance costs each year for the parks. Ms. Carlock discussed the process for how funds were released from grants. Mr. Quagliata would like to prioritize the list and come up with solid phase 1, phase 2, and phase 3 grant applications. The grants would be for 2021, 2022 and 2023. Ms. Carlock suggested going for grants two year apart each time, and added she would like to see the block building saved. Mr. Quagliata suggested the Township Triangle Trail be built in phases; total construction could wipe out the Parks Fund.

Mr. Bratta would like to see the block building and mature trees saved. He liked the plan but was concerned with the budget. He would like to get a trail down to the water at a minimum. People wanted more trails, so the park might be a priority over the Township Triangle Trail.

Ms. Grubb stated it was important to get access all the way to the water. She thought it was very important for trails.

Ms. Aseltyne would like to use the optimum funding of the grants. The natural trails in the park may be more important to residents than the triangle trail.

Ms. Voorheis would like to see the block building remain and she liked the phases. She would like to see the trails go to the waterfront.

Mr. Barrick noted the current design dictated the removal of the block building and the design was a result of prior conversations with the Committee.

Ms. Deren thought the path to the water and getting there safely was important. She would like to keep the block building if possible.

Liz Smith, WLT Trustee, wanted to make some suggestions to the plan. She would like to suggest a fence around the playground for safety purposes. She would like to see parking get closer to the water. She would like to explore the possibility of a drop-off closer to the water. She would like to recommend a dog park; it was high on the list for residents she had received input from. The road needed to come as close as possible to the Civic Center development. She was not in favor of a passive park; she would like to see more activities such as basketball. This was a good start.

Mr. Powell noted he attended the Lakewood Village meeting and wanted to bring up some of their concerns. He noted pathways throughout the Township and some wetlands pathways were not the same. It was extremely important there be close access to the water for anyone with limited mobility, possibly some parking spots close to the water. He concurred with Ms. Smith the park should not be passive. It was really critical the entrance drive be closer to the public safety building, along with access from that building to the park entrance. Mr. Powell thought a basketball court would be great. He also suggested the amphitheater could be for much smaller events and then grow into the bigger amphitheater. Mr. Powell was also in agreement with a dog park. He liked the idea of exercise stations. The restroom costs seemed very high and he'd like to see an accounting of that. He would like to see the existing block building saved. He was impressed with Beckett and Raeder but now we had to back into the money we have.

Mr. Barrick thanked everyone for their input and they would take into account the comments. Tonight, we needed to look at the overall desire.

Ms. Carlock thought we needed to listen to the Township Board members. This was a concept plan and could be adjusted. She was not averse to more activities. The more people we had in the park, the less problems we may have. She would like to see this broke into four applications. The first phase should be a little heavier to be able to get down to the water.

Ms. Aselyne respected and understood the Township Board members wanted to honor what they think the citizens needed, but she wondered if we could start off with a basic plan and see what residents thought and then let the community grow into it. Mr. Powell noted we were looking to provide an area extremely sought after for the Civic Center Development. This park would be a major attraction for those who might live in the Civic Center area.

Mr. Quagliata noted the Township had a housing analysis done by The Chesapeake Group and we could expect about 300 residential units in the Civic Center area. Ms. Smith thinks our most desirable items should be first, the opposite direction.

Mr. Bratta thought it was critical to keep the building. There were residents looking for pickleball. He asked if the Township would provide money from the general fund. That question will be brought up at the Township Board level. Ms. Smith thought the park should be multigenerational. Mr. Quagliata noted general fund dollars would be reserved for the Civic Center.

Ms. Deren agreed with Mr. Powell about trails not being in the park but along roadways, etc. If it came down to numbers, lets get the top number we could apply for and what we could get with that.

Ms. Smith asked how we could shave costs. Mr. Barrick said we could reduce the size of the shelter.

Ms. Voorheis stated we needed to find out what our wants or wishes were.

Ms. Grubb wanted to reiterate the residents wanted trails so we may need to push the triangle trail. Her group at the Hawley Park visioning session wanted to keep the park as natural as possible.

Mr. Bratta thought getting the trail going down to the lake was the most important and the fence around the playground was important.

Ms. Carlock stated this was a lot of information coming in. She thought there may be up to a 50% match from the grants. Ms. Carlock thought maybe we could get to the beach but not build out the features at the beach and then do we have any money left. She doesn't want to let the block building preclude what we wanted to do.

Ms. Grubb asked if it would cost more money in the long term to save the block building and plan around it. Ms. Smith asked if we don't keep the block building, where would they propose a maintenance building. Mr. Barrick noted they would have to give that some thought. Ms. Carlock suggested up by the trailhead.

Mr. Quagliata summarized the comments tonight was to keep the building, have more activities, add a dog park, cut back on costs, moving the road, and moving the cul-de-sac closer to the wetland crossing. He had a pretty good summary of what we needed going forward, and the Committee was not ready to make a recommendation. He would ask Mr. Barrick and the Committee to reconvene in two weeks. Mr. Barrick said that was fine with them and he would like some definitive direction such as keeping the building or not and the resulting impacts of the placeholder for the amphitheater and a budget for first phase. Ms. Carlock mentioned \$1 million for the first phase. Until they raise the trust fund to 50%, it could leave us short. Mr. Powell said Treasurer Roman could be creative and there may be some loans available.

Mr. Bratta asked about the possibility of shifting the amphitheater to accommodate the maintenance building. Mr. Barrick said they would look at it but it may require more grading.

Mr. Quagliata noted we would look at the phase 1 grant application to see what we could afford. Ms. Carlock thought we needed to move along with other pathways such as the triangle trail.

Ms. Aselyne wanted to go back to what Ms. Grubb said. At the visioning session people wanted the park left natural, and now with the Civic Center it appeared to be high density. When would we let the residents know this. How could we keep the park natural with so many items in the park. Ms. Smith thought the visioning session was a small sampling of residents.

Ms. Carlock thought as a park planner by trade, some of these items may be able to be tucked away. It was still essentially the same, and the park was primarily wetlands. Mr. Quagliata thought it may be hard to fit a dog park and active recreation in the same area.

b. Parks Fund & Budget Discussion

This was discussed during the park planning agenda item.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

a. Township Triangle Trail – Grant Application

Mr. Quagliata stated last week the Township submitted a \$50,000 grant application to the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Community Foundation for the triangle trail. It would cover half of the design and engineering fees. We should hear back by late April about the funding. He spoke with someone at the Community Foundation and they thought this project could be a good fit. This was all about getting people connected and moving in this two-mile loop.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

a. Member Comments

Ms. Voorheis wanted to reference the next meeting between the Township Board and the CCDC on January 21, 2021.

Mr. Powell attended the Lakewood Village subdivision meeting and he wanted to note they were concerned with how the park may impact them. They wondered about the impact of lights at night, use of the lake, anything that may impact their lifestyle. Whatever may happen was a lot better than the 60 condos that were proposed at one time. They respectfully asked us to minimize the impact of skiing and tubing etc. and made sure we knew boats had to be 150 feet off of the swimmers near the shore. They would like to keep the improvements in our bay. Ms. Carlock thanked him for being our ambassador.

Ms. Smith thanked everyone for entertaining the Board members ideas. She appreciated the time that had been put into this.

**Adjournment:**

**9:44 p.m.**

The next meeting is Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.