

Patriot Park North at Willow Springs Park Master Plan

PUBLIC COMMENT MEETING

May 26, 2016, 7:00 P.M. At Willow Springs Elementary School

Meeting Summary:

A Second Public Comment Meeting was held on the evening of May 26, 2016 to present the revised Conceptual Development Plan (CDP) for Patriot Park North at Willow Springs, which resulted from the previous Public Comment Meeting held in July 2015. Public comments on the draft conceptual development plan were provided. Approximately 41 attendees signed in at the meeting.

The meeting began with introductions by Judy Pedersen, Public Information Officer, Fairfax County Park Authority.

Opening remarks were provided by Mike Thompson, Park Authority Board Member, Springfield District Representative.

Other Officials and Staff in Attendance:

Andy Galusha, Landscape Architect/Planner and Project Manager, Fairfax County Park Authority

Chris Sperling, Senior Archaeologist, Fairfax County Park Authority

Dave Bowden, Director of Park Planning and Development Division, Fairfax County Park Authority

Anne Cissel, Assistant Public Information Officer, Fairfax County Park Authority

Chrissey Mead, Administrative Assistant, Public Information Office, Fairfax County Park Authority

Waqar Shah, Intern Park Planning and Development Division, Fairfax County Park Authority

Zach Bopp, Intern Park Planning and Development Division, Fairfax County Park Authority

Staff Presentation

Judy Pedersen provided a brief overview of the Park Authority.

Andy Galusha, project manager for the Park Master Plan, provided a brief history of the site, site conditions, and surrounding context, master plan process, timeline, and described the draft plan.

Discussion Session:

Following the presentation, Judy Pederson moderated an open public comment period so those in attendance provide input on the draft plan. The following is a summary of each speaker's comments expressed during this session, after which, the meeting adjourned.

Speaker Number

Group/Organization:

1

SYA/Hampton Chase

I support this project. There are not enough baseball fields in the Fairfax area. There is not enough parking so the project will increase parking facilities for events that take place. Even though the impact will be minimal and improvements to the community will begin to take place. The facility is beautiful and the diamond field is beautiful. Unique at Willow Springs and SYA Coach and lives in Hampton Chase. There are not enough baseball fields in Fairfax County. Has to drive to get to games. This will be a beautiful facility with improvements that can be taken advantage of. Nice path to come. If the kids are not in school, they are playing baseball and if the kids are in school, they are not in the park, so there will not be a very big congestion issue. Advantageous and minimal impact and not used during the winter or fall.

2

Individual

Last year's master plan was great, don't like this one. I agree that there are more baseball diamonds needed. But do not want the forest buffer zone to decrease from 200+ to 50 ft. Do not want 260 ft. diamonds facing south toward Braddock Rd and shifted east toward residents' property where he lives. Also, he does not want to see the reflection of light in the night sky or noise pollution from the games. Amateur astronomer and the lights will be visible in 1/3 to 1/2 the sky. No problem with kids playing baseball. PA system will create much noise and wants peace and quiet. Been in the neighborhood since 1950. New plan also has restrooms next to cemetery. Concerned about size of cemetery, location of additional graves, and potential disrespect of location near cemetery.

Speaker Number**Group/Organization:****3****PTA President of Willow Springs**

Has mixed-feelings. Parents are very much in favor. Going forward will solve problems at Willow Springs. Cars line up toward Braddock to drop off kids and there was an accident yesterday. Sometimes people drop off kids at the neighborhood next-door. This can be prevented if there is a parking lot or access road in the park parallel to the existing road to the school parking lot. The kiss and ride would run more efficiently. Ambulances can't come to school and have to cross to the other side of road, which is a safety-concern.

4**Principal at Willow Springs**

As a principal, this will be beneficial. There is a delay to get ambulances in. When a kid is having an allergic reaction this is very stressful. We need extra parking spaces during events when there can be 1000 people at the school. Would like to develop a system as school for athletics that promotes kids being outside. A revised parking plan with the park could expedite arrival and dismissal and have better Kiss & Ride extension with 400 space parking lot at the park. Can do a lot to alleviate stresses.

5**Individual**

Willow Springs has insufficient parking that backs up to Braddock Rd. If the baseball field is any bigger and parking is increased, there will be more congestion. Any more activity will be a bigger problem and parking is already insufficient for number of kids and parking spots. If created, it should be adjoined to current parking lot at school so there can be a bigger Kiss & Ride facility in support of kids for parking and a parking lot would show favor of school and residents.

6**SYA Little League**

I support the plan as part of SYA Little League. 650 kids in area and utilize baseball. Baseball is an excellent life experience, that should be an everyday life experience for kids. Hopefully will be synthetic turf field to play when not raining. SYA spent several hundred thousand dollars on the 3 existing baseball fields. We have put in many volunteer hours cutting grass and clearing mud.

7**SYA Chairman of Baseball Council**

I am excited to help school and community and be partners to community members as well. Chairman of Fairfax Baseball Council and head coach of Westfield High School. We have raised 1.8 million dollars for cancer research over past 4 years through baseball. I am a lifetime resident of Fairfax County. This benefits the school and community. 400+ parking spots will help school. Athletic field lighting is different and now and is contained within the playing field.

8**SYA**

In favor of the plan. As president of SYA that I have been involved for 30 years and play adult baseball. SYA has 13 different sports representing 13,000 registrations a year. We help provide the maintenance for park and sees it as a partnership. We are committed to working with the school and residents. We will find ways to work together to make things work. This plan is needed. 90 foot diamonds have been missing for a long time. Want it to work for everybody.