

Olander & Margaret Banks Park Master Plan

Public Comment Meeting February 17, 2011

Lane Elementary School

7137 Beulah St., Alexandria

Meeting Summary

A Public Comment Meeting was held on the evening of February 17 for the purpose of presenting the draft Olander & Margaret Banks Park Master Plan for the to the community and accepting public comment toward the park's future design. Approximately 73 attendees signed into the meeting.

Introductions and Opening Remarks

Supervisor Ed Batten, Lee District Supervisor, Park Authority Board of Supervisors, opened the meeting with a moment of silence to remember Mr. Banks, after which he made a brief statement to the attendees of the meeting. He introduced Mr. Jeff McCay, Lee District Supervisor, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. After thanks and acknowledgement of the Banks Family, he spoke briefly on the process for the Master Plan and the public input which will be taken into consideration. Public Information Officer Judy Pedersen introduced Carolyn Summers, one of the Bank's nine children who spoke on behalf of the Banks family. Judy then provided some welcoming remarks and introduced several people in attendance including:

Board Members & Staff

Ed Batten, Lee District Supervisor, Park Authority Board of Supervisors
Jeff McCay, Lee District Supervisor, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

o Opening Remarks

Staff Presentation

Pat Rosend, project manager for the Olander & Margaret Banks Park Master Plan, provided a brief history of the property, site conditions, surrounding context and an overview of the major elements of the draft master plan.

Public Comments

Following the staff presentation, an open comment period was provided to permit those in attendance to share their impressions of the draft master plan. The following is a summary of each speaker's comments expressed during this session.

Eve Stocker

- 31 residents petition
- Limited to preserve character, stream & more
- Counter to residents wishes
- Safety & security issues
- Conflict w/quiet enjoyment
- Trails & signs pollute landscape
- Preserve stream, lawn & trees

Matt Fine

Chatsworth, KROC

- Would like to see more details on cost and execution beyond planning stage.
- Security concerns, trash-need plan for stewardship
- Neighbors like the park the way it is today
- Concern for noise & trash and impact on sales of homes in neighborhood
- Keep the park "as-is"

Nancy Davenport

Southport

- Enjoy the park every day
- Picked house because of the park, told it would be preserved
- See neighbors walking dogs, very nice area, serene, would like it kept that way
- House is historic and should be kept
- Security of house is a concern

Craig Harrison, Jonathan Davenport, Andrew Jones

Hayfield Students

- Looking for places to skate and risk getting in trouble.
- Skaters thought of as trouble makers, but are really not. Just want to have fun
- Retailers will make money when they go to get sodas & stuff
- This could be a place where we can go and stay out of trouble.

Ashley Banks

Granddaughter

- Grew up on property, attended Hayfield
- Close to grandfather, he would like the park to remain in the natural state.
- Some things made me happy and some made me sad
- Use creativity, you can do a lot of things at the park "as-is"
- Go Green....better place than multiple basketball courts
- Not too many places that you can have the same serenity.

Mark Cannady
Banks

Friend of

- House is historic and what Mr. Banks accomplished is historic
- Home should be focal point of community
- Civic and community activities there
- Keeping the memory of Mr. Banks and historic value of home

Duane Lempke

Chatsworth

- What is it going to take to change the plan? What is the next stage....timeline?
- Concerned about status of the fence. Like the fence and would like to repair it.
- Decision on the house will need to be made
- Not good for skate parks....isolated area, skate parks should be near schools.
- No electricity please, leave the lights off...park closes at sun down.
- Keep as is for wildlife

Deacon David Taylor

Banks Pastor

- Mr. Banks was strong man of faith, wanted to share what God blessed him with
- Church always had place for underserved folks to come
- Maintain the family home, restore legacy of Mr. Banks
- Archival center at the house
- Educational center
- Make sure there is someone there to perpetuate the Banks legend....family member for first five years who can assure that his legacy is preserved.

Benjamin Lomax

Nephew

- Family celebrations were done at Uncle Olander's house
- Property is a Jewel
- Don't want scars on the property, was the caretaker.
- Experienced tranquility, harmony
- Want to see BBQ pit restored
- 2nd floor of house would make perfect museum of Mr. Banks
- Love this property, a whole lot of people love this property.

Nan Siemer

Area Rep

- Love the Banks family
- Skate park would be about 100 feet away from my home
- Wanted to do a profile on kids and skateparks and found that it makes lots of noise and drives people away.
- Want kids to find their skatepark....in another park
- Kingstown is a lovely quiet community....Banks have been a wonderful partner in that.
- Don't want to see the property turn into an amusement park

Margaret Yim

Landsdowne

- Thank the Banks for generous donation
- Feel for the teenagers but they don't pay taxes
- Need to preserve land the way it is

Monique Rizer

- Moved here from Seattle, bought home because of the park

- Dismayed to see development going on
- Lot of things you can do there without structured play
- Would like the county to consider the neighbors
- Noise is a big concern

Yvonne Freeman

Glenwood Mews

- Mother of three boys, skaters
- They are not bad kids, just want place to skate
- Understand concerns of being close to park, noise, security
- Don't discount the way the kids feel. Would like to see something in the nearby area for these kids

Linda Payne

Neighbor

- Attended Mr. Banks parties, enjoyed them immensely
- Preserve & have a big party every year commemorating Mr. Banks birthday.

Bob Reeser

- Lived in neighborhood longer than 23 years
- Kids need a safe place to skateboard, something like Wakefield, possibly at Lee District Park where there would be supervision
- Banks park should remain the green place that it is and point county to area where a skatepark can be built.

After closing remarks by Judy Pedersen and brief comments by the Supervisor, the meeting concluded.