

---

# Ruckstuhl Park Master Plan

PUBLIC COMMENT MEETING

July 29, 2015, 7:00 P.M. At Marshall High School

## Meeting Summary:

A Public Comment Meeting was held on the evening of July 29, 2015 to present the Draft Ruckstuhl Park Master Plan to the community and accept public commentary toward the parks future design. Approximately 16 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 Ken Quincey, Park Authority Board Member, Providence District Representative

## Other Officials and Staff in Attendance:

Sara Baldwin, Chief Operations Officer, Fairfax County Park Authority

Dave Bowden, Director Of Park Planning Development, Fairfax County Park Authority

Sandy Stallman, Manager Park Planning Branch, Fairfax County Park Authority

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

Erin Stocksclaeder, Natural Resource Specialist, Fairfax County Park Authority

Chrissy Meade, Public Information Office, Fairfax County Park Authority

Russel Arrington, Area 1 Park Operations Manager, Fairfax County Park Authority

Chris Sperling, Senior Archaeologist, Fairfax County Park Authority

---

## Staff Presentation

Judy Pedersen provided a brief background of the Park Authority including Park Authority mission, quick park facts, board of directors, master plan process, and the project timeline.

Andy Galusha, project manager for the Park Master Plan, provided a brief history of the site, site conditions, and surrounding context, and the proposed plan.

## Discussion Session:

Following the presentation, Judy Pedersen moderated an open public comment period so those in attendance could share their impressions of the master plan. The following is a summary of each speaker's comments expressed during this session, after which, the meeting adjourned.

---

### Speaker Number 1

---

- \* Plan reflects views and opinions expressed in previous meetings. There are huge pressures in how elected officials shape the what they think is the opinion of the community as a whole not just the people who desire to preserve open space for the future. Proposed plan reflects the desires of Lilly Ruckstuhl wanted to see hosting migratory birds, resident birds of the area, dominated by local vegetation, looks like a natural place. People of the community desire to preserve the health of the community based on the birds that are here. Recent development caused the loss of many kinds of birds. This property in its natural state will attract those birds to move back.
- 

### Speaker Number 2

---

- \* Resident of Colonel Lindsay Community. Would like to say I appreciate that the county has worked with community to address concerns. Want property to stay as a natural environment. Happy that the plan has a natural feel to it.
- 

### Speaker Number 3

---

- \* Property adjacent to cemetery. Question on timing of decision, when does it go to the board? How and when would it be funded? There is a reference to no structures on land, does that include restrooms? Number one concern is the protection of the cemetery. Much inappropriate activity has gone on there. Fencing sooner rather than later is necessary.
- 

### Speaker Number Comment Card

---

\* Thoughts....

- \* Need traffic calming, light and left hand turn lane on to Idyl; traffic is getting more intense on this road.
- \* Bike and pedestrian lane continuing the length of Idylwood
- \* History - would like to see some signage of the history in this area - who owned the property before Lili Ruckstuhl?
- \* Perhaps area maps like at Hidden Oaks showing progression of change in the area to present.
- \* Engage volunteers / a "friends of" group to help maintain the park, do invasive management etc. (I am a master Naturalist)
- \* I love the idea of using it for classroom

---

Speaker Number    Email (paper copy)

---

- \* As you make decisions regarding preservation and development of the land into a park, here are my concerns:

1) Preservation and respect for the cemetery. Please erect a protection fence around the cemetery as soon as possible. As adjacent residents for more than 20 years, we have been disappointed to see the vandalism to the head stones and inappropriate activity which has occurred around a sacred, historic site.

2) Access. Please limit access to the park to Idylwood Road and Dunford Drive. There are concerns in our neighborhood that people visiting the park will park on Colonel Lindsay Court and walk through our back yards to access the park. This potential problem can be addressed with fencing around the park and the cemetery and provision of adequate parking for park users.

3) Traffic and parking. As noted above, adequate parking for park users is critical, and should be constructed on the park land itself. To encourage walking (and safety), a sidewalk should be constructed on the park frontage on Idylwood Road (also as soon as possible). Traffic is already heavy on Idylwood Road, and a school bus stop is located at the corner of Idylwood and Colonel Lindsay Court, so other traffic enhancements should be considered for the area around the park, such as marked and signed sidewalk crossing from the park to the corner of Idylwood and Pimmit, for the safety of all walkers.

4) Park facilities. I support a low impact, passive park, which maintains the natural environment. I support the construction of a walking/hiking/nature trail, park benches and possibly an educational/nature area and toddler/small-scale playground in the new Ruckstuhl Park. I do not support community gardens, construction of ball fields, restrooms, picnic areas, large playground(s), and lights. As noted above, construction of a protection fence around the cemetery should be installed as soon as possible, along with a plaque, possibly explaining the history of the land as well as giving credit to the generous donors. I do not support picnic area, community gardens and restrooms, which might attract undesirable wildlife (rodents) and require much more (costly) upkeep and maintenance by the Park Authority.

5) Operating Hours. The Ruckstuhl Park should be open only from dawn to dusk, not at night.

6) Maintenance and Security. As referenced above, by not constructing picnic areas, community gardens and restrooms, the amount of maintenance (including trash pickup) by Park Authority staff will be kept to a minimum. It is critical, however, that the new park receive regular visits from Park Authority maintenance crews and Park Authority security and/or County Police, to maintain the park's safety and security for all users.

We are very pleased about the creation of Ruckstuhl Park which will preserve undeveloped open space for the enjoyment of generations to come.

---

Speaker Number    Question from floor

---

- \* What is going to be done about Traffic? Traffic on Idylwood Drive is terrible.
-