

**Salona Park Master Plan  
Public Information Meeting Summary  
February 4, 2010, 7:00 PM  
Franklin Sherman Elementary School,  
6630 Brawner St, McLean, VA 22101**

**MEETING SUMMARY**

A Public Information Meeting was held on the evening of February 4, 2010 for the purpose of increasing public awareness of the project and the park master planning process as well as to invite public comment and input toward the park's future design.

**INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS**

Sandy Stallman, Park Planning Branch Manager, provided general welcoming remarks and made introductions of various persons of note in attendance that evening including:

Cheryl Patton – Administrative Assistant to John Foust, Board of Supervisors representative from the Dranesville District (Mr. Foust was unable to attend)

Kevin Fay – Park Authority Board, Dranesville District

George Lovelace – Park Authority Board, Member-At-Large

John Dargle – Director, Fairfax County Park Authority

Dave Bowden – Director, FCPA Planning and Development Division

Andy Galusha – Project Manager, FCPA Planning and Development Division

Ed Busenlehner – Area 1 Manager

Adam Draper – Northern Virginia Conservation Trust

Ashley Stanton – Northern Virginia Conservation Trust

Dan and Karen DuVal – owners of the Salona Park property and grantors of the Conservation Easement

Park Authority Board member Kevin Fay provided some additional comments,

- recognizing the importance of this property within the McLean area and its future to serve as the “crown jewel” of McLean open space;
- noting the community spirit of Karen and Dan DuVal;
- reflecting the continuing effort toward land acquisition in McLean for community benefit, specifically noting the recent acquisition of the home sites immediately adjacent to McLean Central Park; and
- encouraging public input toward the design of Salona Park through the Master Plan process.

**STAFF PRESENTATION**

Sandy Stallman provided an outline of the evening's agenda as well as an overview of the Park Master Plan process.

- Park Authority Overview
  - Park Authority mission of the Park Authority is to enhance citizen's quality of life through natural and cultural resource stewardship and to provide a range of recreational opportunities
  - Park Authority land use and operations are guided by a twelve member board appointed by the Board of Supervisors

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- Park Authority is responsible for over 400 parks and 22,000 acres of parkland
- Master Plans (MP)
  - Park specific long-range plan to determine land use, park features and facilities
  - Establish conceptual use and design of site to be further refined when the site development is ready to move forward
  - Master plans consist of three parts
    - Written plan – describing site conditions and planned park features
    - General Management Plan – guidance for broad management zones
    - Conceptual Development Plan – general locations for land uses, support features and park facilities
- Master Plan process
  - Established to provide consistent process for planning individual parks
  - Process includes
    - Site Analysis
    - Initial public information meeting
    - Development of a draft Master Plan
    - Present draft Master Plan to the Park Authority Board
    - Present draft Master Plan to the public at public comment meeting
    - 30-day comment period follows public comment meeting
    - Revisions to the Master Plan, if needed
    - Presentation of the final Master Plan to the Park Authority Board for approval
  - Public input is accepted throughout the planning process via:
    - Public meetings – held before and after master plan is drafted
    - Project website link to parkmail
    - E-mail
    - Mail
    - Telephone

**SITE HISTORY AND CONDITIONS**

Andy Galusha, Project Manager for Salona Park, provided a brief history of the property, some local context and description of the site.

- Salona history
  - 1717 – property was part of the Lee family’s holdings
  - 1812 – the property was purchased by the Maffet family
  - 1814 – President James Madison stayed briefly at the Maffet home during the War of 1812 when Washington was attacked by the British, as noted on a commemorative plaque on the property

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- 1850 – the Smoot family acquired the property and used it as a working farm through the Civil War at which time Union encampments were located at and around Salona
- 1952 – the property was purchased by the DuVal family who have owned it since
- 2005 – Dan and Karen DuVal enter into a perpetual conservation easement with Fairfax County Park Authority and Northern Virginia Conservation Trust on a 41-acre portion of the site for use as a public park. See [Conservation Easement](#)
- Existing Conditions
- Significant portions of forest vegetation
- Three fields are located along the Dolly Madison frontage
- The topography is noted as providing a high point near Dolley Madison Highway and draining southeasterly.
- Drainage channels, wetlands and a Resource Protection Area are noted on the property.
- The fields are part of the historic landscape of the site
- Orchards are still present on the western part of the site
- Salona House remains as a private residence and is not included in the conservation easement or park area
- The foundation of the old barn remains and several out-buildings are noted
- Easements
  - 1971 – an easement was placed on the house and its immediate vicinity to protect the historic nature of the home
  - 2005 – an easement was established in agreement with the Park Authority and the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust to protect the remainder of the site
  - The 2005 easement agreement established certain uses to be permitted or restricted within the easement area:
    - Permitted uses:
      - Agricultural uses
      - Two rectangular play fields
      - 100 parking spaces
      - Playground
      - Picnic areas
      - Trails
      - Interpretive signage
      - Provision of a buffer to protect historic features from active recreation activities
    - Restricted uses:
      - Synthetic turf

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- Sports lighting
- Removal of significant trees and soil

**PUBLIC INPUT PERIOD**

Sandy Stallman then opened the floor to a period of general questions and input from the public. The following is a summary of the major issues and comments for consideration in the draft Master Plan: *Park Authority responses are shown in italics.*

- **SUSTAINABLE DESIGN**
  - Parking lot design should use permeable/porous pavement to reduce runoff and protect site. *The Park Authority has many recent park installations that have used pervious pavers and other methods of reducing erosion and runoff. Construction materials will be selected and designed at the time of development.*
- **SITE ACCESS**
  - Question was raised about the ability to provide direct access to the park from Kurtz Road. *Staff will review this request as it develops the Master Plan.*
  - Question was raised regarding pedestrian access along 123, noting gaps between existing sidewalk systems and that proposed with the plan. *The conceptual plan shown in the presentation indicates a trail along Route 123 on the park site only. A public trail cannot be placed on private property without the owner's permission or granting of an easement and therefore is not shown on private property..*
- **TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC**
  - This was a major area of concern expressed throughout the evening. Residents already experience significant difficulty entering and leaving their community adjacent to the park.
  - Repeated concerns were expressed about the additional traffic impact when the park is developed, especially as it relates to the sport field usage and parking. .
  - Several comments/suggestions related to the installation of a light at Buchanan Street. Comment was made recognizing the difficulty of enhancing access to the park and neighborhood without further impacting the traffic flow on Route 123 by adding another light.
  - Encourage pedestrian and bicycle access to the park.
  - Several requests were made that the traffic impacts are studied in earnest with the development of this property.

*It was noted by Park Authority officials that any needed park-related transportation improvements will be determined by VDOT following a traffic impact analysis that will be completed and submitted at the time the*

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*site is developed Existing traffic concerns that are unrelated to the park use can be directed to VDOT or the Dranesville Supervisor's office.*

- **PARK FEATURES**

- Question regarding the stringency of the restrictions on field lighting. Would it be added at some point in the future? *Field lights are not an allowed use under the conservation easement.*
- Questions whether there will be access to the green area behind the house, how trails will be connected at various edges of the property and if a circular trail loop could be considered. *Trail locations are sensitive to the central site residence and resources on the site, but will be further explored.*
- Request was made to preserve the cultural landscape of the fields as opposed to creation of additional recreation fields. Specific mention was made of the middle field noted as containing rare herbs and grasses. *This will be further explored in the development of the master plan.*
- Suggestion for the design of the park to be more focused on preservation of the natural and historic nature of the site, rather than athletics. *A clarification on interpretive features was provided. General interpretive feature locations are shown on the conceptual map in the presentation. Interpretation will be guided by the [Salona Cultural Landscape Report](#) and further research as needed.*
- Request was made for a skate park. *A skate park is not a permitted use at this site. We have heard from a number of McLean citizens of the high need for a skate park in McLean. Other park opportunities within McLean are being explored but will need to be master planned for such a use.*
- Clarification was asked for why some uses are restricted. *The conservation easement provides the Park Authority certain rights to create a park but has provisions for a limited number of permitted uses and certain restrictions on how the property can be developed.*
- Question was made whether there will be restroom facilities provided with site development. If so, how are these maintained? *Typically, restrooms are not provided at local parks, but porta-potties are provided and maintained through contract or by field users.*
- Question was made as to the true need for additional athletic fields. *There is a demonstrated need for rectangle fields Countywide and in particular in the Dranesville District. This high rectangle field need was part of the rationale for including fields in the permitted uses when the conservation easement was negotiated.*
- Clarification was requested regarding the size of the proposed athletic fields. *Maximum field sizes are set out in the conservation easement.*

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- Clarification was requested regarding the park buffer noted on the plan. Does it include fencing or landscaping? *The buffer is generally a setback area of 50 feet around the site perimeter. Parks are not generally fenced. Landscaping needs are generally determined at the time of development.*
- Clarification was requested as to the plans for the “agricultural education area”. *This is still yet to be determined. Possible examples may be a demonstration garden, community garden or interpretive features used to provide education on sound and/or historic agricultural practices. It is likely to require a partnership with a skilled volunteer group to further define and implement this feature.*
- **POTENTIAL PARK IMPACTS**
  - Adequate budget to maintain fields and keep clean. *Site maintenance is absorbed in the area management/operations. Interested partners are encouraged to participate in adopt a park and field adoption programs.*
  - Several attendants expressed concerns about athletic field impacts including potential overflow parking on neighborhood streets, noise and visual impacts and field usage when not used by permitted teams. *Parking standards for athletic fields are 50 spaces per field. The conservation easement limits the number of parking spaces. Parking on public streets is managed by VDOT. Issues and neighborhood impacts related to athletic fields are managed through the Department of Community and Recreation Services who allocate and manage athletic field usage. Field design will consider potential neighborhood impacts.*
  - Suggestion was made of investigating the possibility of a shared parking agreement with Trinity Church to ease parking demand.
- **PROCESS**
  - General timeline for this project.
    - *Next step is to draft MP using input from the Public Information Meeting*
    - *Present draft MP to Park Authority Board in Spring*
    - *Advertise and Hold Public Comment Meeting in Spring*
    - *30-day comment period*
    - *Revise draft MP, if needed*
    - *Present to Park Authority Board for approval in late summer/early fall.*
  - Can all public comments received during the 30-day comment period be posted in a “blog format”, visible to all who are interested.

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- *This hasn't been done previously for master plans, but we can explore the County's policy on use of blog format and resources available.*
- Question was made if the comment period is open to anyone? *All comments are accepted.*
- Question was asked regarding how citizens can pursue a request for a skate park in McLean.
  - *Through master plan processes that occur – Langley Fork will be starting soon; Look for potential appropriate locations in other parks and add the master plan to the FCPA Planning and Development Division annual work plan by working with the Dranesville Park Board member.*
- Funding - *No funding is currently allocated or available for Salona Park development. The earliest possible funding opportunity would be 2012 when the next Park bond referendum is scheduled.*

**CLOSING COMMENTS**

Sandy Stallman closed the public comment session with appreciation for the comments of those in attendance and restated the means by which additional public comment could be made.