

SALONA PARK TASK FORCE

MEETING MINUTES

OCTOBER 16, 2012

Members present: Ed Pickens, Margaret Malone, Joel Stillman, Dan DuVal, Carole Herrick, Mark Turner, Beth Chung; others present: Cheryl Patten (representing Supervisor John Foust) and Andy Galusha (representing the Fairfax County Park Authority).

The meeting began with discussion regarding reactions to the October 4 public meeting. It was noted that the turnout was very large. An estimated 430-450 persons attended. Members of the task force discussed what they had learned during the public meeting. Some task force members discussed notes they had taken at the meeting. Others discussed their interaction with visitors. Statements by visitors reported by task force members included: 1) preservation of the historical, environmental and cultural aspects of the property is important; 2) there is a need for athletic fields (with and without other uses); and 3) a positive reaction to the idea of a green building.

Task force members agreed that a major concern on the part of the public was the potential impact of increased traffic and the danger of accidents at the intersection of Buchanan Street and Dolley Madison Boulevard (Rt. 123). A task force member commented that during the public meeting some visitors were erroneously told that a traffic light could be installed by Supervisor Foust. It was pointed out that in previous task force meetings it had been stated that Fairfax County did not have the authority to install a traffic signal and that VDOT was the entity with that authority. To date, VDOT's refusal to install a traffic signal at the intersection was based on its assessment of the distance between signals on Dolley Madison Boulevard and VDOT's desire to keep traffic moving along Rt. 123. It is not known whether a signal light at the intersection would be reconsidered by VDOT as the result of recommendations for proposed uses of the parkland, or whether installation of a light would adequately address traffic issues.

There was discussion about a request by neighbors from the Kurtz Road neighborhood who would like access to the park from the neighborhood and from Franklin Sherman Elementary School. It was acknowledged that an ingress/egress easement would need to be acquired from an abutting private property but that the homeowner has stated that an easement would not be granted.

It was observed that many visitors had been given misinformation about the process and the start time for the public meeting and that this created confusion and frustration among some of those attending the meeting. Some members of the task force remarked that they had had very positive interaction with the public. Others noted that some visitors were focused only on filling out comment sheets and did not interact with task force members and other presenters.

Andy Galusha was asked to walk the task force through the Park Authority process once the task force issues its recommendation(s). Below is a synopsis of the likely process:

- Task force recommendation to Supervisor Foust
- Park Authority staff reviews with possible revision to current Draft Master Plan
- Public comment meeting on Final Master Plan
- Plan voted on by Park Authority Board [timeline to this point is 3-6 months]
- Public approval of zoning - 2232 review [timeline for zoning is 9 months]
- Funding acquisition – first available Park Authority Bond cycle is 2016, but private funding source is possible at an earlier date
- Once funding (public or private) is available the plan goes to design and engineering
- Final design and engineering begins along with required archaeological, water quality and environmental review studies. [timeline is 1-3 years]
- Exclusive of outside funding source, earliest Park Authority development is 2018-2019

Discussion began regarding the charge to the task force for developing its recommendations: Is it charged with telling what the community wants at Salona, or is it charged with reporting what the task force wants? The view was expressed that the recommendations of the task force should respond to the mission that it was given when it was appointed.

There was discussion as to how the October 4 comment sheets should be handled. A motion was made and seconded. It was agreed that the task force will make the comment sheets available to the public and that this will be done after they have been reviewed by the task force.

A second motion was made to create a process to provide for comments from people who did not attend the public meeting. The motion failed for lack of a second. It was observed that the task force had agreed prior to the public meeting that comments were to be made in conjunction with the presentations by the task force and others at the public meeting. It was also noted that an opportunity for additional comments will be available at any subsequent public meeting.

Comment sheets are available for review by task force members at Supervisor Foust's office.

New Business: The task force agreed to discuss with Fairfax Master Naturalists how the Master Naturalists will proceed with a plan to remove invasive plants from the Salona parkland, beginning with the hedgerows in the front fields.

Next Meeting: **Tuesday, October 30 at 7pm.**

Tuesday, November 20 at 7 p.m.