

SALONA PARK TASK FORCE

MEETING MINUTES

January 10, 2012

The meeting convened at 7:40 PM.

Members attending meeting: Margaret Malone, Dan DuVal, Whit Field, Sybil Caldwell, Joel Stillman, Carole Herrick, Ed Pickens and Beth Chung. Fairfax County support staff attending meeting: Cheryl Patten, representing Supervisor Foust and Andy Galusha, representing the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA). Also present: Ed Shahin.

Changes to the amendments of December 14, 2011 offered by Andy Galusha: Page 2, Paragraph 1, last sentence- change "*a Master Plan is proposed*" to "*a site plan is submitted*"; Page 2, Paragraph 3, third sentence-change "*Master Plan*" to "*site plan*".

Ed Pickens gave a presentation about the potential trails at Salona. He observed that the southern part of the park could have natural surface trails and some bridge crossings. The trails should be sited as far away from buildings as possible and could be built by volunteer labor. The trails would probably not have to be ADA compliant. They could be 3-4 feet wide and have natural surfaces. The bridges would likely be fiberglass, with each costing approximately \$25-35 K. He noted that there is concern about the difficulty of establishing trail connectivity. A suggestion was made that short trails to specific areas of historical interest could have limited access times. For example, if there is an interesting archaeological site a trail could be constructed that would only be open for approved guided tours of the site, such as school groups. Ed had a discussion with one neighbor who was concerned about the location of the trails being sited close to neighboring properties and affecting the privacy of these homes. Ed commented that the trail entrance for this southern part of the Park would be off of Buchanan Street and would not originate in the circle in the adjacent neighborhood.

With respect to trails in the northern area, Ed said that trails generally would have to be 6 feet wide, with a cleared area 2 feet on either side. There would be 2 options for trail finishes – asphalt, with a price of \$150 per linear foot, or stone dust with a price of \$125 per linear foot. The hedgerows in this area are 50 – 60 feet wide. Bridges would be required for any stream crossings and trail width would be variable depending on the circumstance and surface materials. Depending upon surrounding activities, trails could be outside the hedgerows and be within a hedgerow where it crosses a stream. The northern portions of the trails would have to be ADA compatible, but where a trail traverses hilly ground the trail could not be ADA compatible.

Andy Galusha stated that VDOT has plans to widen Route 123, Dolley Madison Boulevard, and put in a bike lane. There is no date for this development. There are plans to construct a walking trail in the right of way along Route 123 and the front of the Salona property. There is a possibility that a portion of the land of an unbuildable lot running between Kurtz and Buchanan Streets may have to be condemned in order to construct a trail 6 - 8 feet wide with a 2 foot buffer on either side. The land is owned by Vienna Trust. There was brief discussion as to whether the Park Authority or VDOT would have maintenance responsibility for the Salona portion of the trail. Questions were raised regarding the relative cost of asphalt vs. stone dust for the approximately 2,600 square feet of trail.

Carole Herrick began the presentation regarding how Salona Park could serve McLean senior citizens with a discussion of her consultations with seniors concerning their ideas for the Park. She noted that people were disappointed that there is no place in McLean for a nice walk. Some of the uses that seniors proposed were: 1) a garden area with walking paths similar to Meadowlark Gardens in Vienna; 2) paved trails to allow for easy wheelchair access; 3) outdoor space for art and exercise classes; 4) designated space (either inside a building, or if there is no building, outside) that would be used for educational opportunities and that would provide an opportunity for volunteer activities. The view was expressed that current residents who are now seniors have lived here for decades and have been active in creating many community facilities enjoyed in McLean today. They want someplace to go other than the Lewinsville Center and would welcome an opportunity to participate in activities that are in a welcoming outdoor environment. Carole presented 4 letters from seniors expressing their views as to the benefits Salona Park could offer senior citizens.

Ed Shahin spoke next as a guest presenter. He commented that the senior population in McLean will soon greatly exceed its current 17% of the overall population. Senior centers in McLean are very limited and offer no opportunity to expand. Many seniors are house bound. Seniors need social interaction. Ed stated that Salona is a substantial resource and could be designed to provide many recreational opportunities for seniors. Some opportunities would include: 1) benches on which to sit and enjoy the fresh air, read a book, or play checkers or backgammon; 2) a place to conduct outdoor exercise classes; 3) open space with trails to walk that can accommodate persons who need assistive devices; 4) trails that would incorporate exercise stations for active adults. The Lewinsville Center is not a safe place to walk because of the broken concrete around the center. He stated that Salona is the "last vestige of green space" and is close to Lewinsville Center and would be convenient for seniors. Joel Stillman offered to work with Ed to find opportunities for seniors to conduct exercise classes on nearby athletic fields during the morning and early afternoon hours.

Margaret Malone presented the draft of *The Future of Salona*, a statement by the task force that will be distributed to McLean residents and appear on the Fairfax County Park Authority website. Several suggestions for changes were made:

- List more specific topics that the task force is working on so as to provide more information about task force actions.
- Reference the map in the first paragraph of the statement so that readers will understand the information that is being presented. (The map will be attached as page 5 of the statement.)
- On page 3 paragraph 2, change “alternative use” to “proposed use”
- When referencing fields, it needs to be clarified whether they are athletic or agricultural.

It was agreed that the task force should request that Fairfax County provide information on athletic field assignments for the past three years and a needs assessment looking at the available Park Authority fields. Cheryl Patten will contact Karen Avvisato, Fairfax County Athletic Services, for the information.

Margaret has reserved the entire Community Hall at the McLean Community Center for May 8, 2012. This is the tentative date for a public meeting.

The next meeting for the Task Force is scheduled for Wednesday, February 15, 2012.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.