

Riverfront Task Force
Minutes
June 12, 2013

In Attendance:

Kerry Devine- City Council
George Solley- City Council
Matt Kelly- City Council
Bob Antozzi- Parks, Recreation and Public Facilities
Chris Hornung- EDA
Carolyn Helfrich- Clean and Green Commission
Ken Kroko- Parks and Recreation Commission
Mike Carmody- Darbytown Neighborhood Association
Bob Whittingham- DRMI
Jamie Scully – ARB
Johanna Humphrey – Rising Sun Neighborhood Association
Michelle Thompson- Shiloh (Old Site)
Karen Hedelt- Department of Economic Development and Tourism

The meeting called to order 5:00pm. No public comment was offered.

Minutes from May 22, 2013 were reviewed and adopted.

Bob Antozzi reviewed the seven items brought to the task force by council and provided the status on each.

- The property survey continues.
- RFP responses for archaeological survey are due Friday, June 14.
- The ARB tabled the Masonic Lodge application. The ARB requested research be done on the building and that the application be resubmitted as part of a plan.

Tom Crimmins and Chris Hornung of the Economic Development Authority were introduced to discuss the economic considerations of riverfront park design and planning. Chris Hornung noted that the EDA supports the establishment of a downtown riverfront park due to its interest in downtown development; thus the EDA put money and effort toward the purchase of the Masonic Lodge property. The EDA has discussed how the area surrounding the park could grow and how the park could be designed to contribute to that growth. It is very important element be part of the design contract, as originally recommended by the Task Force. He asked the Task Force to picture the next 5-15 years on Sophia Street and how the park plays into that picture.

Tom Crimmins referred to JumpStart! as an example of a good economic development document. The foundation of JumpStart! was a need to know who the potential developers are and whether there is a customer base for development. A downtown riverfront park was part of the vision, including visibility of the park from 2nd story promenade on the other side of Sophia St. He noted that the original RFP and contract with the design team had funding for an economic element in the design process; he strongly believes that this would benefit the park design and hopes that element will be restored to the contract. He sees a synergy between the park and development on Sophia St.

Chris Hornung pointed out that adequate parking is essential for redevelopment.

George Solley asked what in park design could act as a deterrent to economic development. Chris Hornung replied that neighborhood parks differ from parks that attract development and tourism. An example of a neighborhood park would be Kenmore and an event park would be Hurkamp. He said that the view from Sophia St is important, as well as the views from nearby properties and down city streets toward the park. He favors events in the park, but not just any events, and likes the concept of an amphitheater. He doesn't mind small retail such as bike or canoe rentals.

Jamie Scully asked again the status of the seven tasks to be addressed before allocating funding for the design team. Four are not yet started; the interactive community action task is waiting for guidance from the City Manager. Mike Carmody indicated that the archaeological survey would take 5-6 months. Jamie Scully asked if the Task Force can go to City Council to move forward without the survey being complete. George Solley said yes, but he could not predict the result.

Ken Kroko asked when the process can move forward. Again, the response was that we will be able to proceed, but exactly when is not yet known. Discussion ensued concerning archaeological considerations.

The Task Force agreed that the next meeting would be scheduled for Wednesday, July 17, and the topic for discussion would be "events considerations in park design and planning." Roberta Gold and David Peterson would be invited to offer their experience and views.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.