

MINUTES  
MAYOR'S BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE  
ON THE  
PRESCOTT PARK MASTER PLAN  
7:30 A.M. – WEDNESDAY, September 7, 2016  
EILEEN DONDRO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

1. Call to Order – Chair, Councilor Chris Dwyer

Chair Dwyer called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

Members in Attendance: Councilor Chris Dwyer, Chair; Mayor Jack Blalock; Councilor Nancy Pearson; Phyllis Eldridge, Trustee of Trust Funds; Thomas Watson, Trustee of Trust Funds; Dana Levenson, Trustee of Trust Funds; Stefany Shaheen, Citizen Representative

Staff Present: David Moore, Assistant City Manager

2. Consideration of Minutes from August 3, 2016

Mr. Watson moved to accept the minutes from August 3, 2016, seconded by Mayor Blalock. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Dwyer stated that this will mark the end of the first phase and the beginning of the middle phase. She stated that after the presentation today, the next meeting will be scheduled in 2 weeks for a work session to refine the concepts before the next public input meeting.

3. Presentation on Diagrammatical Concepts: Weston & Sampson

Ms. Ruane began the presentation stating that they have taken everything they have heard so far, including feedback from the website and public comments, and come up with a very general soft scape which addresses 4 concerns; green space, hard space, circulation, and stage space.

Mr. Bolinger reviewed the various opportunities for public input and the evolution of the dialogue stating that the park is intended for public use and enjoyment and is a city park. He continued that the opportunities for entertainment seem to have become inseparable but there are also opportunities to protect the views and naturalness of the area and to enhance the maritime history, access and connections to the water and maintain access to the park, even during events. He continued that there are different areas with distinct characteristics, but they may also be too compartmentalized and need better integration. He stated that we also need to be respectful of the neighborhood and try to enhance both the formal and informal uses. He concluded that the public comments ran the gamut of “don’t change anything” to “wipe the slate clean and start over” so they will be offering various ideas for the committee to give direction.

Ms. Ruane gave a brief presentation of other urban waterfront parks as examples so that people can see concepts and ideas in reality. She then reviewed the 3 concepts: (See - <http://www.cityofportsmouth.com/agendas/2016/misc/WestonSampsonPresentation9-7-2016DiagrammaticConcepts.pdf>)

**Concept 1:** Community Connections:

- Identifies historic parcels and park evolution
- Organizes programming in bands of hard and softscape
- Offers two complimentary circulation patterns
- Widens North Pier to expand parkland
- Connects Four Tree Island with water taxi docks
- Creates stand-alone maintenance facility
- Relocates stage, repurposes Shaw

**Concept 2:** Outside/Inside:

- Streamlines pedestrian circulation along a central spine.
- Waterfront activities on the “outside” with hardscape
- Passive recreation and ornamental experiences occur on the “inside” with softscape
- Terracing of water’s edge for access and resiliency
- Relocates stage to connect with

**Concept 3:** Water Connections:

- Rethinks the park/water interface
- Expands circulation beyond current park limits and creates new opportunities
- Widens Prescott Pier for extension of parkland
- Knits site together through new plaza spaces
- Relocates stage + Hovey Fountain

The committee discussed the ideas presented in the 3 concepts and agreed that Concept 1 did not represent the changes they were looking to bring forward. The consensus of the Committee was to ask the consultant to bring back to the next meeting expanded plans for Concepts 2 and 3.

4. Public Comments:

Beth Margeson – stated that the loss of the parking lot would take away a lot of parking spaces and then where else will people park. She also discussed handicap accessible spaces that must be provided. She continued stating that she doesn’t feel that the concepts presented solve the intensity of use by Prescott Parks Arts Festival and that it is problematic to build buildings just to accommodate PPAF and that they should check with the Attorney General to see if that is allowed. Finally, she discussed the various ideas discussed for the existing buildings and the installation of sound barriers stating the way to address the noise issue is to keep the volume down.

Judy Nerbonne – stated that the employees won’t have a place to park if they remove the parking lot. Secondly, she stated she attended the recent meeting regarding the WWF reconstruction and it looked as though they would be using a portion of the property mentioned in the presentation during the project.

Chair Dwyer stated there will be various transitions made as the phases of both projects move forward.

Mark Brighton – stated he likes the ideas presented so far but feels the Prescott Park Arts Festival crowds must be controlled and that the drinking must be addressed.

David Krempels – stated likes Concepts 2 and 3 but still feels that the stage on 4 Tree Island would solve a lot of problems. He stated he also wonders about have a shell covering over the stage to mitigate the noise.

Mary Krempels – stated she likes the concepts that include water access.

Sandra Parr – stated that that in the past the efforts were made to remove buildings from the area so she doesn't like the idea of adding new buildings as she feels this would be disrespectful of Josie Prescott's will. She stated that decisions made by present City Councils will have impact into the future and feels there should be ways to undo things when they no longer fit the needs of the city.

The next meeting will be held September 20, 2016 at 7:30 a.m.

5. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 a.m.