

MINUTES

COUNCIL-MANAGER BRIEFING

November 8, 2010

The Council-Manager Briefing was called to order by Mayor Ronald A. D'Epifanio at 6:00 p.m. at the Fairfield Municipal Building, 5350 Pleasant Avenue. The following Councilmembers were present: Tim Abbott, Tim Meyers, Terry Senger, Marty Judd, Mike Snyder, Mitch Rhodus. Staff present: Angie Johns, Arthur Pizzano, Jim Bell, Dave Butsch, Erin Donovan, Tim Bachman, Dennis Stuckey, Bob Schappacher, Carol Mayhall, and John Clemmons. Planning Commission members present: Jeff Holtegel Scott Lepsky Jerry Dailey and School Board representative Mark Morris. Parks Board members present: Don Hassler, and Doug Meece

Huffman Farm

Development Services Director Tim Bachman explained this project began in early spring of last year with a meeting with the heirs of the Huffman Farm. Mr. Bachman further explained the Huffman Farm is a 22 acre tract of property adjacent to the golf course. He commented Mr. Huffman had passed away and placed the property in a charitable trust and that property is to be used for open space, recreational type use undefined. Mr. Bachman explained there was a brainstorming session with Mr. Huffman's nephew Fred Wehr, the attorney representing the estate, Art Pizzano, Bob Schappacher and John Clemmons to start thinking of ideas for the property. He explained a task force was then convened consisting of two member of the Planning Commission - Jeff Holtegel and Mark Morris, two members of the Parks Board - Doug Meece and Don Hassler, and staff members Tim Bachman, Erin Donovan, Jim Bell and Bob Schappacher. Mr. Bachman discussed the various ideas for this property that were proposed to the family during a meeting earlier this year including a perpetual open space, a children's theme, an educational component and agricultural use. He discussed the city's goals and objectives including revenue generating programs, a phased project, capital improvement plan and school partnership. Mr. Bachman discussed in the north portion, the idea is a First Tee Academy, which will be revenue generating. He commented the remaining property will be a sustainable living park. He explained the area will include an activity center, green house, interpretative pond, community gardens, and orchards to engage children and adults in green ecologically compatible uses. Mr. Bachman also discussed the possibility of an arboretum or labeling of trees as suggested by Mr. Wehr.

Parks Board member Doug Meece discussed The First Tee Program, which is a global program that teaches character building values through the game of golf. He discussed the current REACH junior golf program at North Trace that has transitioned to a First Tee program. Mr. Meece explained that the north part of the property will be used to complement the golf course, with a golf academy including a driving range teaching facility, golf facility focusing on character development and targeting children. He commented there are two other First Tee Program facilities in the area including Reeves Golf Course and Forest Hills Country Club. Mr. Meece further explained there will be a practice green with practice bunkers that would also be open to anyone playing the golf course and could be used as a warm up area. Mr. Meece explained the revenue generated will offset the other aspects of the project. He explained the First Tee Program is a nonprofit and grant fund dollars would be available. Parks and Recreation Director Jim Bell explained there are no capital dollars available, but there are sponsorship dollars. Bob Schappacher stated we already use the First Tee logo. Mr. Meece further commented First Tee has a good partnership with the schools.

Planning Manager Erin Donovan explained the following goals will be incorporated in the outdoor classroom for this park: environmental education to school-aged youth that teaches all levels about sustainable issue in the environment, ecology, healthy living; create a partnership between the schools and the City; incorporate the required school curriculum requirements, develop a youth based Farmers Market, encourage volunteerism, and provide educational workshops for the community. Ms. Donovan displayed a map of the area and discussed the different learning stations. She noted that each one can operate independently, so the city can start with one area and as funds are raised continue with other sections. She pointed out on the map the buffer for residents on Firestone, a proposed orchard, interpretive pond, garden site, flower gardens, greenhouse, activity center and play area, and the access point. Ms. Donovan displayed a photo of the garden from Parky's Farm at Winton Woods, and discussed the possible learning opportunities for the youth. She displayed a photo of the Orchards from Parky's and a Butterfly Garden from Farbach-Werner nature preserve and discussed the learning possibilities. Ms. Donovan discussed the greenhouse section and the possibility to bring the outdoor classroom indoors to learn agriculture during the winter months, cultivate plants for outdoor gardening, and learn about science. She discussed the Land Lab Nature Program, which is a partnership between the City of Kettering and Kettering School District. Mr. Donovan further discussed the interpretative pond learning possibilities. She discussed an activity center and play area for the future and discussed the activity area at Parky's Farm. Ms. Donovan explained this is a phasing project and one item is not dependent on the other. She stated there are a lot of grants out there that you can get. She mentioned the family might have seed money. She explained this is meant to be a volunteer type project. She explained the first step is the family is working out how the estate will be processed and handled and that could be going on for another year. Mark Morris stated the school is excited to do this project. Mr. Holtegel stated he hopes that Council understands that this is something that is going to be phased in over a period of time. He further explained there is a lot of volunteer stuff, there are a lot of things we can do ourselves that are not going to cost a lot of money. Councilmember Abbott commented he thinks it is a great vision, a lot of work has gone into it and it has a lot of merit. Councilmember Rhodus commented that he likes the versatility of it and that it addresses all ages and ties the school, the youth and the gardening part. Councilmember Meyers questioned if a team will be created to develop this master plan. Mr. Bell commented

tomorrow night Parks Board will receive the handouts and it will go back to the Environmental Commission. Mr. Bachman explained they probably have a year for the acquisition of property. Mr. Pizzano briefly discussed the interplay between the city, the family and the representatives of the Huffman estate and making sure their needs are met. Mr. Wehr commented his Aunt was about gardens and kids, although they could not have kids. He commented his uncle was an Engineer and President at Hamilton Tool Company. He explained his uncle was born and raised in Fairfield and went to Fairfield High School and his aunt was from Hamilton. Mr. Wehr explained his aunt was upset when all the houses went up along John Gray and on her deathbed she asked Uncle Harold to keep it green. He commented he is not involved in the exact trust, his sister, her husband and the attorney are the three trustees. He further commented there could be some seed money. He explained the estate has to go through different processes. He stated in his opinion this is exactly what the family is looking at. Mayor D'Epifanio suggested something be done down the road to honor the family.

Adjournment

The Council/Manager Briefing adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela Johns
Clerk of Council