

Sports Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 22, 2016

Langston Brown Community Center, Room 109

Time: 7:00-9:00 PM

Commission Members Present:

Heather Cocozza, Chair
Steve Severn
Doug Ross
Drew Murray
Patricia Trapanese
John Bacon

Justin Wilt
David Tornquist
Shirley Brothwell
Sherry Kohan
Reggie Kouba
Larry Robertson

Commission Members Absent:

Jessica Paska

County/APS Staff:

Josh Colman, SC Liaison
Patrick Todd

Peter Lusk
Jeff Winkle

Guests Present:

Erik Gushall, WFWG Chair
Gregg Kurasz
Gail Harrison
Greg Patton
Roy Gamse
Lincoln Oliphant

Larry Suiters
Liz Kirby
Janet Eichers
Nedim Kirimca
Judy Hadden

Please note: Agenda items may not be in chronological order.

Approval of Past Meeting Minutes- November 2016

[7:00-7:04pm]

Proposal to make a change to the minutes- from FY2016 Budget Close-Out Funding- remove "Feasibility study has been done for decking on 66".

Review and motion to approve meeting minutes, seconded, approved.

New Business

Williamsburg Working Group Presentation and Discussion

[7:05-8:05pm]

The Williamsburg Working Group delivered presentations and comments. For the presentations, speakers were as follows:

- Erik Gutshall, WFWG Chair
- Justin Wilt
- Gail Harrison

Presentation can be found here: <https://arlingtonva.s3.dualstack.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2015/08/WFWG-Sports-Combined-Presentation.pdf>

Presentation from Erik Gutshall covered background of the project, how things have progressed and where they are now.

- Issues started in 2013 with Discovery ES- neighborhood had initially been told there would not be turf or lights. Very late in the process, field was changed to turf and added in lights. Discontent in the way the process played out.
- Board approved Discovery ES use permit, but delayed decision on lighting of fields.
- Charge stipulates evaluating whether or not to light the fields.
- There's been a great deal of data gathering and information collection.
- Proposal from Musco to provide LED lights. LED can better control spill or glare. There are no existing LED sports fields in the country (typically used for street/parking lots).
- The existing zoning allows 68 ft. tall lights (80 ft. tall is recommended by Musco).
- Areas of consideration:
 - Fact finding- a great deal of time has been spent on fact finding- 1,000+ pages on the website. There is not necessarily agreement on all this information.
 - Field Utilization- one item the group is still working on- group wants to develop field utilization model- take some of the DPR information and have a model where different field utilization scenarios are played out.
 - Mitigation- had some discussion on the pros/cons of various mitigation measures. Immediate neighbors are not supportive of mitigation.
- Where is the group?
 - No consensus on the issue. They've got two presentations (one open to lights, another opposed).

Presentation from Justin Wilt - Open to Lighting

- Discussion on Sports Commission position statement.
- Most synthetic fields and lighted fields are in central and south Arlington.
- 25% of ASA's soccer players live within 1.5 miles of Williamsburg.
- Sport groups are growing as the general population grows.
- Discussion on annual hours of play gained with lights- varying depending on curfew times.

- Discussion on mitigating the impact of lights- a number of options, including environmental, mechanical, scheduling, and partnerships. Mitigation at Yorktown HS discussed as an example of what works.
- Health effects- studies show no conclusive evidence of problems- County Public Health concluded minimal/no adverse health effects.
- Discussion on factors to balance including: more recreational time, balance with neighbors' concerns and issues, traffic, leverage of investment.

Presentation from Gail Harrison- Opposed to Lighting

- Preserving residential neighborhoods is a county land use plan goal.
- Discussion on Williamsburg neighborhood- county zoning says that this area should be preserved. The location is a traditionally dark area. Neighborhood has undergone significant change to meet community needs (new elementary school, new synthetic turf, more school activities, noise/traffic increases).
- Field Noise levels are high during the day- this level of noise at night would be too loud. Fields are exempt from nighttime noise standards.
- Discussion on proposed lights- Nancy Clanton (outside lighting engineer), says that the glare would be 2-3 times greater than standards. Field lights would be highest intensity of all fields in Arlington.
- Discussion on Musco and questions about the data/information they've provided. No photometric data- questions about construction and how property would be protected.
- Discussion on a number of factors including:
 - Human health discussion on risks from blue lights- less sleep, impaired daytime functioning.
 - Environmental impact- trees and linear feet of canopy need to be removed for construction.
 - Traffic increases
 - Field capacity
- Neighbors are in favor of finding lights in places that want them or looking at other options.
- Discussion on mitigation- neighbors don't feel confident curfew will stick, don't feel mitigation is possible. Believes neighborhood trust is badly frayed with past experience.

Sports Commission Questions/Comments

- Discussion on data issues that might help mitigation- why is data difficult to get? Musco is not giving up proprietary information- has told the county it's proprietary.
- Discussion on construction- construction hasn't been addressed. If board chooses to light fields, more work will be done on construction/implementation parameters.
- Discussion on traffic issues and volume- are there comparison that can be found? Traffic information and all studies has been posted to Williamsburg website- <https://parks.arlingtonva.us/williamsburg-studies/>

- Discussion on idea of location and lighting a single field- neighbors don't see that as a solution to mitigate.
- Discussion on references towards finding other fields for lights. Charge for the group is specific to Williamsburg- if board intended the analysis to be more than Williamsburg (evaluation of other locations), the make-up of the group would have been different.
- Discussion on mitigation- using the Greenbrier/Yorktown committee as guidelines- someone of influence to chair mitigation group.

Public Comment

Members of the public were invited to speak for a maximum of two minutes each.

- 1) Gregg Kurasz- Discussion on traffic and noise issues- affects more than immediate neighborhood.
- 2) Larry Suiters- Discussion on not changing unless there's a need- look at the issues Fairfax has had.
- 3) Liz Kirby- Amount of activity has disrupted neighborhood. Traffic and noise are issues.
- 4) Nedim Kirima- Questions the field utilization versus the actual benefit. Benefit doesn't match investment/change.
- 5) Roy Gamse- data still emerging, has concerns on health safety of lights. Refer to AMA data.
- 6) Lincoln Oliphant- issues are lights, noise, and more. Neighborhood already has large numbers of activities.

Williamsburg Lights Follow Up Discussion

[8:44-8:56pm]

Discussion on Williamsburg lights. Chair of working group requested letter from Sports Commission with thoughts/recommendations.

Discussion on middle ground that can be found- mitigation measures. Reference to Greenbrier MOA- can we use that as a starting model, tweak and adjust as needed?

Letter to working group can also address concerns from neighbors. Ensure that focus of letter is on end results and that letter is accurate.

Diamond Field Fund Project Discussion

[8:05-8:29pm]

Steve gave background on committee and projects. Presented Diamond Field Fund projects for review/approval.

- Gunston Turf Project- field slated for renovation, a delta of \$370,000 existed if deciding to turf field. Arlington Sports Foundation working with DPR to turf this field.

- ASF asked Sports Commission to authorize **\$190,000** to be used towards the \$370,000. ASF has put together donors for other amounts- working on getting an additional \$80,000 to get to \$370,000.
- Questions on how probable is getting the additional \$80,000? ASF believes very probable and that it will happen.
- Questions on why \$190,000? ASF came up with that based on what he thought groups who had contributed would be interested in putting forward.
- Storage Building at Greenbrier
 - **Estimated at \$30,000.**
 - There's no current indoor/dry storage at Greenbrier. Maintenance equipment and supplies are exposed.
 - Current shed is utilized by Yorktown HS only.
 - Location would be behind outfield (near tennis courts).
- Concrete Pad for Batting Cage
 - **Estimated at \$10,000.**
 - Brings batting cages up to recognized high school standards. Safety improvement.

Discussion on Diamond Field Fund Committee- groups from all diamond field groups involved and all in agreement.

Motion to approve field fund expenses, seconded, approved.

Per Field Fund process, Josh will send approval information to DPR Director Jane Rudolph for next steps.

Sports Group Coalition

[8:29-8:33]

Discussion on having a group that can advocate for sport related issues free from ties of commission. Could also include a fundraising component. Discussion on ASF as a group that might be able to do that. Suggestions that they could expand their focus to take on more of an advocacy role.

Agreement that additional advocacy can help- strength in numbers. Examples for projects like 4 Mile Run Valley.

FY18 Budget Preparation Meeting with County Manager

[8:33-8:34pm]

Update on discussion with Mark Schwartz, open discussion with other commissions. All items that have been talked about before.

Joint Meeting with Park and Recreation Commission

[8:34-8:37pm]

Discussion on upcoming Joint Meeting with Park and Recreation Commission. Focus on issues like active/passive use of land, budget related issues, etc.

February 28 is proposed date for joint commission meeting. SC would not meet on February 23rd.

Old Business

Sports User Group Field Allocation Study

[8:37-8:39pm]

Reggie will have a working group going through the field allocation questions- there will be some meetings in January.

Sports Commission Annual Report

[8:39-8:44pm]

Discussion and updates to Sports Commission's annual report.

Projects & Themes

[8:56-8:58]

Looking for one additional project/theme to be "claimed" by Sports Commission member. Looking at density and field usage.

Commission Member Reports

4 Mile Run Valley

[8:58-9:10pm]

Discussion on 4 Mile Run project. Meeting occurred last night and visioning sessions happened at beginning of December.

Visioning sessions seemed to have good input from sports- demand for multi-sport facilities, diamond fields, etc. A lot of interest.

At last night's meeting, discussion and straw polls on ideas like field house and arts districts. Field house ran into issues- willing to look at field house, but only outside of Jennie Dean park area. Group would not give direction to designer to draw an option with field house in the area.

Idea of field house may be scaring people off- ideas of combination facilities are more feasible- field house/arts center/community use.

Discussion of ways to move forward, continuing to push for inclusion of multi-sport facilities, community use facilities. Revisit POPS survey- fitness interest remains. Look at pushing for study on field house.

Meeting ends at 9:10pm.

Christian Dorsey, County Board Liaison

Attest:

Josh Colman

Josh Colman, Staff Liaison