



Parks and Recreation Department Board Minutes
Tuesday, August 23, 2005
Meeting

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Parks and Recreation Department Parks Board was held on Tuesday, August 23, 2005 at the Parks and Recreation Department Main Office, 200 S. Lamar, Blvd. Board Room

Board members present: Board Chair Rosemary Castleberry, Board Vice-chair Linda Guerrero, Marilyn Bostick, Jeb Boyt, Jeff Francell, Leonard Lyons, Hector Ortiz and Mark Vane.

Board members absent: Clint Small

Staff members present: Warren Struss, Stuart Strong, Randy Scott and Tino Garcia.

A. Meeting called to order

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Castleberry at 6:45 p.m.

B. Board member Boyt moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Board member Bostick. Motion passed.

C. Citizen Communication

Larry Akers representing the Friends of the Parks addressed the Board regarding the Town Lake Park Master Plan and the interim solution for Riverside Drive. He indicated that the project has been delayed long enough and requested to move it forward so that the City Council can authorize the contract by September 1, 2005.

D. Items for Action

Note: item # 2 was taken up before # 1

1. Approve a Resolution of Support for the Town Lake Park Master Plan and Interim Solution for Riverside Drive.

2. Make a recommendation to Council regarding realignment of Cesar Chavez – Renee Orr, Project Manager for the construction project.

Gordon Derr lead a PowerPoint presentation regarding each of the above items.

On July 29, 2004 Council directed the City Manager to determine the best way to convert the five-block long one-way segment of Cesar Chavez to a two-way segment and to determine the cost. Objectives included: 1) remove jog at Brazos St. 2) reduce confusion for tourist and motorists and 3) develop a more pedestrian oriented boulevard. Existing conditions were taken into consideration and the following options were recommended.

Option 1: Simple Conversion

- Provides 2 through lanes in each direction
- Provides single left turn bays at Lavaca, Congress and Brazos
- Provides left turns from Cesar Chavez to Guadalupe
- Removes on-street uses between Congress and Brazos

(This option is not recommended as the best option due to the negative impact on traffic congestion)

Options 2: Additional Turn Lanes

- Provides dual left turn bays for eastbound traffic at Lavaca and Brazos
- Provides added lane width between Guadalupe and Lavaca **Note:** provided for urban design enhancements
- Acquires some parkland

(This option is the staff recommendation for “Best Option” for converting Cesar Chavez to two-way)

Option 3: Additional Turn and Through Lanes

- Provides 2 through lanes westbound and 3 through lanes eastbound between San Antonio and Congress
- Constructs one lane south of Buford’s Fire Tower located at the south end of Colorado
- Must acquire considerable parkland

(Due to the need of extensive acquisition of parkland and the impact on the Buford Fire Tower, Option 3 is not recommended and will not be pursued)

Traffic simulations were conducted, assumptions made and stakeholders were included in the process. In addition, evaluation criteria was develop to assist in selecting the best option which included level of service for morning and evening peak traffic hours.

The cost for option 1 which includes the simple conversion plus urban design total \$2,680,000. The cost of option 2 which includes the additional turn lanes plus the urban design is \$3,940,000.

This part of the presentation concluded that option #2 was the best option, it includes: additional turn lanes with urban design. It adds capacity at critical locations, lessens delays as compared to option # 1, removes “jog” reducing confusion for drivers , enhances sidewalk width, adds shade trees and ties to Town Lake Trail. It also improves drainage.

PowerPoint Presentation Part two: regarding Riverside Drive.

August 4, 2005 City Council Resolution directing the City Manager to present a briefing to Council regarding the current cost estimate for the construction of Town Lake Park and the impact of reducing Riverside Drive where it passes through the park to two lane, giving particular attention to the addition of density in the downtown area, the conversion of Cesar Chavez to two-way, and future traffic flow on Barton Springs Road, Lamar Blvd. and South First Street.

Presentation consisted of the impacts to the 1) Palmer Special Events Center and the Long Center 2) Town Lake Park Pedestrian enhancements, 3) levels of service- morning and evening peak traffic hours, 4) other mitigating options 5) potential negative impact for Riverside 2-lane configuration and 5) conclusion on reducing Riverside Drive to 2 lanes in Town Lake Park.

Citizen Communication:

Jeff Jack addressed the board and requested the Board support the resolution to City Council on Town Lake Park and also to support asking for improvement to Cesar Chavez to include work to facilitate the diversion of traffic off Riverside Drive to Town Lake Park.

Larry Akers spoke on behalf of support Cesar Chavez 2-way plan with the amendment and also to recommend approval to Council with delay of the Riverside Realignment Project and support for full funding of Town Lake Park, phase two.

Motions:

Board member Boyt moved to recommend to Council to go forward as soon as possible with the reconfiguration of Riverside Drive to two lanes and the reconstruction of the Town Lake Master Plan as currently designed. Seconded by Board member Bostick. Motion passed 5-1.

Board member Boyt moved to recommend to Council to go forward with option #2, including medians and that if any surplus funds are available they be used for pedestrian and traffic improvement to the Town Lake Corridor. Seconded by Board member Francell. Motion passed 5-1 with Board member Vane abstaining.

3. Approve the construction of a marina wave break at 2215 Westlake Dr., Lake Austin Marina. Board member Francell moved to table until next month's meeting. Seconded by Board member Guerrero. Motion passed.

4. Approve the construction of a single-slip boat dock located at 12417 River Bend #7.

The Navigation Committee has had discussion on this issue and recommends approval. Board member Francell moved to approve, seconded by Board member Boyt. Motion passed, with Board member Vane not present at time of vote.

E. Director's Report

Director Struss reported on the following:

- Public hearings on the budget will be held September 13-15th. (Two major areas of note are the transition of the Park Police Unit and the Bergstrom Golf Course closure on December 31, 2005).
- If council approves the Nominal Rate, there may be some additional funds for the department.
- All future design and construction of the South Austin Tennis Center has been stopped. The new charge is to consider a joint use agreement with AISD for the construction of a new tennis center located at Johnny Morris Road. Note: Repair and renovations are still needed at the current site.
- Austin City Limits forthcoming.
- Tom Nelson is the new Division Manager of the Aquatic Division.
- The erosion problem at Auditorium shores as been taken care of.

F. Committee Reports

Land and Facilities Committee: Board member Boyt reported that Bond election process is ongoing with meetings scheduled for September and October. There was discussion on whether the board could make a presentation to the Bond Oversight Committee. Dates for the presentation will be considered at the next meeting.

Navigation Committee: Issues were discussed at tonight's meeting

Programs Committee: Slide show was presented by staff on current programs and services.

G. Items from Board members

Board member Ortiz reported on the lack of signs on the trail regarding keeping dogs on a leash. Director Struss reported that part of the confusion is that the soccer field (by ordinance is leash free) but not the Trail. Staff will look into the possibility of added signs on the Trail.

Board member Francell has been reappointed to the Board for the next 2 years.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.