



COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Comprehensive Planning and Transportation Committee convened in a regular meeting on Wednesday, October 16, 2013 at 301 W. Second Street, Room #1001, Austin, Texas.

Subcommittee Members in Attendance: Mayor Pro Tem Cole (Chair)
Council Member Morrison
Council Member Riley

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tem Cole called the Comprehensive Planning and Transportation Committee meeting to order at 2:09 p.m.

1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION

Mr. James Finck did not speak for or against the parkland project but stated the approximately 37 acres of parkland that represent a true gateway through our great city we are potentially missing an opportunity to see how all of the pieces can fit together. The YMCA is there and there is a limitation that exists now with parking and traffic problems of going in and out. I ask that we look at this from a comprehensive master plan standpoint. We don't want to do partial and then mess up the potential completion. I encourage you to look at this from the whole opportunity standpoint.

Mayor Pro Tem Cole, asked Mr. Finck if he had any comments about the parking needs specifically related to the Y?

Mr. Finck, stated the parking is insufficient. When you go there on a weekend you see parking not only from Austin's Pets Alive, Y, park and Austin High you can see that is a major hub that people are going to for parking and using other amenities.

Council Member Morrison asked Mr. Finck if he has any thoughts about parking location or what option there may be?

Mr. Finck, stated just an opportunity to look at this information from a different standpoint. Garages are great and they are expensive and if people

are forced to pay for that parking when they go to see they kids play ball or get on the trail, there should be a better combination than just one or the other.

Mr. Paul Seals, Chairman of the Old West Austin Neighborhood Association Steering Committee. Several groups have been following the Pressler issue since it first came up. However, the concept of a connector in the middle of our neighborhood from the central part of the neighborhood to the lake has been somewhat of what we have been working on as far as I can remember. We have a positive reaction for the Pressler Street extension. But, at this point I am very concern about the traffic patterns that you may create there.

Mayor Pro Tem Cole, asked if the neighborhood has made any type of decisions or major analysis about the parking issues?

Mr. Seals, stated not specifically the park and the parking area no.

Council Member Morrison, asked Mr. Seals to talk a little more about his point of the concerns of east west traffic?

Mr. Seals, stated basically the connector from Lamar West through the property near the “Y.” It’s one thing to have traffic going to those specific places as oppose to people using it for cut through.

Mr. Mike Sullivan, with the Old West Austin Neighborhood Association stated in general they support the Pressler extension because of the connection and accessibility that it would provide to the parkland.

Ms. Jane Baxter-Lynn, Pressler resident stated, all but 80% of the Pressler residents above 6th street came together informally to discuss the issues that needed to be addressed as far as parking and traffic flow are concerned. One issue that came up is the Pressler street extension and the 6th street traffic light. We will have an increase in traffic as to what we already have as people drive fast down their street which is really residential street. We are not against anything but please take into consideration our residential street when the planning begin.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

November 4, 2013 – Unanimously approved on a 3-0 vote.

3. PRESENTATION OF THE LATEST DESIGN OPTIONS FOR THE EXTENSION OF PRESSLER STREET THROUGH THE PARKLAND KNOWN AS LAMAR BEACH

Mr. Gary Schatz, Assistant Director, Austin Transportation Department, discussed the latest design options of Pressler Street through the parkland known as Lamar Beach. The Lamar Beach Park concept is to bring the roadway down the hill and tie it into the ramp at Caesar Chavez and keeping the footprint narrow by using concrete to retain the walls. Also, adding the necessary water quality features. The improvement concepts will also consist of planting trees and adding lights to Pressler Street and the reserved road going to the park.

Capital improvements for Lamar Beach Park are pedestrian underpass, vehicular underpass and surface parking lots. The services in lieu are park road maintenance, signing and markings and pedestrian safety enhancements. Other enhancements with the project are people-centric connection to adjacent neighborhoods, future opportunity for structured parking with “green roof”, symbiotic relationship with Pressler Park development, future leasable space opportunity, opportunity for railroad quiet zone, and opportunities for AIPP, retaining wall – vertical canvas, railings, educational stations in the rain garden, plaza and roundabout. The implementation strategy next steps are continue Chapter 26 process, continue refining implementation strategy, develop preliminary designs (in process), engage UPRR for crossing improvements (in process) and meetings with stakeholders at milestones upon request.

Council Member Morrison, asked the drop dead dates of the structured parking?

Mr. Schatz, stated there are no dropped dead dates that are driving the potential structure for parking for this project. We are simply trying to implement the project ahead or at least with the Mopac Express.

Mayor Pro Tem Cole, asked about the stakeholder process and going back to the subcommittee it is unclear if we are coming out with a master plan?

Mr. Schatz, stated it is about evaluating option 2 and option 3 of the presentation. We had to take option 1 off the table due to technical reasons.

Mr. Dustin Slack, Four Star Group Developer, are working on plans to develop the residential project on top of the bluff just south of the railroad tracks. In regards to the garage design we are currently working with the City to make sure they design their garage in case an additional bay needs to be added by the City in the near term or in the future. Regarding the master plan we want to be good neighbors in that area and we are working out the details.

Council Member Riley, asked about the pipeline that was mentioned?

Mr. Schatz, stated it's the line that serves the downtown area.

Mr. Steve Frost, with Victoria and Associates stated yes, the 72” line does come for the Aldridge plant.

Council Member Riley, asked about the residential projects along Pressler will they be generating parkland residential fees? Are those fees spoken for?

Ms. Stephanie Stanford, Engineer for Four-star, stated because of the proposed use of the project is family there will be some parkland dedication required. At this point we have not gone far enough into the planning process to determine if that gets dedicated to this particular area or to the general park fund.

Council Member Riley, stated if we are going to have a discussion about potential park improvements that should be on the table as part of the discussion as capital improvements.

4. PRESENTATION OF INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHARGING VARIOUS LAUNCH AND USER FEES AT PUBLIC BOAT RAMPS AND RELATED FACILITIES OR AMENITIES, INCLUDING VEHICLE PARKING FEES FOR THE WALSH BOAT LANDING AREA, IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 20130829-0278

Mr. Chris Yanez, Principal Planner with Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD), briefly discussed PARDs objective for presenting today and introduced Mr. Charles Vaclavik, Division Manager with PARD.

Mr. Charles Vaclavik, Division Manager with PARD, stated that the Walsh Boat Landing is one of the most popular areas located near downtown Austin. It is approximately 4 acres; it has 4 boat ramps with trailer parking for approximately 30 vehicles/trailers, parking lot for approximately 60 cars and is open year round. At this time the current parking fees from Memorial Day to Labor Day is vehicle fees \$5.00 per day and boat launch fees are \$10.00 per day. These lots consist of the following amenities: restrooms, picnic tables, park benches, and wastewater pump station and boat docks.

The Walsh Boat Landing docks have been in place for over 40 years and are not constructed or maintained to commercial standards. The large party boats use this site as well. The Emma Long Metropolitan Park is approximately 1100 acres, boat ramp/trailer parking area for approximately 40 trailers, 2 boat ramps; 2 boat docks, approximately 2,040 park visitors with boats in FY 13 and open 7 days a week/365 days a year from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. The park entrance fees are Monday – Thursday \$5.00 per vehicle (excluding

holidays), Friday – Sunday (and Holidays) \$10.00 per vehicle and the amenities consist of campsites, restrooms, picnic tables and volleyball area.

The recommendations PARD would like to implement are: parking program with the Austin Transportation Department that would add parking kiosks to existing parking lots: raise vehicle parking fees for Walsh Boat Landing to \$2.00 per hour, raise boat launching fees for Walsh Boat Landing to \$20.00 per 6-hours, raise boat launching fees for Emma Long Park to \$20.00 per day Friday-Sunday (and holidays). Also, implement a user (permit) fee for commercial users of Walsh Landing and Emma Long Park and explore a budget amendment that would enable fees collected from Walsh and Emma Long to remain at that site to support maintenance and repairs of infrastructure.

Council Member Riley, asked about the boat launching fees for Walsh Boat Landing is it parking fees for the trailers or an actual launch fee?

Mr. Vaclavik, stated it is a fee for boat trailers that would be captured as a launching fee. Due to no staff on site, the cost is captured at the parking lot.

Council Member Riley, asked if there is no fee for someone launching there and park somewhere else?

Mr. Vaclavik, stated at this time there is not. PARD would propose that if they would put a permit in place then they could have a staff member there, which would check the permits as they launch on the dock and would capture a fee when people would launch and not use the parking lot.

Council Member Riley, asked how did staff come up with \$20.00 for 6-hours for that fee?

Mr. Vaclavik, stated they looked at the turnover rate.

Council Member Riley, asked if the Parking Enterprise had involved in the discussion of the placement of the kiosks?

Mr. Vaclavik, stated that PARD has had initial discussions with Mr. Grassfield but has not had a final discussion.

Council Member Riley, stated it would be important to keep the Parking Enterprise Group at the table and for them to have some on-going role of management of the site.

Council Member Riley, asked what are the next steps in moving forward and their timeframes?

Mr. Vaclavik, stated more evaluations of the number of people coming into these sites and projection of costs. The timeframe is as soon as possible in this next budget year, next fall.

Mr. Yanez, added that the Resolution asked that staff present these preliminary recommendations to the CPT committee today, but also to City Council on November 7, 2013 which will be more in depth.

Council Member Morrison, why is staff contemplating implementing these in October of 2014 instead of doing an amendment and putting them in place for the Summer?

Mr. Yanez, stated that part of the recommendations from the Resolution is to draft potential amendments to the budget that could be adopted immediately.

Mr. Vaclavik, added the fee schedule and permits are in place and could be added sooner.

Council Member Riley, asked if there have been discussion about paving to parking area?

Mr. Jesse Vargas, Assistant Director of PARD, stated that in relation to what Mr. Vaclavik stated earlier there are a couple of bids on the table to redo the parking lot. At this times the funds needed for this project is not currently available therefore PARD is looking into other options.

5. PRESENTATION OF NEW RETAIL DEVELOPMENT AT AUSTIN-BERGSTROM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Mr. Jim Smith, Director of Aviation stated in September the City Council voted to support authorizing staff to execute an agreement of the development retail project at ABIA with the request to return to CPT to discuss some potential design issues. Currently, we are looking into the existing pedestrian path and the future pedestrian path and are consciously moving into that direction of pedestrian friendly paths.

There are a variety of connectivity improvements at this point, CAP metro stops, city buildings, taxi, hotel access and future light rail connectivity which is long term. Phase One development is convenience store with fuel, 10,000 square footage of total retail, parking amenities/playscape for those waiting at the cell phone lots with children, public restroom facilities and restaurant. ABIA has worked with CapMetro for bus stop improvements.

Council Member Riley, thanked Mr. Smith for the presentation and for all of his hard work and the thought that has been put into place in regards to the connectivity of improvements at the airport.

Council Member Riley, asked Mr. Smith to explain the pedestrian/bicycle path plan? Will these be shared use?

Mr. Smith, stated at this point they are not that far along and as of right now there is not bicycle activity at the airport. Hopefully, if they can get enough connectivity they can begin to do a bike share program or bike rental program or set something up with the Hilton so that guest will have a variety of ways of getting around.

Council Member Riley, asked how many Aviation employees work outside of security?

Mr. Smith, stated approximately 1/3 of the employees work on the Southside of the airport and there is basically an 8 mile trip to get from the south to the north side.

ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Morrison adjourned the meeting with no objection at 3:32 p.m.