

Public Meeting #1 - Summary

The first Forest Heights Common Area Master Plan Workshop was held November 8th at 6:30 PM at the Forest Park Elementary School. Approximately 65 people attended the meeting. The intent of the meeting was to share the summarization of the current conditions, identify opportunities and constraints, and get input on the communities' interests. The workshop provided the community with an opportunity to participate in the development of the Common Area Master Plan.

As the community entered the workshop they reviewed and added to a list of values. The intent of these listed values was to help people understand their own associations and interest regarding the future of the common areas as well as the values of others in the community. The values listed included:

- Facilitating community interaction
- Preserving environment
- Places for children
- Opportunities for a variety of users
- Maintaining/increasing property value
- Promoting safety
- Connectivity

People were encouraged to add to the list if their own values were not listed.

Next Gill Williams presented the research, data collection, and analysis done by DEA including an agenda for the evening and an overview of the Common Areas Master Planning process. Included in the presentation were a series of maps that DEA has used to assist in their understanding of the physical characteristics of the Common Areas.

After the presentation people were asked to revisit the values, and vote on their priorities. The intent was to have people vote on their top values after they learned more about the open area characteristics and constraints. The values rated the highest include:

1. Preserving environment
2. Maintaining/increasing property value
3. Opportunities for a variety of users
4. Places for children
5. Promoting safety
6. Facilitating community interaction
7. Connectivity

The group then broke up into smaller group stations to review the opportunities and constraints by use types. The three stations were programmed, unprogrammed and natural activities. At each station a consultant team member was available to answer questions, record comments, review activity requirements and associated costs, and discuss possible locations of uses and activities. The intent was to align the values the community identified in the previous activity to specific uses that manifest these values. In actuality, the small group stations provided a detailed question and answer forum. Participants were interested in discussing specific activities, costs, and appropriate (and inappropriate) locations. Discussions were dynamic and often included a mix of people and interests.

After a lively discussion the group came back together and formulated small working groups. People were asked to sit with people unfamiliar to them. Each group gathered around a table with a

map, a list of activities, the associated point value of each activity and some of the site requirements. Each table had a stack of poker chips totally 200 points. They were asked to determine how to spend the 200 chips both individually and as a group. The individual sheets were forward to the consultant team members at the end of the meeting (see below).

Once the group collectively decided how to spend their chips they “purchased” stickers with the poker chips of the desired activities. These stickers were then placed on the map in various locations based on what each team determined to be appropriate. The six teams came up with different uses and locations. Some similarities include multi-use trail connections between NW Thompson and NW Skyline, community building and/or pool at Mill pond, recreational uses near school, stream restoration/native habitat in central spine.

Each team’s proposal is noted below.

- Team 1:** Pool located near Mill Pond, Stream restoration and native landscaping, Frisbee golf near the school and Bocce near intersection of Miller/Thompson
- Team 2:** Amphitheater near Mill Pond, Stream restoration and street improvements along Miller
- Team 3:** Stream Restoration, habitat development, Native landscaping and multi-use trails
- Team 4:** Community Building and Swimming pool located near Mill Pond, Native landscaping and street improvements specifically along skyline, and Miller/Thompson
- Team 5:** Tennis and Picnic/BBQ near the school, stream restoration, community building, and habitat development near Mill Pond
- Team 6:** Community Building and multi-use sport courts near Mill Pond, Native landscaping, stream restoration, and multiuse trails.

There seemed to be a considerable amount of discussion, collaboration and compromise. Some groups chose activities and locations very easily and others were unable to spend their 200 chips. All teams saw value in restoring or enhancing elements of the natural areas. Most groups wanted some type of community gathering space whether that was a community center, a pool, or an amphitheater.

Individual’s sheets were also collected and tabulated. 35 sheets were returned to the consultant team. The results of the individual sheets were in alignment with both the values and group activities. Stream restoration, native landscaping, and habitat development received the highest number of desired activities. It was unclear if this activity was site specific or throughout the neighborhood. A community building also received a high number of votes. The uses that would occur in the community building were unclear. Some people seemed to see a direct tie between the community building and the swimming pool. Others chose only the community building. A swimming pool was also a desired activity, but again it was unclear if people viewed this as an outdoor pool or one housed in a community/recreation center. Multi-use trails were important. It was not specified if these were additional trails, and if so, where they were located, or if this cost was specifically for improving the condition of the trail system. Street enhancements and active recreation were also desired. Bocce, Frisbee golf, and tennis/multi-use courts were the active recreational uses identified.

At the end of the meeting the group came back together to share the results of each team and brainstorm alternatives. Comments supported by many participants included:

- Pursuing multiple use sport courts,
- Diversity in location/decentralized uses
- Focusing on age diversity and year round uses
- Need for a community center
- Desire for native landscaping and stream restoration
- Consider level of service for new uses
- Consider user fees for swimming pool/community center

Workshop Findings

While those in attendance were not a statistically valid cross section of the community, people place a high value on common areas for a variety of reasons. People would like to see restoration and enhancement of existing habitat and stream areas, use of native landscaping, and additional trail connections. There is high contingent of people who would like to have a community gathering space, community center, and/or pool facility. Recreational needs include a swimming facility, multi-use sport courts, and year-round activities for children, young adults and adults.

List of Resources

AROC Study/Survey

Forest Heights Recreation Plan (PSU)

Habitat Management Plan (Jones and Stokes)

Maps

- Topography
- Vegetation
- Regulatory
- Circulation
- Programmed
- Natural
- Unprogrammed
- Opportunities
- Compiled Team Maps from Workshop (3)