

City of Fairfax  
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB)  
Meeting Minutes

June 9, 2022  
City of Fairfax  
10455 Armstrong Street

**PRAB Members Present:**

Sarah Ross, Chair  
Brian Knapp, Vice Chair  
Mike Anderson  
Tatum Anderson  
Katie Bryda  
Jon Buttram (partial)  
Brian Cipriano  
Frank Francis  
Pat Gallagher  
Diana Gibson  
Kelly O'Brien  
Chuck Paceley  
Matt Rice

Staff:  
Cathy Salgado

**Agenda**

**1. Call to Order**

*Meeting called to order by Chair Ross*

**2. Adoption of Agenda**

*Agenda for June 9, 2022 meeting.*

*Motion: Kelly O'Brien*

*Second: Brian Cipriano*

**3. Adoption of Minutes**

*Minutes from May. No changes.*

**4. Presentations/Introductions**

**A. Thaiss Park Concept Presentation**

Gordon, Inc. presented the concept plan for Thaiss Park. Gordon has an on-call contract with the City for engineering services. They have been hired to complete a

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concept plan for Thaiss Park. Brian Cipriano represented Gordon, Inc. and provided background for the project.

After meeting with Fairfax Little League and City staff the following items were identified as being critical to a redesigned Thaiss Park.

- Increase field size to modern standards – going from 5 fields down to 3 fields
- Adding parking and a drop-off circle for better circulation
- Reconfigure the parking lot to restore some of the Resource Protection Area
- Provide more room for bleachers, batting cages
- Provide more amenities for use by the neighborhoods around the area
- Walking track around the fields – 1/5 mile
- Larger plaza area with community building, concessions, restrooms, picnic pavilion
- Larger playground – five times the current size
- Adult exercise area
- ½ hard court – may have to be deleted because of stormwater requirements
- Permeable pavement in some parking areas
- Creation of stormwater retention zones
- Relocation of field mix storage out of the flood plain

Ms. Gallagher asked how many cars could be in the circle – three. Also asked about public art. It is planned to include art in the park perhaps in the tiered bio retention walls. Ms. Salgado explained the process. The concept will go to the city council for review later this summer. We have met with the city development review team and are waiting for clarification on several issues related to sound, stormwater, set-backs. Ms. Gibson asked about a possible connection to the adjoining school and condo neighborhood. Mr. Cipriano stated that we can look at options. Chair Ross said that this will be a huge improvement to go from just baseball to a community park. Mr. Francis asked about the entrance and if multiple car entrances could be provided. Mr. Cipriano and Ms. Salgado explained that it is safer with one entrance and that two are not needed. Mr. Rice asked about engaging the neighbors and that it is important to get their support. Ms. Salgado said that they regularly engage with the neighbors. Mr. Rice asked about sound system and will it be used. The answer was no. Mr. Cipriano also stated that the city development review team had concerns with the hard court which has a backboard and that the noise from balls will be an issue. We are looking into sound deafening materials. Mr. Francis asked about bike racks. Yes, they will be placed throughout the park. Vice Chair Knapp was happy about increased parking. He asked about snow storage. Ms. Salgado said that the parking lot would still be used for snow storage if needed. Mr. Knapp asked about a trail around the entire park. Mr. Cipriano explained that we are not permitted to disturb the Resource Protection Area. Vice Chair Knapp asked what Fairfax Little Leagues top 3 requests were. They are: field size, safety and

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field orientation. PRAB should make their recommendation on the concept plan at the September meeting.

**5. New Business**

**A. Summary of recent council meetings and actions pertaining to Parks and Recreation – May 24<sup>th</sup> and June 7<sup>th</sup>**

Ms. Salgado reported that the George Snyder Trail extension was presented as a project for Smart Scale funding to the council. They all agreed it is a project that staff will apply for.

**B. Strategic Master Plan – Review of Goals**

Ms. Salgado had provided the SMP Goals for PRAB to review. She also recommended that for the update more departments need to be involved as the plan needs to be in alignment with the Comprehensive Plan, Multi-Model Plan and other city planning documents.

Ms. O'Brien recommended looking at high level goals. Mr. Cipriano asked for some background on the original goals. Mr. Francis thought that perhaps the goals discussion needs a separate meeting. Chair Ross suggested that we tackle the goals section by section. The SMP helps to inform the Capital Improvement Program and is part of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Cipriano asked for some background on the SMP. Vice Chair Knapp provided background that he initiated a request for a SMP. As Chair of PRAB at the time he advocated and finally got the SMP funded. At the time there was no internal capacity to do the plan so in 2012 they hired a consultant. There was tremendous community outreach. The question now might be if we want something shorter, higher level something like what NOVA Parks is now doing – 5 overall areas and sub-goals. Vice Chair Knapp suggested developing a white paper on what PRAB is looking for. Mr. Cipriano asked if the Parks and Rec plan should be within the City's Comprehensive Plan. Ms. O'Brien and Ms. Byrda both responded that the plan needs to be separate but in alignment with other city planning documents.

Chair Ross began the Goal review.

Planning and Development – all agreed it is still needed

Operations and Maintenance – Ms. O'Brien said this was in the weeds too much and that some of the goals could go away or roll into other goals Mr. Cipriano said that some of the goals should be a part of the first goal. Ms. Byrda noted that some of the goals are not goals but rather a how.

Programs and Services – section okay

Strategic Partnerships – Mr. Anderson suggested combining with goal #5. Ms. Byrda noted that some are not goals but rather how's.

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Promotion and Marketing – Same issue that some are not goals.

It was suggested that we take a step back and look at other city documents.

**6. Old Business**

**A. Update on Director Search**

Chair Ross provided update. List of candidates being finalized with a screening call next week to get the list down to 6-8 who would be interviewed that last week of June. The city is still deciding who will be on the interview panel. The City Manager is reviewing notes from the stakeholders. If PRAB has specific questions they want asked please provide. Vice Chair Knapp asked how many people applied and any in-house candidates. Ms. Salgado stated 60 applied and there are in-house candidates. Mr. Rice noted that it is important to find out if the candidates have done their homework and researched the city. They should be asked about city goals, ability to lead a large department and advisory board. Mr. Cipriano wants the candidates to have researched our parks and to ask what would you change and how would you implement change. Mr. Rice and Ms. Salgado explained the screening and interview process in a government settings. All candidates must be interviewed by the same panel and asked the same questions. Vice Chair Knapp asked if the Commission on the Arts should have someone on the panel. It is not known what involvement they might have.

**7. Parks and Recreation Department Reports**

**A. Project Updates – Community Center, Pickleball**

Ms. Salgado reported that the concepts will be shared with PRAB at the July meeting. Pickleball courts at Green Acres are waiting on the new basketball poles to be set.

**B. Upcoming Meetings, Events and Programs**

Events and programs are included in the PRAB report.

**C. Trail Updates**

Ms. Salgado provided an update via the excel spreadsheet.

**8. Stakeholder Updates**

**A. School Board - Jon Buttram**

Mr. Buttram reported that Jeff Platenberg has been hired as the next school superintendent.

**B. Planning Commission –**

Mr. Rice reported that the Planning Commission is reviewing the affordable housing proposal from the Fairfax Presbyterian Church and that in his opinion is

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a positive development. The PC is expecting several small development plans to review.

**C. Senior Center – Chuck Pacey**

There will be a Father’s Day Breakfast on June 19<sup>th</sup>. The Senior Center is getting ready for July 4<sup>th</sup> participation in the parade.

**D. Student Representative – Tatum Anderson**

School year finished and field hockey practice starts next week.

**E. Commission on the Arts – Pat Gallagher**

Ms. Gallagher reported that the Commission activities are wrapping up except for Funday Monday. Currently working on fall programming. Election of officers is next week and they will be down one member soon.

**F. NOVA Parks - Brian Knapp**

NOVA Parks summer hires are in good shape. The minimum wage was increased. The budget was adopted. Currently involved in strategic planning which should be done by late fall. PRAB will be briefed. Getting ready for audit this summer.

**9. Matters of the Members**

Ms. Gibson reported that she has developed a Field Guide for the New School. They have been engaged in fundraising for tree planting and sustainability which has been going very well.

Ms. O’Brien reported that next Saturday is the Old Town Crawl.

Mr. Knapp commented that the Thaiss Park discussion was great and asked if we reached out to Mike about the Draper Drive restroom. Suggested we revisit the Van Dyck Master Plan and maybe have a PRAB meeting at the park. Noted that EYA is selling homes quickly in their new development on Pickett that they will not have a model home. Reported that Wilcoxon Trail entrance at Rt. 50 was repaved.

**10. Meeting Adjournment**

**Time:** 9:50 p.m.

***The next PRAB meeting will be held on Thursday, July 14, 2022 @7:00pm at City Hall.***