

Town Council Quarterly CIP Workshop

Theodore D. Washington Municipal Building

April 18, 2023

Mayor Pro-Tempore Toomer called the meeting to order at 5pm. Council members present were Bridgette Frazier and Dan Wood. Town Manager Stephen Steese, Assistant Town Manager Heather Colin, Assistant Town Manager Chris Forster and Interim Town Clerk Kerry Guzman were also present.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Workshop Items

Update and Discussion Regarding Sarah Riley Hooks Structure and Conceptual Master Plan Options

Kalen McNabb with Meadors Preservation reviewed the current state of the Sarah Riley Hooks structure. Betty Prime (Meadors) discussed the evolution of the structure. Filmore Wilson (Meadors) discussed the original materials and the state of use they are in. Prime reviewed the two budget options, option one being restore which would be a new structure done with salvaged materials installed or option two which would be to replicate the building. Both options exclude site work, landscaping and hazardous materials abatement. There was a list of salvageable items provided. The firm recommended to proceed with option one and proposed the existing configuration with two bedrooms and the front porch on.

Jones continued the discussion with the land and site use. The public survey results were reviewed with the majority of the results wanting the structure to be used as park or classroom space. Potential land use results were for multi purpose trails, boardwalk access or flexible use. Staff requested direction on the structure use with options including: museum/interpretive center, art/music space, restrooms, education facility or artist in residence. Frazier preferred a flex space for different types of artists in residence. Wood wanted to make sure there is an option to reevaluate the use of the structure. Toomer said if used as an interpretive center, it needs to be staffed for visitors.

Jones reviewed the conceptual site plan. The plan featured a perimeter loop trail, open flexible lawn space, possible observation deck/gazebo overlook, outdoor garden, privacy wall, and optional boardwalk across Huger Cove.

Frazier requested to see more picnic seating. Wood agreed with Frazier's suggestion. Toomer raised a concern about safety for the dock on the cove. Staff and Council discussed sensory lighting and cameras.

Jones reviewed the next steps which included work with the landscape architects to modify the plans using Council's feedback, work with Meadors to move through permitting, complete site design and site development and look to begin construction in 2025.

Staff will bring updated plans before Council during another workshop session.

Update and Discussion Regarding Oyster Factory Park Event Area Improvements

Jones discussed the changes that have happened to the plan over the past few years. There was a review of the event space changes which included pedestrian safety and connectivity, a perimeter pathway, a drop off zone and possible food truck access. There was discussion about the safety of food trucks turnaround, the oyster tables layout, string lights locations and a possible upgrade to the bathrooms.

Steese alerted Council that there will need to be a conversation about allowing events with alcohol near the Garvin-Garvey house during the construction phase of Oyster Factory Park.

Council discussed the placement of the palmetto trees. Council stated that the front tree near the pavilion would need to be moved to help with drop offs for events. Jones discussed next steps which included updating the perspective and move forward with constructive drawings. Staff will have Beaufort County sign off on the park. Construction should start in the winter of 2024.

Update and Discussion Requested on Sport Courts at Oscar Frazier Park

Jones requested direction on the sport courts. The master plan calls for courts but the types are not designated. Splash pads are in the design phase and projected construction is in fiscal year 2024 subject to Town Council approval. Jones reviewed the results from the neighborhood survey about what kind of sports courts to construct. The survey results did not indicate a clear favorite court type. 29% of the respondents requested no courts and would prefer to preserve the existing tree canopy.

There was discussion about what would need to be done if no sport courts were built. Frazier, Toomer and Wood are not in favor of proceeding with installing a sport court. Colin stated that she is not aware of any obligation the Town is under to build any kind of court.

Wood stated there was past discussion about highlighting the entrance with brick or defining the two corners of the park.

Update and Discussion Regarding Dubois Park Playground Equipment

Jones reviewed what will be changed including an additional nest swing and adding a height appropriate ring beam. There will be more size and scale for age appropriate structures. Jones asked if Council would like an optional roof on the two to five year old play structure given the location and no proposed shade sales. Council recommended a roof for the structure.

Frazier made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Wood. The meeting adjourned at 6:21pm.