

Mason Mill Park – Master Plan MEETING SUMMARY

SUBJECT: Mason Mill Park Master Plan - **SECOND** Public Meeting
DATE: October 30, 2008
PLACE: DeKalb Recreation Center, Mason Mill Park
PRESENT: DeKalb County: Marilyn Drew, Marvin Billips, John Anderson
MACTEC: Ron Huffman, Jon Hart, Nadine Levy (UpBuild Design)

INTRODUCTION: MACTEC was selected by DeKalb County Parks and Recreation Department to prepare a Master Plan for Mason Mill Park. The process used to develop a Master Plan for the park includes inventory and analysis of existing site conditions, public input meetings, presentation of alternative concepts, and development of recommendations for the park. Based on cost estimates for the recommendations, available funding and community input, priorities will then established for the implementation of the recommendations.

MACTEC staff presented 4 exhibits: a District Exhibit, an overall Draft Master Plan and two alternative concepts for the Day Use Area District.

- The District Exhibit utilizes information gathered from the Site Inventory, Site Analysis and public input meetings. The District Exhibit establishes the character for the park, defines the proposed uses for each district and provides guidance for future decisions related to Mason Mill Park and its uses. Additionally, the District Exhibit includes a proposed Mission Statement.
- The overall Draft Master Plan illustrates conceptual park facilities such as trails, boardwalks, playgrounds, and parking areas. These facilities are proposed in terms of the district character established by the District Exhibit.
- The two alternative concepts for the Day Use Activity District illustrate facility recommendations in an enlarged format.

Approximately 75 citizens attended the meeting. The following items were discussed at this meeting for the Mason Mill Park Master Plan:

- Consider the impact of the proposed Commuter Rail from Atlanta to Athens which will utilize the existing railroad corridor.
- Need to consider the impacts and relationships of the recommendations to the neighborhoods that adjoin the park. Add a point in the Mission Statement about connectivity.
- Comments about the Mission Statement can be made after the public meeting via the County website.
- Add new tree planting near South Peachtree Creek Trail.
- What are the materials of the trails? Propose “soft” trails, not hard concrete.

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- What width are trails/paths? [Width and materials vary depending upon district criteria, user groups etc.]
- Need to recommend refurbishment of areas near South Peachtree Creek Trail to control erosion.
- Need to provide vehicular access to proposed new Dog Park.
- Consider flooding of existing parks during non-drought years. Need to consider silt and debris control in flood-prone areas.
- Please provide access for commuter biking; prefer a paved/hardscape path. Need to provide connectivity to Medlock Park.
- Provide a legend for paths/trails for next presentation with sizes, widths, materials.
- Keep/maintain existing trees.
- Proposed Dog Park might be attractive to teens at night and could be public nuisance.
- Barriers at the end of McConnell Dr. should be proposed so that the Dog Park is accessible to pedestrians only. No parking.
- Wheelchair/ADA accessibility to various districts needs to be provided.
- What are the Historical Registry requirements or stipulations at the Water Works? [NRHP is a registry of historic places. The County has not set stipulations within the historic district established by the NHRP.]

Day Use Activity District conceptual alternatives – comments on Alternative #1:

- Need to keep gravel parking across McConnell Dr. from the Life Enrichment Center
- Need to provide shade at playground areas; include benches, picnic tables, etc.
- Need to provide restroom facilities in proximity to the playgrounds and the proposed Waterworks Park area.
- Suggest composting toilets: see examples at Roosevelt Island or Sweetwater Park.

Day Use Activity District conceptual alternatives – comments on Alternative #2:

- Need additional accessible parking spaces with access to Senior Center/Recreation Center
- Minimize cars within the park.
- Separate people from parking.
- Consider the impact of the proposed Toco Hills/Williamsburg redevelopment.
- Need activities geared towards teenagers such as basketball, sand volleyball, soccer.
- Add details about adjacent library expansion to plans.

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Comments on DeKalb Recreation Center / Life Enrichment Center building:

- There is a CBDG-funded grant to study the need for a Senior-oriented Recreation Center in the Toco Hills area. Potential locations for senior-oriented recreation services are also being studied under this grant.
- What is the frequency of Recreation Center uses versus Senior Center uses in the existing building? Which is most important? [The CBDG-funded study is looking into this issue.]
- Consider the building as an “Activity Center” for all ages rather than as a “Senior Center.”
- Need to consider a new building at the existing location that would be able to provide services for all demographics.
- A new or upgraded building needs:
 - accessible restrooms
 - accessible or automated doorways
 - classrooms
 - facility similar to or of the same standard as the Lou Walker Senior Center
 - to provide elevator for connectivity between ground floor and upper level
 - kitchen, ping-pong, pool tables, facilities like at “Spruell Center”
 - swimming pool
 - skateboarding
 - arts activities, crafts facilities
 - increased energy efficiency and sustainability
- What if any are the lease restrictions for changes to existing building? Mac Love may have placed restrictions on the building. [DeKalb County will research this. *Note: Some funding sources may limit joint use of senior-oriented facilities*].
- There may have been a previous physical connection between the two levels in the Recreation Center building.
- What is the County’s budget for this project? [The County has approximately \$2,000,000 for capital improvements to the park. This will occur after the Master Plan process is complete and priorities for the park are established.]