

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan

Changes to Plan

P&Z Commission Meeting – March 12, 2019

The following agenda item was presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission on March 13, 2019. The item was approved 8-0 with the provision that a summary of Commissioner Comments be included in the recommendation.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan. Hold a public hearing, receive a presentation, and provide a recommendation on the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan. (D. Wells)

Summary of Commissioner Comments:

Commissioner Garber –pg. 20- He said he found the chart confusing, asking why the box at the bottom of the table was blank. The Consultant explained that they changed the table to read this way because with Hispanic Ethnicity, the numbers didn't add up. He said the way the Census works, races are listed on top, and Hispanic Ethnicities could be in any races. The Consultant said that the wording Hispanic Ethnicity should be added to the chart.

Page 20 - Added "Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity (total % from all races)" to blank space in Table 2.1

Figure 2.5, Poverty Level.

The Commissioner asked whether or not the 35.8% of individuals below the poverty level includes students who are citizens of San Marcos. The Consultant said his guess is that the answer is no. It's whoever fills out the Census Form in the City of San Marcos.

Page 20 - Added "Census includes the students of Texas State University" to Figure 2.5

pg. 33 **Map 3.1, San Marcos Parks and Recreation System** – The Commissioner said some of the maps are extremely difficult to get information from. He particularly wanted to see where the neighborhood parks were, but it was not obvious from the map. He wonders if there's a way rather than color a little, box, maybe staff could put a pin flag or something else that could identify them.

In reply, **Commissioner Kelsey** said he had a problem reading some of the maps too.

Also in reply, **Commissioner Rand** suggested four-fold maps as a possible solution.

Commissioner Garber agreed.

Page 34-37 – Added a quadrant Park System Map

pg. 42 – “The San Marcos River runs through the middle of this park, providing passive recreational opportunities such as hiking and bike trails.” Commissioner Garber said he’s not certain of the boundaries of Stokes Park, but was under the impression that the river defines the western boundary, and does not actually run through the middle. He said it may need clarification.

Page 46 (old page 42) - Added “The San Marcos River runs along the west and south sides of this park, providing passive recreational opportunities such as hiking and bike trails.”

pg. 58 – “Although, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) has stated that the dam is eligible for listing as an historic landmark.” The Commissioner pointed out that this is not a complete sentence. Also, he added being eligible for the state landmark does not mean the dam cannot be removed. He said the last sentence implies it can’t be removed. The Consultant added that the intent was to say that the Park Plan is not the deciding body to render decision, and is trying to stay neutral because it’s an ongoing issue in the City.

Page 62 (old page 58) - Changed sentence to “Many paddlers have argued that the dam is a hazard to navigation and the river should be restored to a natural condition; although, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) has stated that the dam is eligible for listing as an historic landmark.”

pg. 68 - **Action PF-3.3. Evaluate potential options to remove or relocate the pool at Rio Vista Park.** “One of the recommendations for improving the riverfront parks system is to remove and relocate the pool at Rio Vista Park to another location within the City.” The Commissioner asked who the recommendation was from. The Consultant said it was a result of the planning process, public engagement, and ongoing discussions.

pg. 84 – “One thing the City should consider in regards to the expansion of its baseball program, is to increase the number of fields from four to eight, and then eventually, to 12 (see Table 3.8, *Future Athletic Field Needs*, on page 83). Commissioner Garber said it should read “ in regard to...”

Page 88 (old page 84) - Changed “regards” to “regard”

Commissioner Kelsey – The Commissioner said he found a lot of typos that need to be corrected. He will get the corrections to someone for the final version.

Commissioner Gleason – The Commissioner said he also had the same comments on the two charts and the maps previously mentioned by Commissioner Garber. He also said he likes the fold-out map. He said if we’re going to do this kind of descriptive information, we could have it on a several page fold-out because it reads so much easier. He later added that overall, he thinks overall the total vision of the Plan is good.

Commissioner Dillon – The Commissioner said that he thought there was good work done on the plan, and that it was deep and comprehensive. He added that we still have access to a variety of things if we need to, the dams in particular.

In reply, **Commissioner Kelsey** added that he appreciated seeing a real picture of Cape's Dam.

Commissioner McCarty – She said didn't have anything else to add, saying other people had done a great job.

Commissioner Rand – The Commissioner said in her hometown of Gaineville, FL, the public parks have sunscreen dispensers, which are run by a group called Impact Melanoma, and she thinks that would be a good addition to San Marcos Parks. She added that she thinks there's a lack of options of what to do with kids in the summer. She said there's nothing indoors you can take kids to on a drop-in basis. She said the pool at Rio Vista is underused. She added that she was glad to see the mention of shade trees and structures, and that needs to be front and center. She said she likes the splash pads, but doesn't like the idea that they're substituting for the pool. She said they are great for kids that are not yet swimming, but when you remove the swimming pools, you get into a dangerous public health situation where kids are not learning how to swim. She said Rio Vista is not giving that opportunity because of the parking situation and how underutilized it is. She added that she thinks the Activity Center should be open on Sunday's. pg. 118 **Map 3.14, Proposed Trail Linkages**. She said it looks problematic in terms of kids getting to schools using these trails. The Consultant added that it's not showing all of the sidewalk connectivity that then connects to these different areas. She also said in the last year or two, there's been some measures to deal with the overuse of Rio Vista, and she's always worried about them effecting people disproportionately according to their socio-economic status. For example, she said when we talk about charging a fee, she worries about that having an impact. She said maybe the fee in lieu is a better option because it's much less regressive than an entrance fee. pg. 43. **Table 3.2, Existing Schools**. She also said that Rio Vista is really overused and damaging for the environment. She said there was some mention about having multi-day festivals, and that seems like a lot of pollution on an overused area. The Commissioner said that Rodriguez Elementary is getting ready to open in the fall, so it should be added to this list.

Commissioner Baker – pg. 108 *Map 3.12, Greenspace Area Priority Acquisition Areas* – The Commissioner asked why the SMGA Greenbelt Concept just loops around the west part of town, and not the east. He asked if we are not able to connect park space around Wonder World. He said we have accessibility listed under our initiatives, and connecting that part of town to the parks system.

In reply, Commissioner Gleason added that some of that has to do with the CDBG Park Grant, and where the money is available right now. The Consultant concurred his statement. The Consultant added that there are partnerships moving forward with the green space protection system, and a lot of that is related to the Edwards Aquifer. He said in addition to what's laid out for areas of acquisition for the Parks and Recreation system, this is the focus that we're trying to get to further the green space system, which is tied to money.

Commissioner Moore – The Commissioner said she also found some typos.

City Council Workshop – March 19, 2019

CM Rockeymoore - what mechanism do you have in place to acquire additional parkland?

Map 3.7, Park Need Areas, identifies where park land is needed immediately and where park land is needed in the future based on gaps in the system. Goal PF-1 and six actions describes how neighborhood park land can be acquired throughout the City. Map 3.12, Greenspace Area Priority Acquisition Areas, shows key greenspace acquisitions and the SMGA greenbelt concept. In addition, Figure 3.30 sets out a list of criteria for determining which greenspace property may be appropriate to acquire.

CM Prewitt – Add the following language to slide 3 under Social, as well as include in the Plan. “accessibility and inclusivity”

Page 7 – Added “In addition, recreation facilities that are accessible to all children create an inclusive environment for social interaction.” In addition, the plan includes several recommendations for improving ADA accessibility throughout the City's Parks and trails system, including page 123, Action T-1.2. - Improve ADA accessibility to the San Marcos River and Action T-1.1. - Conduct a system-wide accessibility assessment to identify, prioritize, and address issues in the City parks, trails, and greenspace system.