



STEWART

MEETING NOTES

*Project: Raleigh Skate Park
#C6044*

Meeting Date: June 11, 2007

Meeting Time: 7:00pm

Meeting Location: Carolina Pines – Community Center

Meeting Attendees: Graham Smith – Stewart Project Manager (GS); Sharon Rhue – Stewart Landscape Designer (SR); Dick Bailey – Raleigh Parks Design and Development (DB); Venessa Garza – Raleigh Parks and Recreation GIS (VG); Mary Belle Pate – SouthWest Citizens Advisory Council Chairperson (MP); .

Prepared by: Sharon Rhue and Graham Smith

The meeting was led by MP. There were 40 community members in attendance.

GS briefly outlined the nature of the project and reviewed information from the PowerPoint presentation (skatepk_CACmtg1.ppt)

- Project funding sources, proposed schedule for key decisions and execution; expecting park to open in 2008. It entails around 11,000sf of concrete.
- Proposed operational expectations (users are skate boarders and in-liners; admission is free; site will be fenced, but no budget for lighting; unstaffed, but users must sign waiver (City of Raleigh is working out the details of this and how access will be granted); Special events might be planned, amplified music prohibited.
- Site selection process – Lake Lynn no longer being considered; Marsh Creek has good visibility and forested buffer, but there's substantial amount of rock on the site; Carolina Pines site is relatively flat, has adjacent parking already, and good opportunity for lighting but there is no room to grow and volleyball courts would be displaced to accommodate the facility.
- Introduction of design team. Stewart will oversee design and construction; Pillar Design Studios on board for their experience in building skateparks. Skater community has been engaged to provide input on desired elements.
- Design Process. Parks and Recreation website has information on it's website.

GS opened the floor to discussion, questions and comments. The following was discussed (City and design team responses in italics):

- Are you aware that there is a significant bank on this site? *Response: (GS) From a skatability standpoint the grade change is a good thing. Care will need to be taken that this area does not provide places to hide.*
- If unstaffed, does that mean that the park would be open to anyone? *Response: (GS) The City is considering the use of swipe card for access. This is what the Town of Cary uses for entry to their skatepark The liability issue means a signed waiver is required. Residents also have to register and are issued a card for entry. The City is currently working on these details.*



STEWART

- What is the capacity? *Response: (GS) Guessing under 100 for the skatepark, with a maximum of probably 20 to 30 on the ramps at any one time. This becomes self-regulating by the skaters to large degree.*
- You are aware that there is are volatile people in this area? Have you thought about exactly who will be using this? *Response: (GS) This will be providing skaters in Raleigh a place to skate legally. Skating is the fastest growing sport and the City is trying to serve this community.*
- Why was Lake Lynn excluded? *Response: (GS) The land itself is not so good. It's on fill soil. Other amenities are also included in the Master Plan – an aquatic facility, tennis center, etc.*
- (MP) Handicap ramps are needed. We've been asking for this to improve access to the community center for quite some time. *Response: (DB) Responded to the code requirements for handicap access to the community center.*
- How does Raleigh plan to recoup expenses for this? Does it become another burden for the taxpayers to purchase and then maintain it? *Response: (DB) It becomes part of the maintenance staffs weekly schedule. (Community member 1) This is the first place in Raleigh for people to participate in this activity for free – like for softball and tennis. (Community member 2) I often hear complaints about young people loitering around... They have nowhere to go. Maybe this is a good place for the skatepark because of the types of kids around here. There was a skatepark [somewhere that this individual has lived previously] and there were no problems.*
- Is relocation of the sand volleyball courts an obligation of this project? *Response: (GS) Yes.*
- Where might you relocate the volleyball courts? *Response: (GS) Siting decisions will be based on visibility and access to facilities.*
- There is no room for expansion here. Perhaps another park should be considered as we are pretty much at capacity at Carolina Pines. *Response: (GS) The size of Marsh Park is a positive aspect in the potential to site the park there.*
- We've been wanting a dog park. Because of lack of available land trade-offs exist. Where you put this park, you can't do other things. Is there a master plan? *Response: (GS) One was drawn up in the 60s, but the City did not adopt it.*
- There was some discussion at one time about a swimming pool. *Response: (DB) The swimming pool ended up going to [a school]. An Aquatic study is currently being done to assess where in City pools are needed.*
- There are no sidewalks on Lake Wheeler Road. We need foot traffic access. *(DB) There is a plan for sidewalks to come in on Lake Wheeler Road.*
- Because we know the plan to do this is delayed, can we get a multi-purpose path? *Duly noted.*
- Has there been an economic impact study, as per hosting events, selling concessions, etc.? *Response: (GS) There are national studies. (Community member) There are 2 concession stands which exist but they need upgrading [Health and Safety issues]. (MP) The Civitans feel slighted that they cannot use these.*
- Have you considered not expanding but putting in another park? *Response: (GS) There are ideas about "skate spots" in different areas around the City, maybe along greenways, etc. The maintenance would be more difficult. (VG) Site recommendation will be made on June 21st. We will probably be recommending Marsh Creek with this as an alternate site. The decision of which to recommend will be made on Friday. The City Council will ultimately decide.*



STEWART

- (MP) Have you considered the possibility of locating the skatepark at Dix?
Response: Dix is a possibility. We considered areas near NCSU.
- There are projects that are not even finished that were part of the last park bond issue. I will never be able to vote "yes" for a parks bond again after the disappointment from the outcome of the last vote. *Response: (DB) Public meetings are held [after bond money is appropriated] to identify projects and determine the dollar amount that goes into that project. Between planning, budgeting, and implementation construction costs went up by 1/3 and we weren't able to do all of what was planned. The Council intends to fulfill its commitment to complete these projects. A bond will be up [for vote] in October and they will say what they want to do, but they don't allocate the bond money to a specific project.*
- We have been asking for a park for over 22 years. In that time land has gotten scarcer and costs have risen. As a community, we are at a minimum for park land. We've identified opportunities to acquire land to the City and those opportunities have been passed up. There was a parcel adjacent to this park which would have allowed for expansion, but the property was sold as residential. *Response: (DB) It's a council decision, and the Budget and Economic Development Committee has offered and negotiated, but sellers have not accepted what the Council is willing to pay. The staff makes recommendations but it is ultimately a Council decision.*

Toward the end of GS's presentation, comment cards were distributed. The following is an outline of the responses received from those cards...

- Would like to see an economic impact study, utilization projections, criminal impact study.
- This park is too small to support increased traffic from the proposed skatepark. Marsh Park seems better suited since this is a sport increasing in popularity and it deserves a venue that can support good attendance. *[Carolina Pines being too small was mentioned 4 times by respondents. One respondent qualified this response by saying that if a greenway connector was included she could support the park in this location].*
- There are many skaters here. The reason you don't see them is because there are no skateparks. Please- "no" to pads, but "yes" to helmets.
- Please do this here. We'll be quiet.
- I think more skaters would use it if it were in NE Raleigh.
- I have concerns over the unstaffed status only as it concerns waivers (e.g. – Can minors sign their own waivers?).
- I'd hate to see a passcard system if it ends up being exclusionary.
- I am totally against this park! Why doesn't Carolina Pines have an outdoor basketball court, or Little League football teams. We need something for the children in the neighborhood to enjoy. Think of the children.
- I like the idea. I'm interested in having somewhere that pre-teens can go.
- Concerned that it's open to anybody.
- Would the noise level be controlled?
- Concerned about the flow of traffic in the neighborhood.

After the discussion concluded, MP asked for a hand raise vote to determine who was for and who was against a skatepark being built at Carolina Pines. The vote was 5 for, and 17 against.