

January 8, 2008 Excerpts from the Council Minutes Regarding Horseshoe Farm Park

The City Council of the City of Raleigh met in regular session at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 8, 2008, in the City Council Chamber of the Raleigh Municipal Building, Avery C. Upchurch Government Complex, 222 W. Hargett Street, Raleigh, North Carolina, with the following present.

Mayor Charles C. Meeker
Mayor Pro Tem James P. West
Councilor Mary-Ann Baldwin
Councilor Thomas G. Crowder
Councilor Philip R. Isley
Councilor Rodger Koopman
Councilor Nancy McFarlane
Councilor Russ Stephenson

Mayor Meeker called the meeting to order and invocation was rendered by Reverend Josh Pavel, Triangle Vineyard Christian Fellowship. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilor Russ Stephenson. The following items were discussed with action taken as shown.

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

HORSESHOE FARM PARK MASTER PLAN – VARIOUS AMENDMENTS – VARIOUS ACTIONS TAKEN

Mr. Stephenson asked that Mr. Koopman make the committee's recommendation as it was his motion.

Mr. Koopman's reported the Public Works Committee recommends adopting the Horseshoe Farm Draft Master Plan as unanimously recommended by the Horseshoe Farm Master Plan Committee with the following adjustments, in keeping with the environmentally sensitive and sustainable theme of the park:

1. Do not allow any clearing or paving in the Significant Natural Heritage Area (SNHA) for the canoe launch or trails, as recommended by the NC Natural Heritage Program. Clearing in the SNHA is allowed for the specific case where it supports the implementation of environmentally sensitive Raleigh Greenway connectivity. Allow only a gravel road to the canoe drop off area outside of SNHA and investigate alternate sites for a more robust, hardened canoe launch facility (for example, across the river off Highway 401 close to the Neuse River Bridge area).
2. Move the parking lots from the middle of the park to a location closer to the existing gate (but not in the "fenced horse pasture") in order to maintain the natural vistas of the park.
3. Incorporate the environmental stewardship recommendations-currently located in the master plan committee's cover letter - dated April 24, 2006, into the draft Master Plan

under the section titled "Environmental Stewardship." (A copy of the letter is in the agenda packet.)

4. After improvements to the access road have been addressed, trails, wildlife habitat enhancements, picnic facilities, and restrooms should have the highest priority for development.

The committee further recommends that Council adopt a resolution to clarify City Council's intent regarding the future of Horseshoe Farm Park. A copy of the proposed resolution was in the agenda packet.

In response to questioning, Mr. Koopman pointed out that was the recommendation coming out of committee. He had passed around some additional clarifying motions or amendments with the Mayor suggesting that those be put on the table at the same time. Mr. Koopman pointed out he had heard in connection with building the pedestrian bridges that it would require the use of helicopters and he does not feel that is the case, therefore he would request that staff report to Council with specific recommendations on the construction of the two pedestrian bridges designed for pedestrian and bicycle traffic only across the Neuse River at Horseshoe Farm and how that could be done without the use of helicopters. He further recommended that we withdraw the referral of the Horseshoe Farm Park environmental stewardship recommendations from the Parks, Recreation and Advisory Boards work plan; also staff to provide Council with results of staff investigations and recommendations for placing a more formal canoe launch area at Highway 401 bridge by July 2008 and as soon as practical install three or more picnic tables within or near the fenced in area by the house and at least three trash cans near the tables at the park. He is also interested in looking at whether or not the existing barn can be used as a group picnic shelter someday and a very minor tweak is to make sure that the master plan allows for horseshoes to be played at the Horseshoe Farm Park. Mr. Stephenson pointed out the clarification the items which were a part of the discussion. The Mayor asked why redraw the referral of the Horseshoe Farm Park environmental stewardship recommendations from the Board's work plan with it being pointed out that had already been done but there was some misunderstanding. The motions as read by Mr. Koopman was put forth by Mr. Stephenson, seconded by Mr. Koopman and a roll call vote resulted in all members voting in the affirmative. The Mayor ruled the motion adopted on an 8-0 vote. See Resolution 437.

City Manager Allen explained at this point we still do not have a rendering of an approved master plan for Horseshoe Farm Park. We do need to incorporate into the design work, the changes and recommendations that have been made along the way in order to move to a certain stage. He stated we need to move toward having that rendering developed by our architect and that may require some more public input, etc. He stated we have talked about moving parking from one place to the other but in his opinion when you move the parking you would also have to move the building but that may not be what the Council expects by their action today. He stated we need to move forward with a rendering and move toward something say a 30% construction drawing, etc. so we could make sure everything is in the plan as recommended by Council with Mr. Koopman stating he understands but does not want to get into another year and a half of research which would paralyze the work at this park.