

DIX PARK | MASTER PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Workshop #5

Wednesday, May 3, 2017, 6:00pm – 8:00pm

Aloft Hotel, 2100 Hillsborough Street, Raleigh, NC 27607

Agenda

- 6:00pm** **Welcome & Updates**
- 6:10pm** **Equity and Engagement, Discussion with Mickey Fern, Professor of Practice, NCSU**
- 7:15pm** **Social**
- 8:00pm** **Meeting Close**

Speaker Bio

Mickey Fearn, Professor of Practice, NCSU

Mickey Fearn has been a parks, recreation, and conservation professional for over 45 years. He is currently a Professor of Practice in the North Carolina State University's School of Natural Resources. From 2009 to 2013 he served as the National Park Service's Deputy Director for Communications and Community Assistance from 2008 until 2013. His responsibilities included Communications, Public Affairs, Strategic Planning, Youth Programs, International Affairs, Partnerships, Legislative and Congressional Affairs, Policy, State and Local Assistance Programs, and outreach and communications to groups currently underrepresented in park, recreations and conservation.

Before joining the National Park Service, Mickey worked in Seattle where he held positions as the Director of the City of Seattle's Innovation Project, Executive Director of the Neighborhood Leadership Program, Manager of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative, and Director of Communication and Citizen Engagement in the Department of Parks and recreation. In addition, Mickey led the creation of the architecture to end youth violence in the City of Seattle, and developed programs connecting young people with nature.

Mickey served as a Washington State Parks and Recreation Commissioner for 12 years. Prior to his work in Seattle, Mickey worked for the Governor of California, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Mayor of Oakland California. Mickey's organizational interests include inclusion, collaboration, and innovation and creativity. Mickey earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Recreation and Park Administration from California State University and his Master of Science Degree in Recreation and Leisure Studies from the University of Oregon.

Presentation Notes

Mickey Fearn, Professor of Practice, NCSU

Mickey Fearn's lecture focused on the importance of diversity, inclusion, and equity in our planning process. He explained that when we aim to define normality we exclude diversity. When we think of ourselves as normal, we think of ourselves as right. Instead, we need to encourage people with opposing views and backgrounds to participate in this process to ensure a truly democratic process. Fearn stressed that public engagement is not just about collecting information, it is about building community. While race is a prominent complicated aspect of this project, we cannot engage with our neighbors solely focused on the race they are— that blinds us from seeing the richness of culture and ethnicity that multiracial communities hold. If Dix Park becomes an authentic democratic space, the people of Raleigh will have a ground on which they can find their commonalities and explore their differences.

When addressing what will be at the park, Fearn used the analogy of making potato salad. He explained that he led a class exercise where he asked all of his NC State students what ingredients they use when making potato salad. The group compiled a list of 95 ingredients from each student's unique recipe. The group then voted on which ingredients were most important, with consensus being necessary. The group could only reach consensus on three items: cumin, salt, and olive oil. No one could even agree on which type of potato to use: peeled, unpeeled, sweet, small, etc. Fearn used this example to show that if we only aim to reach a consensus in our planning, we will never create anything of substance. We all need to rise above our personal interests for the collective and work outside affinity groups. We need to rise above our own capacity to deal with more complexity.

Lastly, Fearn addressed the people whom we are trying to reach. He stated that we are aiming to reach aware users, non-aware users, aware non users, and non-aware non users of the park. We must develop a strategy for reaching *each* of these people groups. In order to have a successful master planning process, we must understand our target audience and all of the nuances within it.

Next Meeting

TBD