

Source: Tim Teddy 

FISCAL and VISION NOTES:

TO: City Council
FROM: City Manager and staff 
DATE: April 9, 2010
RE: Southeast Regional Park Master Plan
(Parks & Recreation Tracker # 2782)

City Fiscal Impact Enter all that apply:	
\$0	City's current net FY cost.
\$0	Amount of Funds Already appropriated
\$0	Amount of budget amendment needed
\$0	Estimated 2 yr net costs: One-time
\$0	Operating / On-going
Program Impact:	
N	New program/ agency (Y/N)
N	Duplicates/expands an existing program (Y/N)
N	Fiscal impact on any local political subdivision (Y/N)
Resources Required:	
N	Requires add'l FTE personnel? (Y/N)
N	Requires additional facilities? (Y/N)
N	Requires additional capital equipment? (Y/N)
Mandates:	
N	Federal or state mandated? (Y/N)
Vision Implementation Impact Enter Below All That Applies: Refer to Website:	
Y	Vision Impact? (Y/N or if N, go no further)
12.1	Primary Vision, Strategy and/or Goal Item#
12.1.1	Secondary Vision, Strategy and/or Goal Item#
Task #	FY10/FY11 Implementation Task#

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

A request by the City of Columbia (Parks and Recreation Department, agent) seeking approval of the final concept plan for the Southeast Regional Park Master Plan. The park is comprised of properties formally known as the Philips Farm and Crane Tract. The properties are located to the north and south, respectively, of Gans Road east of the US 63/Discovery Ridge interchange. The parks combined contain approximately 460 acres. **(Case # 10-31)**

DISCUSSION:

At the February 1, 2010 Council meeting the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) and the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) were requested to review the final master plan for the Southeast Regional Park. The regional park straddles Gans Road and creates two distinct recreational areas.

North of Gans Road is the A. Perry Philips Park, containing approximately 140 acres, which will accommodate the majority of the "structured" recreational activities of the regional park. South of Gans Road is the Gans Recreation Center, containing approximately 320 acres, which will accommodate the majority of the "field" and nature-related recreational activities of the regional park.

The PRC reviewed the final plan at its February 18, 2010 meeting and recommended approval subject to the addition of approximately 10 acres of buffer area northwest of Gans Creek. The PZC reviewed the final plan at its April 8, 2010 meeting and recommended unanimous approval (8-0) of it including support of the additional 10 acres of buffer area as recommended by the PRC.

In arriving at its recommendation, the PZC indicated support from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission, incorporation of enhanced stormwater protections, and elimination of the equestrian area as positive improvements to the plan. Additionally the PZC requested that development of "structured" improvements in either park occur after opportunities for development of similar facilities were exhausted on

other park sites closer to town.

Several members of the public spoke in favor of the plan and indicted appreciation of the environmental protection measures and elimination of the equestrian area. No one spoke in opposition to the plan.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact is anticipated within this or the next budget year. Proposed development of the park improvements are subject to funding availability and approval by Council.

VISION IMPACT:

Adoption of the Southeast Regional Park Master Plan acknowledges the research and public involvement in identifying park demands and deficiencies within the current park inventory and will allow for the expansion of such inventory to permit all residents access to a full range of outdoor and indoor recreational opportunities.

SUGGESTED COUNCIL ACTIONS:

Accept the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission to adopt the Southeast Regional Park Master Plan with the addition of 10 acres of buffer area northwest of the Gans Creek.

**AGENDA REPORT
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
April 8, 2010**

SUMMARY

A request by the City of Columbia (Parks and Recreation Department, agent) seeking approval of the final concept plan for the Southeast Regional Park Plan. The park is comprised of property formally known as the Philips Farm and Crane Tract. The properties are located north and south of Gans Road, respectively, between Discovery Parkway and Bristol Lake Parkway. The sites combined contain approximately 460 acres. **(Case # 10-30)**

SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Area (acres)	460 (140 acres in A. Perry Philips Park & 320 acres in Gans Creek Recreation Center)
Topography	Gently sloping
Vegetation	Open green spaces with scatter tree cover
Watershed	Clear Creek and Little Bonne Femme

SITE HISTORY

Existing structures	Boat ramp and associated parking, walking trail (A. Perry Philips Park). No improvements in the Gans Creek Recreation Center.
Existing zoning	PUD 4 & OP (A Perry Philips Park) & R-1 (Gans Creek Recreation Center)

UTILITIES & SERVICES

Sanitary Sewer	All City of Columbia Services
Water	
Electric	
Fire Protection	

ACCESS

Gans Road	
Location	Northern and southern boundaries of parks
Major Roadway Plan classification	Substandard Minor Arterial
Capital Improvement Program projects	Future collaborative improvement of Gans Road from US 63 to Bearfield Road. Currently unfunded. Listed in CATSO 2030 Plan as a \$7 million + project with Boone County as lead.
Right-of-way needed	N/A

Bristol Lake Parkway/Woodhaven Drive	
Location	West side of A Perry Philips Park
Major Roadway Plan classification	Neighborhood Collector
Capital Improvement Program projects	None
Right-of-way needed	None

Philips Farm Road	
Location	Northeast corner of A Perry Philips Park
Major Roadway Plan classification	Local
Capital Improvement Program projects	None. Per annexation agreement, road would be extended to Park property from Ponderosa Street by others. Extension through park to Bristol Lake Parkway at City expense.
Right-of-way needed	None

Gans Creek Road	
Location	East boundary of Gans Creek Recreation Center
Major Roadway Plan classification	Neighborhood Collector
Capital Improvement Program projects	None
Right-of-way needed	None

Pedestrian Access Needs	
Sidewalks	To be constructed along Gans Road in alternative location
CATSO Bicycle/Pedestrian Network Plan	Urban Trail/Pedway along Gans Road & Bristol Lake Parkway

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

The Park and Recreation Department conducted a total of 8 public forums and 2 web-surveys related to this proposal dating back to November 2007. In February 2010, the Parks and Recreation Commission recommended approval of the master plan subject to the addition of buffer land to the northeast of Gans Creek (see attached map and minutes). Additionally, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission recommended approval of this item at its February 2010 meeting (see attached minutes & e-mail correspondence from Chairman Heise). A general public hearing notice has run notifying the public of the public hearing. Since this is not a rezoning action, individual property owner notification was **not** mailed.

DISCUSSION

In February 2009, the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed two early “conceptual plans” for the development of the Southeast Regional Park. Such review was in conjunction with the review of the “final” PUD development plan for the boat dock and fishing facilities located on the southern end of Philips Lake and two final minor subdivision plats.

During the course of deliberating on these items, the Commission was informed of the Parks Department’s on-going efforts to refine the park plan to more adequately capture the public’s desire for the possible future development of the combined 460 acres. It was noted that a more defined plan may be presented to the Commission once the plan had undergone a full public review.

This report provides the Commission with the final “concept” plan that has undergone public vetting. The attached plan represents a culmination of approximately 3 years of public engagement by the Parks Department aimed at balancing the needs and desires of the community for recreational services. The final “concept” plan has been endorsed by the Parks and Recreation and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Commissions.

No funding for the proposed improvements has been identified at this point nor has a decision been made as to the final listing of park facilities. The plan represents what the Parks Department envisions as opportunities for site development based on its lengthy and deliberate public hearings process. Final decision of the ultimate improvements will require Council action and a separate public hearing process.

The current plan represents a combination of elements from Options 1 and 2 presented in February 2009. The primary differences between the current master plan and the options previously developed are:

1. The proposed equestrian area and full service RV Park proposed for the Gans Recreation Center (option 1) have been removed. See attached correspondence from the Parks Department for rationale on equestrian area removal. The currently proposed use as “Event Open Space” is consistent with the Option 2 proposal.
2. The nature center proposed for the Gans Recreation Center (option 1) has been eliminated and replaced with a playground and shelter.
3. The proposed tennis complex in the A. Perry Philips Park (option 1) was eliminated.
4. Additional connectivity to Rock Bridge State Park has been provided.
5. Enhanced or relocated bicycle/trail locations (minor shift and acreage increases) were incorporated into plan.
6. Permanent recreational buildings for the possible construction of an ice arena, water park, and multi-purpose sports complex were reconfigured due to parking and other site circulation changes.
7. Through street connectivity from Ponderosa Street to Bristol Lake Parkway/ Woodhaven Drive (future) have been added.
8. Stormwater facilities (i.e. ponds) have been enhanced to ensure regulatory compliance.

9. Recreation fields have been changed to uniform sizing and consolidated to reduced infrastructure installations (i.e. drive isles and remote parking lots).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The proposed 2010 Southeast Regional Park Master Plan is representative of the community's desires for possible recreational uses on the 460 acres of parkland straddling Gans Road. The proposed layout and uses are supported by the Parks and Recreation and Bicycle and Pedestrian Commissions. Staff finds that the plan has addressed all original review comments relating to the Philips Farms Development Agreement associated with the PUD 4/OP area of the park and will provide needed parkland in southeast Columbia.

Since the A. Perry Philips portion of the regional park is zoned PUD 4 and OP, all future site specific development plans will require public hearings before the Planning and Zoning Commission and Council. Public hearings will also be required for development of the Gans Recreation Center; however, such hearings will only be at the Council level due to the R-1 zoning of the property.

Such additional reviews in conjunction with the required Council approval of funding for such site specific improvements will ensure that the continued development of the regional park will be an inclusive process. As such, staff recommends **approval** of the submitted master plan.

Report prepared by _____

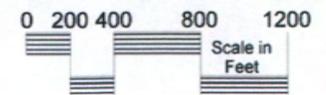
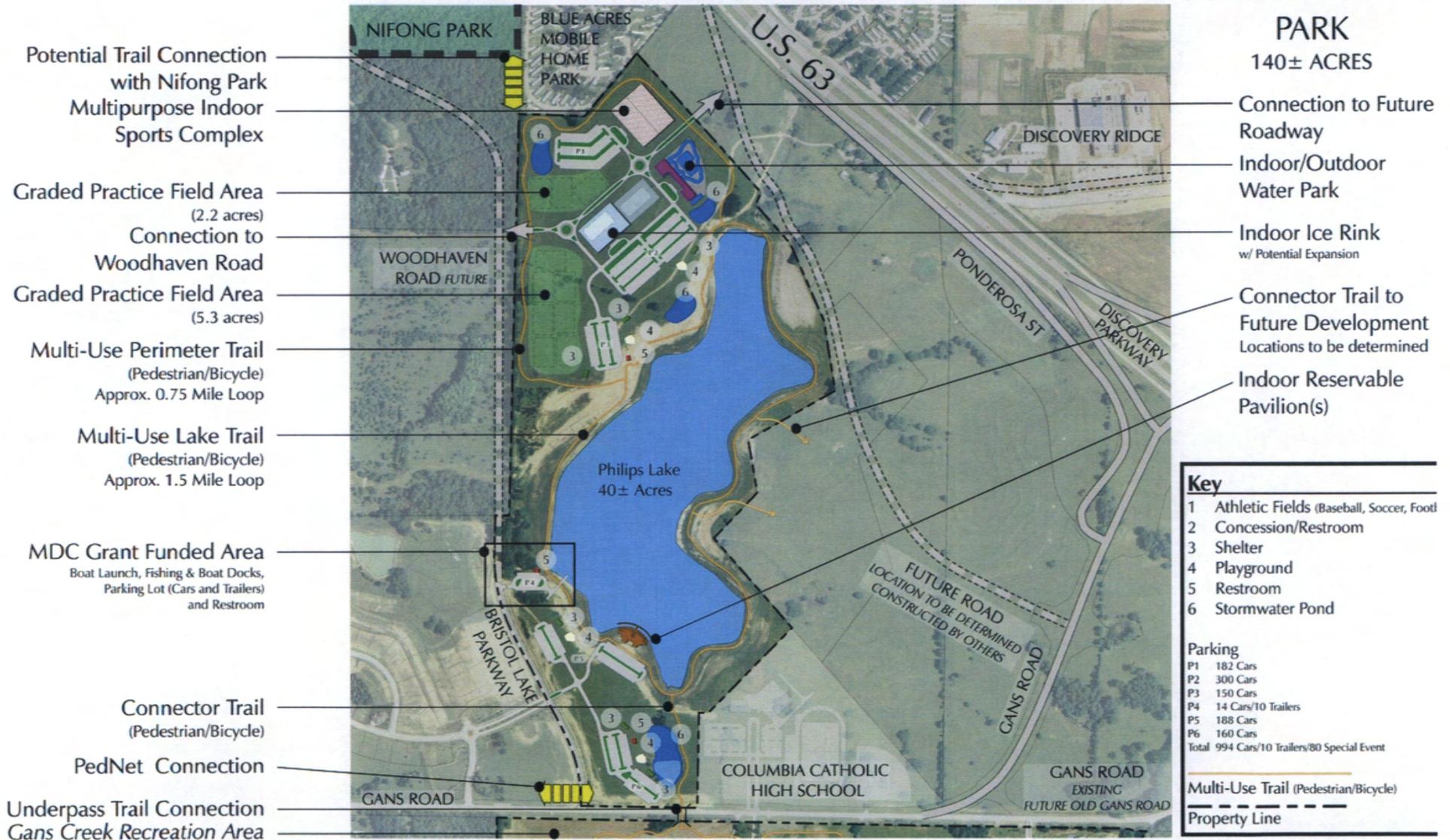
Approved by _____

2010 Southeast Regional Park Master Plan

A. Perry Philips Park

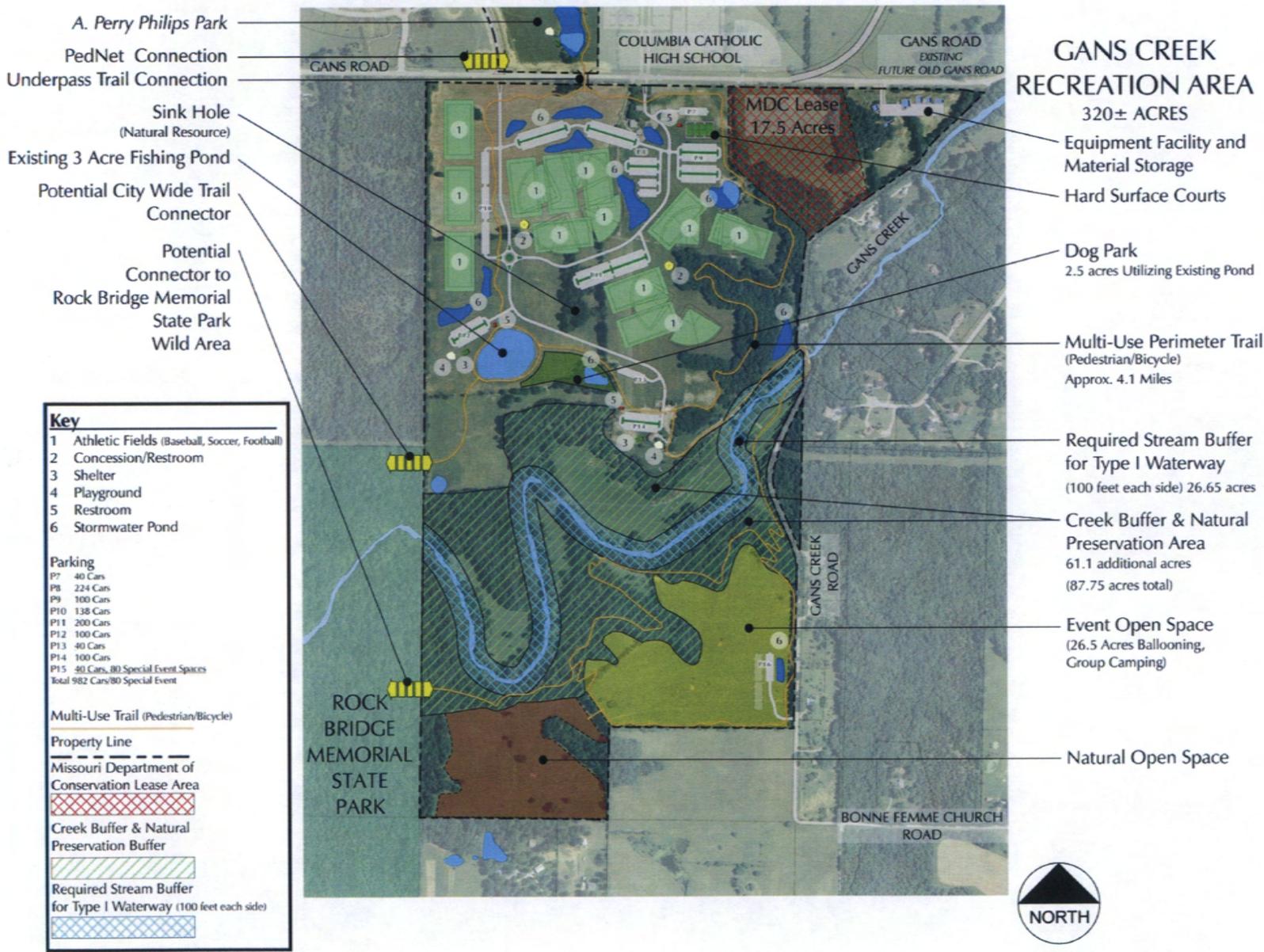
A. PERRY PHILIPS PARK

140± ACRES



2010 Southeast Regional Park Master Plan

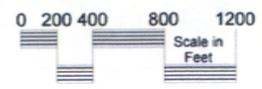
Gans Creek Recreation Area



- A. Perry Philips Park
- PedNet Connection
- Underpass Trail Connection
- Sink Hole (Natural Resource)
- Existing 3 Acre Fishing Pond
- Potential City Wide Trail Connector
- Potential Connector to Rock Bridge Memorial State Park Wild Area

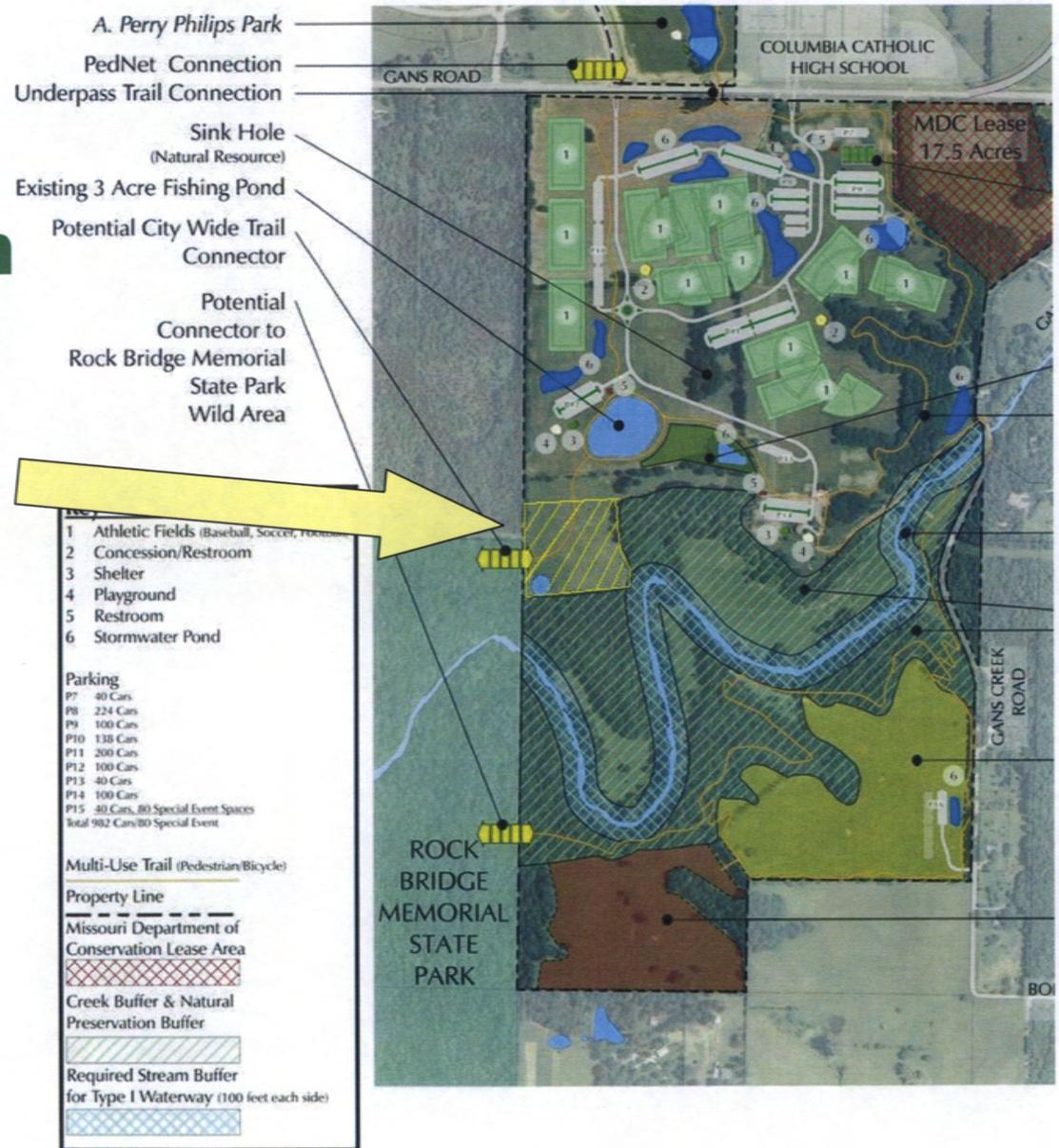
- GANS CREEK RECREATION AREA**
320± ACRES
- Equipment Facility and Material Storage
- Hard Surface Courts
- Dog Park
2.5 acres Utilizing Existing Pond
- Multi-Use Perimeter Trail (Pedestrian/Bicycle)
Approx. 4.1 Miles
- Required Stream Buffer for Type I Waterway
(100 feet each side) 26.65 acres
- Creek Buffer & Natural Preservation Area
61.1 additional acres (87.75 acres total)
- Event Open Space
(26.5 Acres Ballooning, Group Camping)
- Natural Open Space

Key	
1	Athletic Fields (Baseball, Soccer, Football)
2	Concession/Restroom
3	Shelter
4	Playground
5	Restroom
6	Stormwater Pond
Parking	
P7	40 Cars
P8	224 Cars
P9	100 Cars
P10	138 Cars
P11	200 Cars
P12	100 Cars
P13	40 Cars
P14	100 Cars
P15	40 Cars, 80 Special Event Spaces
Total 982 Cars/80 Special Event	
Multi-Use Trail (Pedestrian/Bicycle)	
Property Line	
Missouri Department of Conservation Lease Area	
Creek Buffer & Natural Preservation Buffer	
Required Stream Buffer for Type I Waterway (100 feet each side)	



2010 Southeast Regional Park Gans Creek Recreation Area

- **P&R Commission Proposed Revision**
 - February 18, 2010
 - Increased buffer area by about 10 acres



Source: Mike Hood

Agenda Item No. (I)

FISCAL NOTES:

TO: City Council
FROM: City Manager and Staff
DATE: January 21, 2010
RE: 2010 Southeast Regional Park Master Plan Update (A. Perry Philips Park and Gans Creek Recreation Area)

City Fiscal Impact Enter all that apply:	
\$0	City's current net FY cost.
\$0	Amount of Funds Already appropriated
\$0	Amount of budget amendment needed
\$0	Estimated 2 yr net costs: One-time
\$0	Operating / On-going
Program Impact:	
N	New program/ agency (Y/N)
N	Duplicates/expands an existing program (Y/N)
N	Fiscal impact on any local political subdivision (Y/N)
Resources Required:	
N	Requires add'l FTE personnel? (Y/N)
N	Requires additional facilities? (Y/N)
N	Requires additional capital equipment? (Y/N)
Mandates:	
N	Federal or state mandated? (Y/N)

SUMMARY: The Department of Parks and Recreation has prepared the proposed master plan for development of the Southeast Regional Park, individually known as the 140 acre A. Perry Philips Park and the 320 acre Gans Creek Recreation Area (copy attached). This draft 2010 Southeast Regional Park Master Plan was prepared using information gathered from 18 public meetings, 617 survey responses, and input from numerous City Departments, including, but not limited to Public Works, Water & Light, and Planning Departments. The Department also worked closely with adjacent neighbors including Rock Bridge State Park, Missouri Department of Conservation and adjacent property developers including those representing the future Catholic High School property. The Department introduced the proposed master plan to the public via two public meetings on September 15, 2009 and September 23, 2009 as well as by accepting comments through a web based survey. Overall, the proposed master plan was well received by the public with the exception of the proposed 17 acre equestrian area. Public comments were about evenly split between those that supported the equestrian areas and those that were against. After extensive evaluation and investigation of other equestrian parks, park staff chose not to include equestrian trails and facilities in the final proposed plan

primarily due to the environmental risk associated with the karst topography and related sinkholes.

At this time, there are no funding sources for the development of the two parks with the exception of \$407,500 for fishing and support amenities at Philips Park. Funding for this Philips Phase I project includes \$250,00 Park Sales Tax funds and a \$157,500 Missouri Department of Conservation grant. Construction has begun and it is anticipated that the project will be completed this year.

If the Council concurs, park staff requests that the proposed plan be forwarded to the Parks & Recreation Commission, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and any other Commission the Council may deem appropriate for review and recommendations.

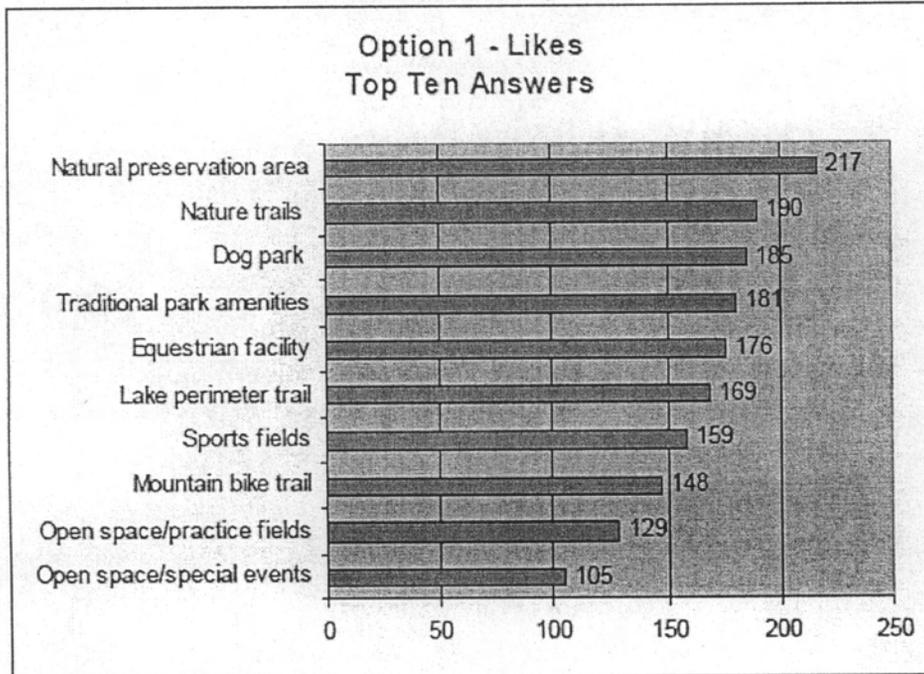
DISCUSSION: The Department of Parks and Recreation has completed the final phase of the public input process regarding the development of a recommended master plan for the Southeast Regional Park, individually known as the 140 acre A. Perry Philips Park and the 320 acre Gans Creek Recreation Area.

2007-2008 Public Input on Proposed Master Plans

Based on previous public comments and an inventory of the two sites, park planning staff prepared two draft park master plan options and presented them to the public in late 2008 and early 2009. The public was invited to submit their comments on the two options through a Public Comment Form (survey), which was made available on the web, at the two public

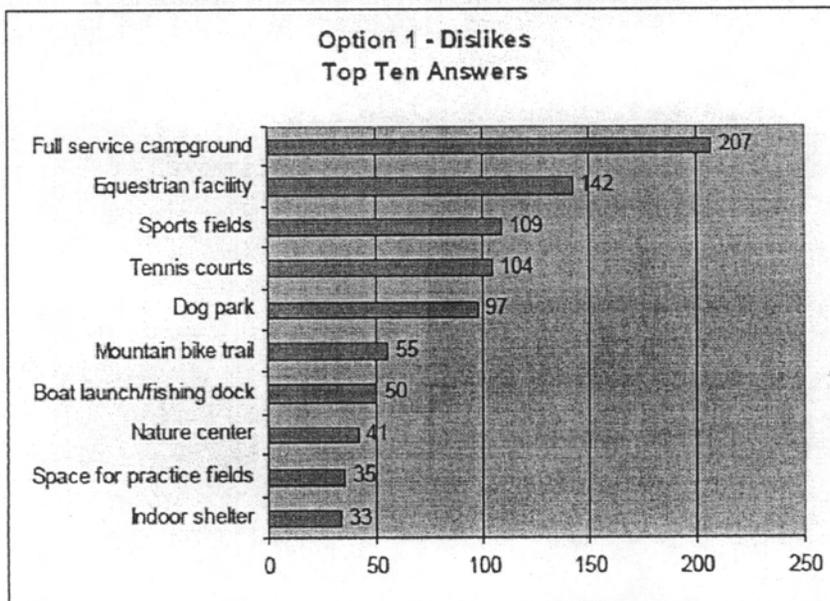
meetings held, and at four locations throughout the city (ARC, Daniel Boone Building, Daniel Boone Regional Library, and the Parks and Recreation main office). The survey was conducted from December 10, 2008 - January 31, 2009. There were 537 surveys completed. Option 2 received 62% of the votes and Option 1 received 32% of the votes. Participants were also invited to comment on their likes, dislikes, and what they would change, add, or delete on each plan. The comments received were varied and represented diverse interests. During this portion of public input, equestrian facilities (shown only in Option 1) ranked in the top ten of desired amenities as shown in the below graph:

Question 1. What do you like *most* about Option 1?



Confirming the controversial nature of the equestrian facilities, they also appeared in the top ten *least* liked amenities of Option 1 as shown in the graph below:

Question 2. What do you like *least* about Option 1?



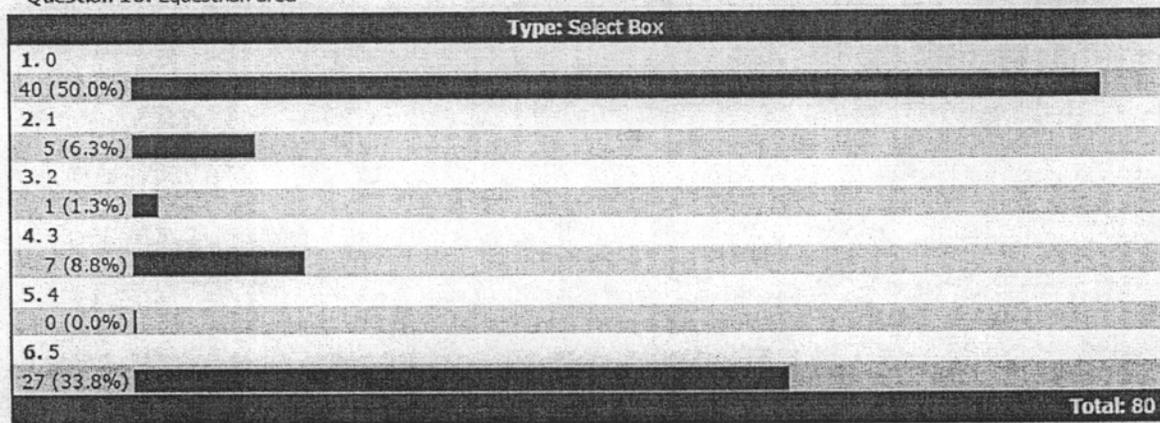
2009 Public Input on Proposed Master Plans

During the late summer of 2009, park planners reviewed all of the information gathered to date including new and follow-up meetings with special interest groups and other public agencies and developed a 2009 Proposed Southeast Regional Park Master Plan.

The Department introduced the proposed 2009 Draft Master Plan to the public at two planning meetings in September, 2009. These meetings were scheduled at the Activity and Recreation Center (ARC) with the first scheduled for September 15, 2009 and the second, September 23, 2009. On September 15, 2009 the department posted the 2009 Draft Master Plan and initiated a web based survey for those that chose to voice their comments online instead of attending one of the public meetings. This survey was formatted differently than the earlier surveys as it asked respondents to indicate their level of priority for the proposed amenities with 0 being a "no or zero priority" and a 5 being a "high priority" amenity. A total of 80 surveys were returned or submitted.

In regards to the equestrian facilities, the following graph (Question 16) shows that 45 respondents felt it was a low priority (0 and 1) and 27 respondents felt it was a high priority (4 and 5).

* Question 16: Equestrian area



It was interesting to note that several comments from those that supported the equestrian facility felt that the proposed 17 acre equestrian area was too small and wanted more acres. The requests for more acres ranged from opening up the 100+/- acres representing the entire area south of Gans Creek to opening up the total 460 acres of the Gans Creek Recreation Area and the A. Perry Philips Park. The Missouri Division of State Parks and the staff at Rock Bridge State Park had no official comment regarding the addition of equestrian facilities at Gans Creek Recreation Area.

Ultimately, park planning staff felt that equestrian use at Gans Creek was not appropriate for several reasons. Staff believes that there are best management practices to help protect the environment from storm water runoff from parking lots, buildings, athletic fields and other traditional recreation amenities. The protection of water that is enriched with manure from horses is much more difficult to manage due to the wide open and dispersed nature of the activity.

Horseback riding in an area that has sinkholes also poses potential risks to horses and riders because often tall grass obscures shallow sinkholes and new depressions or holes can develop

overnight. Rains can carry horse wastes short distances overland to such sinkholes and down through cracks in the limestone. Such water enriched with manure may enter caves and springs and can result in high nutrient levels that are known to cause algae growth and low oxygen levels which can cause harm to sensitive aquatic animals and increase bacteria levels. The springs and drainages on the Gans Creek property input water into the Gans Creek which flows into Rock Bridge State Park which is the only home of the endangered pink planarian. In addition to the potential for adverse impacts to the water, horse droppings can also introduce invasive and/or exotic species into an area. Finally, planners were concerned that horses crossing a stream can cause bank erosion introducing unwanted soil sediments into the stream.

2010 Southeast Regional Park Master Plan

Following staff analysis of the results from these latest meetings and surveys, park planners prepared the attached 2010 Southeast Regional Park Master Plan and feel that it best represents the public's preferences, suitability for the site, and implements the goals for the southeast regional park as established in the department's *2002 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*.

The proposed 2010 Southeast Regional Park Master Plan provides a great deal of flexibility. For example, the athletic fields are shown as either a football, baseball/softball, lacrosse, or soccer field. The proposed master plan allows for any one of these fields to be selected based on the needs at the time of development. All of the amenities proposed in the 2009 Southeast Regional Park Master Plan are included with the exception of the equestrian facilities as noted above.

Funding for Phase I Development of Philips Park

As approved and funded by the 2005 Park Sales Tax, the Department has \$250,000 for Phase I development of the Philips Park. Additionally, the City has received a \$157,500 Missouri Department of Conservation grant to build fishing facilities at Philips Park. The City's match for the grant is \$52,500, funded out of the Phase I park development budget. The following amenities are to be constructed as part of the grant agreement: entrance road, parking lot (minimum 10 vehicles + 10 vehicles w/trailer), boat ramp, courtesy boat dock, floating fishing dock, restrooms, security lighting, and sidewalks connecting facilities. The lake trail, boat ramp, and boating and fishing docks are substantially completed and all that remains in this first phase is the parking lot, some walkways, restroom, parking lot lighting, and utilities. Staff anticipates that future development priorities may include passive recreation features such as a picnic shelter, playground and related support amenities (walkways, drinking fountains, landscape, etc.). Available funding resources following the Phase I development will determine which requested facilities are developed.

Zoning of Philips Park

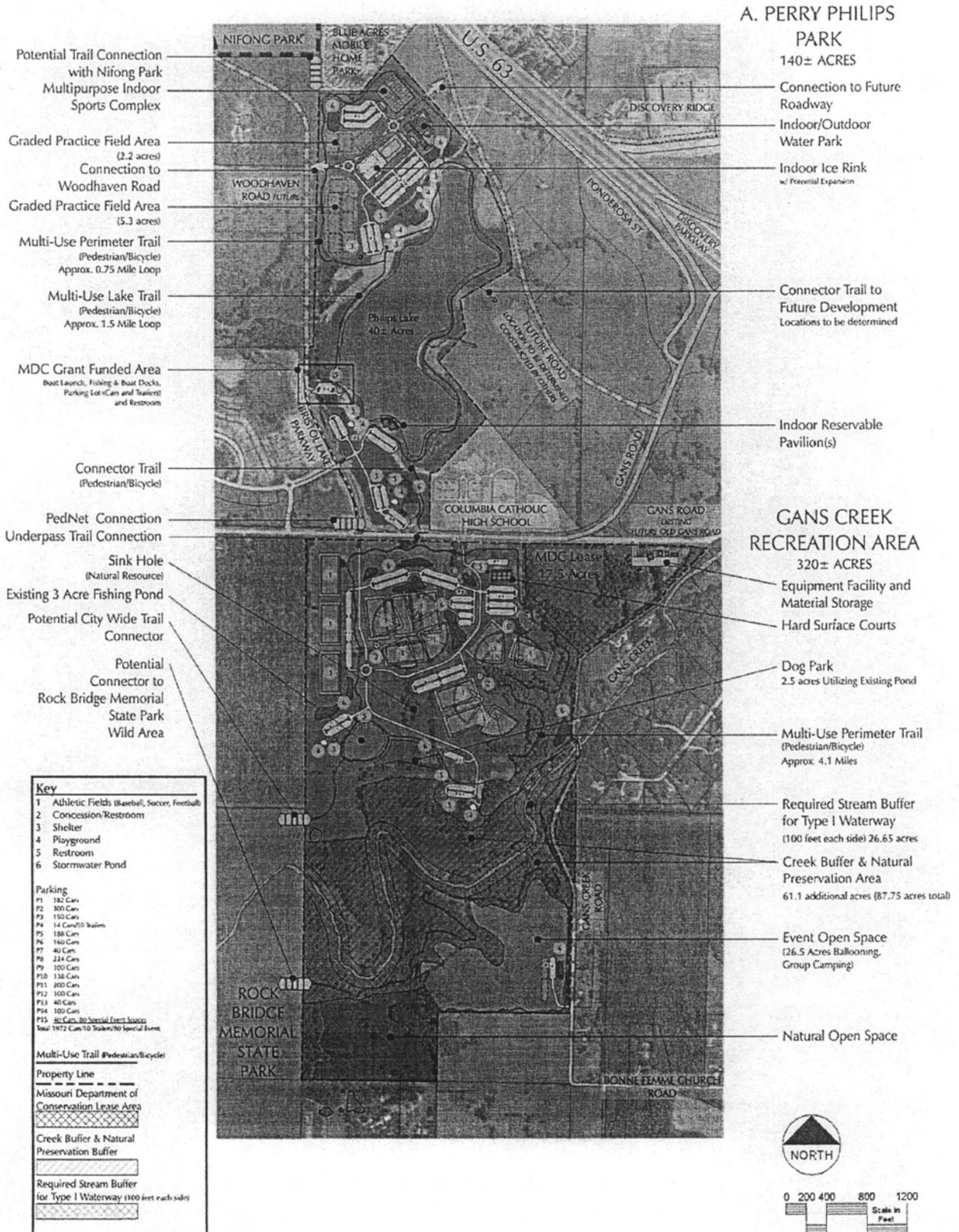
Philips Park has both C-P and O-P zoning. On February 5, 2009, the Planning and Zoning Commission voted unanimously to approve the Philips Phase I plan as noted above. The zoning plan was introduced to Council on February 16, 2009 and was approved by Council on March 2, 2009. This procedure allowed the department to begin construction on the Philips Phase I development in time to meet the MDC grant deadlines. The 2010 Southeast Regional Park Master Plan is a slight variation of the previous Option 1 and 2 that were approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission so the department anticipates that the P&Z Commission will need to review and approve the 2010 version. The one exception is that the Philips Phase I development area (MDC Grant Funded Area and perimeter lake trail) remains unchanged from previous options.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no fiscal impact as a result of this report.

SUGGESTED COUNCIL ACTION: If the Council concurs, park staff requests that the proposed plan be forwarded to the Parks & Recreation Commission, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and any other Commission the Council may deem appropriate for review and recommendations.

2010 Southeast Regional Park Master Plan

A. Perry Philips Park & Gans Creek Recreation Area



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Thursday, February 18, 2010, 7 p.m.
ARC, 1701 W. Ash

MINUTES

Commission Present: Terry Kloepfel, Marin Blevins, Bill Pauls, Dan Devine, Gary Kespohl, Sue Davis, Meredith Donaldson

Commission Absent: None

Staff Present: Mike Hood, Mike Griggs, Erika Coffman, Tammy Miller

Public Present: 22 in attendance, including media

Kloepfel called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Agenda: The agenda was approved on a motion by Blevins, seconded by Donaldson.

Minutes: The minutes were approved on a motion by Devine, seconded by Pauls.

Monthly Report: Kloepfel asked about a report about a recent Bonnie View Park focus meeting? Griggs said staff had met with about four Audubon Society members to discuss the Bonnie View Park plan. It was designed to be a small meeting.

The January monthly report was approved on a motion by Blevins, seconded by Davis.

Public Hearing: Regional Park Master Plan

Kloepfel opened the public hearing by asking Hood to make a staff presentation.

Hood shared a Powerpoint presentation with the Commission and the public; first of all, highlighting the goals of the process, which were to involve the community in the park planning and make it community acceptable, incorporate state of the art best management practices (BMP) to protect the environment, and support high use active recreation facilities. Hood said this is why the land was purchased to begin with.

Hood defined a regional park as one with at least 200 acres or more that offers a diversity of recreational opportunities with natural settings, competitive uses, and can accommodate large numbers of people. Regional parks are also usually near major highways to easily handle higher volumes of traffic.

Hood said regional parks such as Cosmo Park typically have these features: athletic fields; natural areas; cultural areas are protected; shelters and playgrounds; trails with key connections to city-wide trail system; unique facilities like dog parks, ice rinks and pools; support facilities such as parking and restrooms. These parks are usually built in phases over a period of time such as 5-20 years.

Cosmo Park was developed over a 30-year period.

The need for a new regional park was identified in the 2002 Open Space Master Plan. That plan recommended that there be a new regional park be acquired and developed in southeast Columbia. That plan also identified the need for several facilities that we had no place to put them, Hood said. Some of those needs are athletic fields, tennis courts, golf course, indoor courts, nature center, chlorinated swimming in south Columbia, indoor ice rink and other recreational facilities.

This planning process for the new regional park began more than two years ago. It was a four-phase process with information collection with public meetings, concept development with more public comment, draft plan, and master plan approval. This draft master plan is in front of the Commission tonight. It is staff's recommendation but Hood added that it doesn't mean it is the final plan. Changes can still be made. Commission will solicit public comment tonight for their recommendation to the City Council. Planning and Zoning Commission will do the same thing. City Council will also have a public hearing before they make their final approval.

Hood showed a map of the park. It is a total of 460 acres and will consist of A. Perry Philips Memorial Park and Gans Creek Recreation Area. Certain key components were considered in the master plan process, including surrounding land use with Nifong Park, Rock Bridge Memorial State Park, a new Catholic high school, open space with planned development, the new Discovery Ridge proposed development. A new interchange on Highway 63 will provide excellent access, as well as the extension of Gans Road and Bristol Lake Parkway.

The Trails Plan was also considered with several potential links into the property that ties into the city-wide trail system. Links will also connect with Rock Bridge State Park.

A site analysis was conducted with analyzing flora and fauna and the topography of the site. Some key natural features were identified, such as steep slopes, native vegetation, wildlife habitat, and the Gans Creek corridor. Hood then shared some photos of the property to give the public a feel for the property, which was mainly used for agricultural purposes. The photos also showed the buildings on the Gans property and a small lake. The Department of Natural Resources assisted on a natural resources inventory. This inventory focused on the southern part of the site adjacent to the Rock Bridge State Park.

Another factor that affects the park planning is the fact that 17 acres of the site have been leased to the Department of Conservation for a nature center and regional office, in the corner of the tract off of Gans Road.

Hood reviewed the steps of the regional park planning process, which started in November 2007 with the first public hearings, leading to focus groups and surveys, and draft master plan options.

Hood then showed the plan, breaking it into the north and south parts of the park. Highlights of the proposed plan for Philips Park are fishing amenities with docks, boat ramp, parking, and restroom; trails, standard park amenities such as shelters, playgrounds, restrooms, etc.; indoor facilities such as ice rink, sports center, and aquatics center; graded practice facilities; indoor pavilion; and outdoor aquatic facility. The lake divides the park. Many of the fishing amenities and lake perimeter trail are already in place or under construction. North of the lake, if funding is available, there may be the indoor facilities close to Highway 63 that are highly visible. On the southern half of Philips, features include the shelters, playgrounds, and indoor pavilion. Hood showed photos of what some of these features may look like. This includes a 7.5 acre graded practice area that may be used for practices for soccer, football or lacrosse; or, possibly for tournaments. Hood said we have been approached about hosting large tournaments that we cannot accommodate right now with our current facilities. One modification was made to the Philips plan, and that was to add a connection to the west to Bristol Lake Parkway, if and when that road is built. Staff felt it would be beneficial to add an access point and it fits with the City's transportation plan. At one time, Cosmo Park had just one entrance and there was difficulty with traffic. There are three there now and traffic flows better, Hood said.

Hood moved to the south half of the park, the Gans Creek Recreation Area. Highlights include trails; standard park amenities such as playgrounds, shelters, restrooms, parking; hard surface courts; outdoor fields; natural preservation and creek buffer; dog park; and event open space. The area breaks into two zones, the northern part that is planned to be more active use that offers potential to develop facilities as the city grows. At this point, it is not known if the city would need more soccer fields, baseball fields, or any other sport, but more fields will be needed at some point, Hood said. Staff has tried to put as much flexibility in the plan as possible so that the areas could be developed into whatever is needed. Hood said the community will make that decision as the need arises. Some tennis courts are shown with a fenced dog park, some playgrounds and shelters placed strategically through the park. He showed photos of examples of type of facilities.

On the southern half of the property, Hood described the second use zone. He said it is a much more natural type of park with much of it set aside for nature area preservation. He showed a map of the Gans Creek that flows through the park and described a city ordinance that requires a stream buffer of 100 feet, which would equal about 27 acres. Staff feels this is a unique area and that Gans is a very sensitive system that is important to protect, with bluffs and Karst topography. Staff is recommending

the buffer zone total closer to 88 acres, about 61 acres more than what is required. This would be a managed area to ensure the desired habitat develops.

As far as the open space, staff envisions that as offering different options, with balloon launches, organized scouting campouts, practice fields or special events.

Modifications to the plan: draft proposed master plan was introduced to the public via two public meetings last September. It was well received by the public with the exception of a 17-acre equestrian area in the far southwest corner of the park. Comments were just about evenly split between those who supported the equestrian area and those who opposed the equestrian area. Some of the equestrian supporters felt that 17 acres was small, that they would like to have a larger area. Missouri Division of State Parks and the staff at Rock Bridge State Park had no official comment on this issue. Many comments were made about the Karst topography of the site. There were concerns raised about the compatibility of equestrian use as related to Karst. Staff confirmed that the area identified for equestrian use is located within a designated Karst area. The City has completed its natural resources inventory and that inventory identifies this particular area as a Karst region and recommends protection of the region. Staff has not completed a detailed mapping of all sinkholes in the area however, many of them have been identified.

Hood showed a map showing the Karst area. He detailed concerns with equestrian use and Karst topography. Best management practices can be used to protect the environment from storm water run off from parking lots and recreational amenities. However, protection of water that is enriched with waste from horses is more difficult to manage over a dispersed area. There was also concern with horseback riding in an area with sinkholes, with risks to horses and riders. The sinkholes are usually obscured. Rainwater can also be a concern as it can carry waste into caves, springs and limestone, harming sensitive habitats. The springs and drainages on the property input water into the creek which flows into the state park, the only home of the endangered pink planarian. In addition, horse droppings can introduce evasive species. Horses can also cause bank erosion. Ultimately, Hood said, from the staff's standpoint, it was debated at length. Staff felt there were two evenly divided, strongly held opinions. Staff felt that the equestrian use presented more concerns and risks than potential benefits. At this point, the equestrian area is not included in the plan. The area is now designated as a natural/open space area.

Hood said the plan was submitted to the Council on February 1. Council then forwarded the plan to the Parks and Recreation and Planning and Zoning Commissions for their comment and recommendation. Council will likely schedule a public hearing at some point. Hood then shared details on how the park would be developed. Presently, the department has \$407,500 in Park Sales Tax funds and a MDC grant for the development of the first phase of Philips. No other funds are available. A priority list of projects of the new park will be made for future funding opportunities. The current Park Sales Tax expires in March 2011. It is likely the Council will place it on the ballot for renewal, which is the next best opportunity for regional park funding. Council will have the final decision as to when and what projects are recommended for funding by the Park Sales Tax.

Hood concluded the presentation.

Kloeppel thanked him and asked Commissioners for questions? There were none, so Kloeppel welcomed the public, thanking them for coming. He set the ground rules, asking speakers to come to the podium and state their name and address. He asked them to sign the sheet on the table after speaking for our record. He asked speakers to keep their comments to 3 minutes in length. He asked for the first speaker to come forward.

David Bedan, 2001 Chapel Wood Road - Tonight, I'm speaking for the Columbia Audubon Society. I'm sure you know that the Audubon Society is very interested in preservation of natural habitat and natural open space so people can enjoy nature in open areas. We would have hoped for a bit more natural area in this park, especially around Philips Lake, this is a significant habitat for birds and was a good birding area. But we're pleased to see the southern end of the Gans Creek Recreation Area with a significant area of natural space and protection for Gans Creek. We were quite pleased to see the removal of the equestrian area and use. As an old horseman myself, I spent many a pleasant

hour in the saddle, but I also know that horses can be very destructive and other state parks are overused by horses and has ruined the trails and caused a great deal of erosion. It wasn't just the 17 acres that was at stake in the city park. There are two gates that would allow equestrian use in the state park and I don't think the state park is prepared to manage a huge influx of equestrian use. Overall, we as the Columbia Audubon Society does support the staff's proposed plan with one caveat, something to think about. In the future, if there is lighting of these recreational fields in Gans Creek Recreation Area, that you use the type of lighting that points illumination down to the ground and not spreading that across the sky. I know that's the trend that the City is going to and I would encourage that. Also, that there would never be lighting in this south corner that you are calling the open space event area. We'd prefer not to have that lighting next to a natural area. But with those few caveats, I think it's a pretty good plan and we support staff's efforts. Thank you.

Kloeppel thanked him and asked for questions?

Devine asked staff if there are plans for lighting the open event area?

Hood said no, not at this time. It would stay mowed and open. At some point as with all master plans, if the community ever desired, that could be amended. At this point, it will just be an open field.

Rob Nix, 1503 Stone Street – I'd like to first off thank the City Parks Department for all the efforts that have been put into this. I'd like to thank the Commission for holding this public hearing. The one issue I'm here tonight about, that I'm extremely concerned about and it seems to be some modifications to the last plan that I saw. I'm not exactly sure when the city... (pointing to the map) this area I believe right here, the line that is shown is a utility gas line.

Hood confirmed this.

Nix: Just south of there is an extremely unique sensitive area of the Gans Creek Wildlife Area. Possibly some of the maturest trees that are left within the basic Columbia city growth area. It's lovely here and this little pond here is off of it. The original plan previously showed these (athletic) fields coming down slightly further and one actually on this side of the lake if I remember. I was very concerned because it did not seem to be compatible as far as being a neighbor of this beautiful spot, showing a connector here to connect to the Gans area. There's also an extremely sensitive bluff with grotto cave areas here, all of which would be nice to have as a neighbor of similar use. Being that this new plan is showing things pop up (north) a little bit, that's good. I wanted to make sure that the concern over parking, lighting and things in that area, noise, activity and traffic could pushed as far possible to the north as you can go. I believe that would be better compatibility. It would be a shame to ruin the feeling of this growth. It's a hidden wonder that most people aren't aware that is there. It would be nice to be able to have it join in with the future prospective use of this wonderful area. Congratulations overall on the work that's been done by the staff on this.

Kloeppel thanked him and asked for questions? There were none.

Ken Midkiff, 1005 Belleview Ct – I'm the conservation chair for the Osage group of the Sierra Club. I'm speaking on their behalf. Generally speaking, we support the staff's recommendation. We are particularly pleased that the equestrian area is no more. Our concern has been, as Mr. Bedan's concern had been, that there would be access to the Gans Creek Wild Area from the equestrian area. We're pleased to see for other reasons, that it has been removed. We congratulate the staff and we are supportive. Thank you.

Kloeppel thanked him and asked for questions? There were none.

Jan Weaver, 412 ½ West Walnut – I'm on the board of Friends of Rock Bridge State Park. I know that the state park staff and DNR could not comment, but we are very happy to see the horse area removed for the same reasons that have been expressed. We were concerned that it would increase access to the Gans Creek Wild Area. There has already been a lot of damage done, and we support this plan. We are pleased with the extreme corridor and the areas around it as well. Thank you. Kloeppel thanked her and asked for questions? There were none.

Richard Shanker, 1829 Cliff Drive – I've been to many of these meetings. Mike, you did a good job; I've been to so many I think I could give the presentation myself. I'm a member of the Audubon Society and Sierra Club. I was at a meeting last night when it was revealed that this meeting would be held and that there is now an exclusion to the equestrian area. That's what I'm here to address. I was for the and still am, the equestrian area. The property as you know has been used for many years for livestock. One of the pictures there even showed some of their cows grazing right next to the creek. When it rains, it is not a pristine environment right now. The impact of all this development is going to have an impact on the stream, the whole area is Karst. By definition, my understanding of Karst is not just a 17-acre stretch, it's the whole area has the potential of being Karst. I'm not saying that you did not do a complete job or anything, but I'm sure that development could have an impact. As far as impact goes, unless we're just going to keep it the way it is and not do anything, there's potential for pollution in all parts of the park. I was concerned also about the focus groups, I didn't know if the horse group needs to register to become a focus group but for those who were at the first few meetings, there were tablets here and we all wrote down priorities. And at least a couple of the groups I was at named, that was a main goal was to have some area for horses. There were horses on the Crane property as well as cows. One of the features of a park is multi-use trails, I don't see why that can't be incorporated. Unless I'm mistaken, there are no city parks that allow horses right now. This is an opportunity, if you don't have the 17 acres, perhaps a perimeter trail all the way around. As far as that buffer area, that buffer area that we see here that is protected is very steep. I doubt and Mike correct me if I'm wrong, I doubt it could be developed for anything without a great amount of work. It is so steep and narrow. The best use is just to leave it as is. I can't see any trails or anything like that. One of the goals as you stated was active recreation. Horse-back riding is that. The restrooms, the people, everything there will cause some pollution. The 17-acre plot that is depicted is highly thick fescue. If you haven't been there, it is hard to get through fescue. You would have to have a lot of animals going through the stuff to impact as severely as down there in the bottoms where it is more gravelly and really percolates more. So I would propose that you reconsider this. I don't know what the focus groups were. Mike and I talked earlier today. I don't know if there was a horse focus group after all this came up but I'd appreciate an opportunity to get a focus group together and combat some of this. All of this came up last night when I attended the Audubon meeting. Another consideration is a horse trail around the perimeter of the north park and/or south park, or a fee structure, or some other compromise. Because it was originally part of the plan, the last I heard, and now in this last phase, it's been eliminated. If it was a 50-50 vote or group, then I think there needs to be more consideration. Because on the front end, there was extreme interest in horse trails. In the end, it's been eliminated. I can appreciate my fellow Auduboners, and Sierra Club people and all of that, but there is also a multi-use aspect to this park I hope you consider. Thanks.

Kloepfel thanked him and asked for questions? There were none.

Susan Flader, 917 Edgewood – I'm speaking as president of Missouri Parks Association, a statewide citizen organization to support the state park system. Our interest in this plan has been its proximity to Rock Bridge State Park and the Gans Creek Wild Area. We are very pleased with the current recommendation to buffer Gans Creek and to provide for natural area development in that area and saving it from potential horse use. We applaud that decision. I agree that there is potential for run-off from any hard surfaces and I think that any building that is done and any hard surfaces need to have rain gardens, pervious pavers, whatever can be done to eliminate runoff into that creek. It is extremely important to protect it. Thank you very much.

Kloepfel thanked her and asked for questions? There were none.

Harold Anderson, 2100 Northland Drive – I'm an Audubon member. The Audubon Society would like to see the staff re-establish some of the habitat that is there, to get rid of the fescue and get something that is more conducive to habitat and wildlife. We would like to see that. That's all I have to say.

Kloeppel thanked him and asked for questions? There were none.

Mitch Skov, 407 West Blvd South – I'd like to thank parks staff for removing the equestrian area that was shown previously in the southwest portion of the plan. I appreciate that. I would like to emphasize that I would like to see more of this park area, mainly the southern area, be maintained in its natural state if possible. I'm also very, I have doubts as to whether the money is going to be available at any point soon if ever, to develop the park under the level that is being shown. That may be pessimistic but given the trends in revenue across the country, I'm very concerned that that will have a big impact on the final implementation of this plan. It may be better to temper expectations with that in mind. Again, with respect to the Karst topography and Gans Creek watershed, I would like to see a greater percentage of it in natural habitat.

Kloeppel thanked him and asked for questions? There were none.

Dee Dokken, 804 Again – I'm also very glad that the horse area was removed, that there was that consideration for the natural resource there. I have some miscellaneous things that some other people haven't said. I think that on this plan, where it says Rock Bridge Memorial State Park, it should also say Gans Creek Wild Area because that is important information. I'm also a little concerned with the two connectors, if they are MKT type trails, bike trails. I know that mountain bikes are not allowed in the state park, they're there, but they're not allowed. Again, this is a decision that it seems like the park should be making as to what type of trails. I'm wondering if when that guy was talking—I can't remember his name—when he was talking about that wonderful area in the corner of the Gans Creek Wild Area. I'm also concerned about this area (pointing to map), can this area be extended south. It seems like that would give more of a buffer. Thank you.

Kespohl asked if the other extended area show more buffer?

Hood located the buffer zone in question on the Gans map. He said at one point, staff showed some of the developed fields going down into this area (north of access). I don't know that it would be a big issue to extend it.

Marion Mace Dickerson, 3651 S. Ben Williams Road – I would also like to say that I'm glad that the equestrian option was removed for the reasons already stated. I had something else I wanted to mention that no one else has talked about tonight. That is the fact that there are several buildings on this property. I think it would be a very good use for one of the buildings to have a part of it used for nature programs for school kids. The park has some very interesting features with Karst topography and the lake. These are all things that would be very helpful for kids to go on field trips and study about and then have a place to go to look at displays of the natural areas. So that is just one thing I wanted to add that has not already been discussed.

Kloeppel thanked her and asked staff about the condition of the buildings?

Hood responded that there are three houses that were owned by the Crane family. The primary house is a brick house off of Gans, probably built in the 1950s/early 60s. It has some structural problems and is in the area where the main entrance to the park would likely be. Hood said staff looked at all three houses to determine possible use. Another house is located off the top of the bluff where it drops into Gans Creek watershed. That house is a multiple story house and is likely in the best condition. But it is almost impossible to make it accessible. It has multiple levels with just one or two rooms per level. It's a unique design, Hood said. Staff has talked about the possibility of an on-site staff person overseeing the park and using it in that way. The final decision has not been made. The third house is located in the corner on the far east edge. It is an earth contact house built in that era and never completely finished. It has moisture problems and it may have potential but would take a lot of work.

Hood added that staff had original thoughts about using a house for a nature center. One reason that staff stopped considering it, is the conservation education center that the Department of Conservation is planning on the edge of the property. Hood said they are planning two major classrooms and an

area for youth groups and classes. It is meant to be an area for environmental educational programs. It's not a nature center. But Hood said it would be difficult not to duplicate it. At this point, staff is not calling for any of the houses to be used as a nature center.

Griggs added that the MDC facility would be fully accessible with ample parking, and good access off of Gans Road.

Kloepfel asked for more comments. He closed the public hearing and opened the floor for Commission discussion.

Devine asked about extending the preserved area as had been discussed, a little farther north?

Hood said it was an open pasture with a little more rolling topography. It's planned for the trail system to link somewhere in that particular area.

Donaldson asked to formally propose that the shaded buffer area be extended north?

Hood said yes, staff could "square it" off. He asked Griggs if there concerns?

Griggs said no the line just mainly follows the treeline and there is some fencing. It seemed like the logical line at the time. If left alone, it would probably grow back.

Donaldson said she would like it included in the buffer and have it defined as that.

Staff agreed.

Donaldson asked if lighting needed to be specified?

Hood said the plan sets aside athletic fields, but doesn't say whether they will be lit or not. It depends on the type of fields built. If it's soccer or football, it's unlikely that they would ever be lit. If it does turn out there is a need for baseball or softball fields, they would be lit. He said staff would and is already using the most current state-of-the-art lighting technology. At Atkins, the lighting does not spill at all. He said staff is committed to that type of technology and it will only get better. The specific lighting and poles would come in the detailed design phase. The Master plan is meant to be a guide to identify the type of facilities that would be in the general areas of the park as appropriate.

Hood said it really is not a detailed design. He said there could be written statements that development of this park should implement the most recent technologies for controlling light spill.

Each type of facility will have different lighting demands as well. He said the goal statement mentions the state-of-the-art best management practices to protect the environment.

Donaldson said that statement covered her questions.

Pauls mentioned that he was at a lot of the initial meetings too. He said it seemed to be more leaning toward the equestrians then, about 70-30. He said it seemed that was the reason equestrian use was taken so seriously early in the process because of the response. He said if the meetings went to 50-50, he understood the progression. But now it seems like 90-10. He said he was a soil scientist so he understood the Karst protection concerns. He asked what happened in the progression of the interest? He wants to know what is representative of the community?

Hood agreed that there was a high turnout from the equestrian community; they organized and attended in large numbers and expressed their point of view clearly. He said the 50-50 that was alluded to, was total number of comments from web surveys, meeting attendees, etc. He said they were asked about how supportive they were and asked to rank them on the surveys. He said from a staff standpoint, it was about equal. Staff felt it could not be mixed use, it had to be one way or the other. The more staff researched the environment and Karst topography, it was decided that protection was the best recommendation.

Pauls asked about the analysis of soil maps and asked staff to consider USDA soils map of the area which would identify in detail of the area where the Karst area was and how much it would include. He would like staff to follow up on that.

Kloepfel said he agreed with leaving the equestrian part of it out but acknowledged there was a lot of interest. He said maybe it was something that could be pursued at another location. He agreed that this was not the right location for it. He said it seemed like a designated horse area would be better

served on its own, rather than in an area like this. He asked Hood if there were any other areas in the parks system that may work for a horse area?

Hood said that realistically the equestrian area needs to be a large area. Staff heard several options from the equestrians, depending on their interests. He said there was an interest in horse trails, which would mean a fairly lengthy system. There was also interest in an arena-type setting for practice and training show horses. There are some city parks in the state with these type of facilities. There was also interest in cross-country type area, which is what was first recommended at Gans. This is a large field with jumps placed randomly. Staff visited Queeny Park in St. Louis which has such a facility. Hood said since such a large area would be required, he is not sure there is that type of space in the current park system. Most of Columbia's parks are much smaller. The City does own some other land but it is not under the control of the park department.

Devine mentioned the discussions with Boone County and their parcels of land?

Hood agreed and said he did not know how big those parcels of land are.

Pauls said that may be a good partnership.

Donaldson said she had attended a meeting and knew of the amount of interest from the equestrians. She thought it would be useful to see what the needs are for equestrian use. It seemed that many of them were county residents so getting the county involved may be appropriate. She commended staff for all the work they did in researching equestrian areas and making sure of their recommendation. Pauls mentioned the connection of the trail to the state park. He said he would like to not see any concrete in that particular area.

Kloeppel asked Commissioners if they would like to take action tonight or come back at a future meeting. He said he thought they should go ahead and make the recommendation.

Kespohl said with a change to the buffer area, he would be ready to recommend approval.

Donaldson moved to recommend approval of the plan as proposed with the extension of the buffer area to include additional acreage located adjacent to the northeast corner of the Gans Creek Wild Area of Rock Bridge State Park. Pauls seconded the motion.

All in favor, motion passed 7-0.

Kloeppel reminded the public that the Commission's recommendation was not final. He encouraged them to attend the City Council public hearing (date to be determined) if they would like to express concern or support for the proposed master plan.

Council Questionnaire

Kloeppel asked the Commission for their input on the Council questionnaire. The first question asked if the description provided accurately identifies what the board does.

Donaldson said since she is relatively new to the commission, she questioned if there were other things that she or other commissioners should be doing, such as assisting with programming?

Kloeppel said essentially he viewed the Commission as supporting the staff in what they do on a daily basis.

Blevins said it seemed like most answers the Commission provided on last year's questionnaire would be sufficient.

Kespohl said he would like the Commission to have a better understanding over cost vs. revenue, fees and income. He'd like to know more if we're meeting cost recovery goals.

Pauls mentioned that future projects could include maintenance of current facilities and parks and addressing the park ranger position, trying to emphasize it's a priority to add another ranger.

Blevins mentioned it would be nice if Ranger Arens could come in from time to time to speak to the Commission.

Griggs said that would be possible and it may be good to have other staff members visit the Commission also. Commissioners agreed.

From: "Heise, David" <dheise@ccis.edu>
To: Mitch Skov <MMS@GoColumbiaMO.com>
CC: "ribacon@gocolumbiamo.com" <ribacon@gocolumbiamo.com>
Date: 3/31/2010 4:03 PM
Subject: RE: B & P Commission report to P & Z re: SE Regional Park

In addition to the minutes and comments from the P/Z liaison, I would communicate the following:

The Bicycle/Pedestrian Commission reviewed the SE Regional Park Master Plan at our regularly scheduled March meeting. Following a presentation by Mike Griggs (Parks Department), the Commission discussed the plan, and opinion of the plan was overwhelmingly positive. Of primary concern to our commission were the trails in the park, including trail connections to the park. The Commission was pleased to see well designed paths within the park (including one already constructed), as well as plans to connect to the citywide trail and non-motorized network in the future. The Bicycle/Pedestrian Commission is in favor of the plan and recommends that it move forward.

You may edit with liberty as needed.

Thanks,
David

3. Public Awareness. This is the area of biggest opportunity. They hope they can help. They would be willing to get the word out by sharing with Neighborhood groups, Press releases, City government channel, City Source Newsletter. This could be a Service learning student project. It would need coordination, but it could be a good project for a student to take on to get the word out.

Hibbs asked if public awareness would be enough. Would it be better to have some enforcement that would 'scare' people into action? How do you balance the enforcement in a way that people will start complying without wasting resources? Walthall feels that even minimal enforcement would help to spread the word and generally the situation could improve. Chief Burton sees the positives of the public safety and lifestyle improvements. (Per conversation with Britt). Heise asked about downtown enforcement and who is responsible. Technically Protective Inspection is responsible. Schenker feels that complaint driven enforcement would be the most valuable use of resources. Schenker further suggested talking to larger groups, Fraternities / Sororities about getting their involvement. He also suggested an idea of expanding enforcement outside of downtown as a way to clearly define an enforcement area. Skov reminded the commission that the City Council has asked for recommendations from both the Bicycle & Pedestrian Commission as well as the Disabilities Commission. Hibbs felt that is more than about the ordinance, it's about safety and safe routes walking to schools. Schmidt asked about how volunteers could be encouraged. The question was asked to Britt, what type of directive would she like to receive from the commission? Response: More directive from the top down. Where would money for enforcement come from? Would there need to be a policy or funding change for enforcement? OR should the commission request funds to hire staff for enforcement? Heise stated that the next step should be to meet with the Disabilities Commission to keep the ball rolling. Ahrens felt that the Commission agrees with everything Britt has put together. Heise asked Mike Griggs IF the parks department has the resources for clearing priority routes as has been discussed in the past? Griggs responded that he would have to investigate. Griggs also review the current standards for snow removal. If there is ½" snow or more, all sidewalks at parks and near schools are cleared within 24 hours. In a larger snow event, they are the back-up for public works. (worst-case scenario). He felt that the Priority routes could be an option, but would need to investigate further.

B. Presentation / Review of SE Regional Park Master Plan – Mike Griggs

Mike Griggs, Parke Services Manager, presented Master Plan and information on the SE Regional Park. The Commission had a few general comments relating to general planning and felt that the general planning was well thought out. Schmidt felt trail connectivity is well planned on site. Ahrens mentioned that a future connection to northeast (across Highway 63) could be helpful.

C. SRTS Non-Infrastructure Funding discussion.

EXCERPTS
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
APRIL 8, 2010

3) PUBLIC HEARINGS

10-30 A request by the City of Columbia (Parks and Recreation Department, agent) seeking approval of the final concept plan for the Southeast Regional Park Plan. The Park is comprised of property formally known as the Philips Farm and Crane Tract. The properties are located north and south of Gans Road, respectively, between Discovery Parkway and Bristol Lake Parkway. The sites combined contain approximately 460 acres.

MR. BARROW: May we have a staff report, please?

Staff report was given by Mr. Pat Zenner of the Planning and Development Department. Staff recommends approval of the submitted master plan.

MR. BARROW: Thank you, Mr. Zenner. Are there any questions? Yes, Mr. Rice?

MR. RICE: I wonder if you or Mr. Griggs might want to talk about the Parks and Rec Commission's proposed revision about the increased buffer area, probably about ten acres. We saw a slide on that, I believe, and I don't see that as part of what's in front of us today. Is this a recommendation that you're not recommending as staff or as Parks Department?

MR. ZENNER: Oversight on Planning staff's part. We were looking at the recommendation of Parks and Rec as standing alone, and going to Council is an independent recommendation, Planning Commission being a body to either accept that recommendation to Parks and Rec, but we didn't include it. My error. We would and we would support the addition of the ten acres.

MR. RICE: In your recommendation -- in the staff recommendation?

MR. ZENNER: In our recommendation, we would support --

MR. RICE: Okay. Okay.

MR. ZENNER: -- Parks and Recreation's recommendation, also.

MR. RICE: Okay. So, it's just an omission?

MR. ZENNER: Uh-huh.

MR. RICE: Okay. Thank you.

MR. BARROW: Thank you. Any other questions of staff? I'm going to open the public hearing. Before I do, I'm going to state what our rules are. Basically, essentially, we ask the people who support the proposal to come forward. The first person gets six minutes to speak and subsequent speakers get three minutes. Then we ask the opponents to come forward, and the first speaker gets six minutes and the subsequent speakers get three minutes. Please come up here and speak into the microphone; that's how we record our minutes. State your name and address for the record. Anyone wishing to speak in support of this, please come forward.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

MR. MIDKIFF: My name is Ken Midkiff; I reside at 1005 Belleview Court, Columbia 65203, and I am the conservation chair for the Osage Group of the Sierra Club -- the local Sierra Club -- and I'm speaking on behalf of that group, which has approximately 1,000 members, total. We applaud the members of the Planning and Zoning Committee for what they have done. Our concern was about the equestrian area, and we're very happy to see that removed. Our concern was that was going to be an entryway into the Gans Creek Wild Area. The other thing is -- and this is not my idea, but we would hope, and I'm sure that this would be the case, that the Parks staff would coordinate efforts with the Rock Bridge State Park people in terms of the Gans Creek Wild Area. For instance, there's a bicycle trail proposed to go there, and the Gans Creek Wild Area doesn't allow bicycles. So, that would be one thing, and we can totally support the buffer area -- the increased size of the buffer area. Thank you. And I yield the remainder of my time to whoever wants to speak next.

MR. BARROW: Thank you, Mr. Midkiff, but see if there are any questions? No? Thank you.

MS. WEAVER: My name is Jan Weaver, I live at 412-1/2 West Walnut in Columbia, and I'm here speaking on behalf of Friends of Rock Bridge Memorial State Park. We are very pleased with the plan as it's going forward; in particular, the buffer area for the creek. Of course, that's going to help preserve the water quality within the park and, right now, the water quality is very high. And then removing the equestrian area right next to the park, we were concerned that horseback riding might increase in the park. We already have horseback riding in that part of the park, but we've got it at a level that can be, more or less, sustained, so we are very happy with the plan as it moves forward the way it's been drafted by the Parks Department. I'd like to urge them to use the name Rock Bridge Memorial State Park and I'd just like to recognize Dottie Sterker Peters. Her husband, Lou Sterker, was instrumental in establishing the park, so I just want to say that Friends of Rock Bridge is really happy with the way it's moving forward. If there are any questions, I can take them.

MR BARROW: Thank you. Are there any questions? Thank you.

MS. WEAVER: Thank you.

MR. BARROW: Anyone else wishing to speak in support of this, please come forward.

MS. FLADER: Thank you. I'm Susan Flader, 917 Edgewood Avenue. I'm president of the Missouri Parks Association, which is a statewide organization of about 3,000 members dedicated to state parks and historic sites, so our concern also has to do with the proximity of the Gans Creek area to Rock Bridge. And we, also, are very pleased with the plan as it is now proposed, including the ten-acre addition to the buffer area. We think it's very important to be buffering Gans Creek, a state outstanding resource water, and we also are very pleased that the horse riding, which would have increased the amount of pressure on the Gans Creek area, is no longer being proposed. Thank you very much.

MR. BARROW: Thank you. Are there any questions? Thank you. Anyone else?

MS. DOKKEN: My name is Dee Dokken; I live at 804 Again. And I'm also speaking -- I approve of

what the Parks Department and the Parks and Rec Commission have come up with. And I propose that buffer area because I think it was left off just because it happens to be a fescue pasture instead of forest, and it was a pasture whose corner had gotten too close to the creek to begin with. So, if it can be just allowed to grow up into woods, that would be good. And another person at Parks and Rec Commission hearing mentioned that right across from that buffer where Rock Bridge Gans Creek Wild Area comes up, there's a very special place right there up in that corner, and this would help buffer that, also. Thanks.

MR. BARROW: Are there any questions? Thank you. Anyone else wishing to speak in support of this, please come forward. Is there anyone who wishes to speak in opposition to it? Is there anyone who wants to speak at all? Seeing no one, I'll close the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

MR. BARROW: Discussion, Commissioners? Mr. Brodsky?

MR. BRODSKY: I just had two quick questions of our Parks and Recreation representative that's here. The bike lane that Mr. Midkiff mentioned or the bike path, where is that and what's the status of that, or can you just comment on that in general?

MR. GRIGGS: Well, our trails that were shown in that plan are multiuse trails, meaning that they could have bicycles on them. And when we were working with the superintendent of the Rock Bridge State Park, we were very aware of the fact that they don't allow bikes in the Gans area. So, we were concerned about how do we do that through that area. You know, how do you invite bikes down our trail, but then, all of a sudden, say stop, don't go this far. And so, we're working on how we can restrict it, especially down in that buffer area that borders along the Gans side. You know, we think that bikes will go down that way even just by human nature. Even if we don't allow it, they're going to go try to get down there, but we think we can work with the -- where you do the trail designs where you can't hardly take a bike through it, you know, with the switchback gates and things like that that would help prevent and keep the purpose of the Gans Creek Wild Area in store.

MR. BRODSKY: And then I just had one other question, too. The additional buffer area, the ten acres that's been added that is currently a field, will that be allowed to be developed back into wooded area or will that be mowed? Will it be natural grassland areas like we have in the Gans Wild Area currently?

MR. GRIGGS: Well, certainly, we -- you know, the original plan showed a lot more development going down by past that pond into that area. Since then, we at staff had backed it up and just kind of left it sticking out there as a fescue field. And, now, with the thought that we're not developing around that pond anymore, that we can look at that area. We certainly anticipate a lot of that to grow up in forest and trees, you know. We'd like to make sure it's not -- you know, that it is native trees and doesn't become a honeysuckle patch or something like that, but -- so, we will manage it in some aspect, but I think she's right; we're likely to let it just grow up.

MR. BRODSKY: Okay. Great. Thank you.

MR. BARROW: Further discussion, questions? Ms. Anthony?

MS. ANTHONY: I'd just like to say this is the second time we've seen this plan. We saw it first in February of '09. We were excited then; I'm excited to see it again. I want to commend the Parks and Rec Department for conducting three years of a very public vetting of this plan. I think there is a lot of input -- public input, and I think the result is excellent and I'm going to be supporting this.

MR. BARROW: Thank you. Further discussion? Mr. Brodsky?

MR. BRODSKY: Through my comments, I would echo everything that Ms. Anthony just mentioned. I, for one, am glad that the horses -- the equine area has been removed. I was a little concerned about the environmental implications there. The -- I mentioned this during our work session, but I'll mention it now just to put it in the public forum. And I think that Parks and Rec is thinking this way anyway, but the indoor ice rink and the multipurpose indoor sports arena, I had expressed some concern about making that kind of investment that is on the edge of our community and not centrally located where we currently do have land available, particularly next to the ARC. Through our discussion, it seems that Parks and Rec is thinking along those lines, as well, and that those facilities would be much further down the line, possibly 20 or 30 years down the line, so I was happy to hear that. One last thing -- again, we talked about this during our work session, but I'll mention it here in the public setting -- is using that Philips Lake as a storm-water feature for the intense development that will be happening to the east. I was glad to hear Parks and Rec's response that that is on their radar and that they have talked about using some predetention areas so we don't have storm water from parking lots going straight into that lake. So, I was very pleased to hear that they were thinking along those lines, as well, and I plan to support this.

MR. BARROW: Thank you. Yes, Mr. Rice?

MR. RICE: I might add to what Mr. Brodsky said. I thought I heard that the -- there are berms already in place there; is that correct? Okay. So, we've already got some of that improvement going on, which I commend. That's all.

MR. BARROW: Yes.

MS. PETERS: I have a question of staff. Is there consideration being given other places to include horses, more activities for horse owners in the park systems?

MR. GRIGGS: Yes. In fact, that was the exact position of the Parks and Rec Commission was for us to continue to evaluate other sites, either Parks and Rec owned or City owned. Are there any other tracts owned by, say, Public Works or Water and Light or any other City agencies that are currently being land-banked for future use that may be open to that. And so, we are evaluating that and taking that into consideration on future acquisition, as well as current sites.

MS. PETERS: We're currently working on the East Area Plan, and I'm wondering if your department might work with us a bit on that and see if maybe there is some area that horses could be incorporated?

MR. GRIGGS: Certainly would be glad to.

MR. BARROW: Thank you. Further discussion? Well, I'll jump in here. We could talk about this all night and I'm hoping that, at some point, we'll realize we have a consensus and someone will make a motion and we can move this forward. But I want to echo the comments that I've heard from other commissioners tonight. I really want to give praises and thanks to the Parks staff and the Parks Commission for the extremely transparent and inclusive process that you took into account. I think that the plan is much better because of that, and I appreciate the concern for horseback riders, but I also appreciate that this is not a very good place for that activity based on its -- the dangers to the horses and the riders due to karst topography perhaps, and also the damage that could happen on that creek. I've paddled this creek a few times. It is an outstanding water resource. The State has designated it as such, and I've experienced it as such. And when I paddled it, it was the Crane property, and we had to wear camouflage and look like ducks because the landowners didn't appreciate paddlers. But there were cows on that property, and I experienced cows using the creek as a toilet. And so, I'm just really, really happy to see that that use of the creek is no longer going to be happening in this reach of it, and I'm also really, really happy that you've extended the riparian buffer along here. And I'm a big proponent of natural regeneration. If you don't mow that fescue, eventually, trees will grow -- pretty quickly, really, although fescue tends to impede trees from growing, so if it was another type of grass, it might grow even better. And I also wanted to just point out that, you know, this map shows that this -- designates this as a type-I waterway and with a very narrow required buffer. And so, I'm really happy to see the City extending it and also using some of the natural features and drainages and extending it up that way. And I just want to say for the record that to call this type-I waterway is really a crazy thing to call it because to a hydrologist, type I, it means a first-order stream, then you have a second-order stream and a third-order stream. And I really encourage the City -- I just want to say this for the record -- when it's reviewing its buffer ordinance, to change the name of that because it's just -- you're asking for people to get confused by that, especially people who are scientifically trained in stream hydrology, you're asking them to misinterpret just by what you were calling that. So, I'd say maybe we should call it a type-A stream or a type-B stream or -- anyway, I just wanted to say that for the record. And I've spewed on enough about this. This is a fabulous park and a fabulous park plan and it's really farsighted, and I'm going to support it. Is there anyone who wants to make a motion? Yes?

MS. PETERS: I move that we approve 10-30, a request by the City Parks and Rec Department seeking approval of a final concept plan for Southeast Regional Park Plan, formally known as Gans Philips Crane -- or Philips Farm and Crane Tract.

MR. BARROW: Ms. Anthony?

MS. ANTHONY: Would that be including the proposed revision increasing the buffer area by about ten acres?

MS. PETERS: Yes, it would.

MR. BARROW: That's your motion. Is there a second? Ms. Anthony?

MS. ANTHONY: Second.

MR. BARROW: Do you want to second it? I'm sorry. I saw her first.

MR. BRODSKY: No, that's fine. I did have a quick question of staff before we vote.

MR. BARROW: Please.

MR. BRODSKY: Just a matter of curiosity. There is a fairly large parcel -- I can't see exactly how large it is -- but just south of the land that we're leasing to the NDC, and it's owned by one owner, Robert and Suzanne Feldwisch? I'm probably butchering that. But has there been any discussion with them about acquiring that piece of property down the road?

MR. GRIGGS: Not at this time.

MR. BRODSKY: No?

MR. GRIGGS: Generally, a lot of our acquisition comes from sellers contacting us, saying, hey, we have this. We'd like to do this. And in rare cases, you know, when we're doing trails and some neighborhood parks, we actually work with developers ahead of time, but we have not. But, you know, when we see tracts of land that are kind of isolated by a stream or a natural feature like that, then it kind of opens up that discussion a lot easier for us to do that. But at this time, we are more concentrated on getting this plan ready to go and kind of see how the road alignments are and, you know, all those future plans, so --

MR. BRODSKY: Yeah. I was just curious. Thank you.

MR. GRIGGS: Sure.

MR. BARROW: Question? Is there any discussion on the motion? Are you ready?

MR. RICE: Yeah.

MR. BARROW: May we have a roll call, please?

MR. RICE: Okay. A motion has been made and seconded to recommend approval of the Parks and -- I'm sorry. Let me start over. A motion has been made and seconded to recommend approval of the final concept plan for the Southeast Regional Park, along with the ten-acre buffer increase that's proposed by Parks and Rec Commission and recommended, also, by staff.

MR. BARROW: Very well.

Roll Call Vote (Voting "yes" is to recommend approval.) Voting Yes: Ms. Anthony, Mr. Barrow, Mr. Brodsky, Ms. Peters, Dr. Puri, Mr. Reichlin, Mr. Rice, Mr. Vander Tuig. Motion carries 8-0.