

Hallett Park Community Meeting
1-24-2019 Start Time: 6:00 PM
Town Hall Auditorium

Florida Institute of Government Facilitators: Raphael Montalvo-University of Central Florida, Angela Crist-University of South Florida

Board and Commission Members: Karla Rettstatt, Deputy Mayor; Tom Kurey, Commissioner; Mike Wilkinson, Commissioner; Dan Hartshorne, Finance Board; Nancy Hartshorne, Park & Tree Board; John Hail, Infrastructure Board; Tom Olson, Finance Board;

Staff: JP Murphy, Stefan Massol, Ricky Allison, Keith Bodeker, Mike Shumaker, Cathy DeKarz, Christine Torok

Press: Tom Germond (Belleair Bee)

Raphael Montalvo and Angela Crist introduced themselves; Mr. Montalvo provided brief background of role of Institute of Government; will facilitate discussion; stated objectives; discussed agenda.

JP Murphy-Town Manager-Introduced town staff present; will not get into erosion and stabilization issues in depth as there are no subject area experts present to discuss; briefly discussed history of park; property was donated by Mr. Hallett in 1977; discussed previous drainage and roadway projects completed in area; purpose of meeting is to gather resident input as to what the public wants to see; safety is a concern on slope; Waterfall West area is safest area to access but is not ADA compliant; prior engineering study recommended plantings to assist with erosion; maintenance concerns; areas of significant erosion will require an engineering solution; SWFWMD engineers have recently walked the bluff, will assist in conducting study to see potential solutions.

Ms. Crist stated she will facilitate group discussion and keep everyone on task; three key issues to discuss are: park character, design, and access; provided guidelines for discussion.

Mr. Montalvo directed residents to break into groups to discuss park character; participant comments and suggestions were presented to group as a whole:

Opinions on character: keep present park design emphasizing wildness (retaining nature), protect park from further erosion, park is food for the soul, discouragement from going to base of bluff, panoramic view is what makes it special, keep greenspace (no man-made structures), no doggie park (keep on leashes), attention to infrastructure, for Belleair residents, property retained by Town, potential to provide safe access areas, area is common meeting area for residents; kids want to keep park as is.

Cautionary comments in response: costs of maintenance and preserving aesthetics; too much access causing visual clutter.

Residents next broke into groups to discuss design; the following comments were presented:

Opinions on design: keep clean and simple (sod, irrigation, a few benches, maintain trees); 30ft clearance along view lines from streets; the finger (or toe) might be a place to put anything new; more in terms of uses would need more parking-which is not wanted; safe access to water without damaging pipe in area; need for trash cans other than pet waste areas; potential for trail along edge; no parking or increased lighting in area; maintaining open design; upgrade lawn to a nicer grass, move leveled; don't entice people to the edge.

Mr. Murphy suggested clarification on path in next section; what materials would they like to see; keep ADA compliance in mind.

Residents broke into discussion groups regarding access; the following comments were presented:

Opinions on access: leave as is, not creating a path and triggering ADA concerns; maintain access that is currently there; half of north toe (Waterfall West) is owned by Country Club; should access be provided or not; only place to provide safe water access is at north end; safety concerns as erosion increases; how to police safety.

Mr. Murphy requested clarification on access; residents do not want additional access points; potential for natural barriers to prevent access; one opposing viewpoint would like to see a ladder.

Ms. Crist requested residents to fill out a worksheet providing further input; Mr. Montalvo provided brief instructions for completion; worksheets collected for analysis.

Mr. Murphy thanked residents for attending; discussed next steps; cost estimates not yet available, structural elements of Bayview are in capital plan; SWFWMD engineering study to be done; some items are able to be done soon; feedback will be utilized in leadership forum; project plan to be generated; Palmetto construction project out to bid.

Adjourned at 7:42 PM