MEETING NOTES

Rochester Parks & Recreation Master Plan – Advisory Committee Meeting #5
March 24, 2016
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Rochester Recreation Center at 21 Elton Hills Dr NW

Attendees:
Park Board Members Vern Yetzer, Larry Mort; Advisory Committee Members Jeff Ellerbusch, Pam Meyer, Randy Thomas, Ed Hruska, Mitch Moore, JoAnne Judge-Dietz, Amy Eich, and Dee Sabol; Rita Trapp and Jess Vetrano from HKGi; Andy Masterpole from SEH; Mike Nigbur and Paul Widman from City of Rochester.

1. **Meeting Introductions & Welcome**
The meeting was kicked off by Rita Trapp of HKGi. The purpose and agenda of the night's meeting were reviewed.

2. **Approval of Advisory Committee #4 Notes & Recommendations**
Advisory Committee members were asked if there were any changes to the notes or Recommendations from the previous Advisory Committee meeting. None were noted.

3. **Review Recommendations**
Attendees provided feedback and edits to the working set of Recommendations for public health, public art, programming, and management and operations.

Feedback on the Draft Recommendations included:
   a. Public Health
      - Some of the goals come off more like solutions – is this the best way to approach each principle?
      - Free day of indoor activities – would outdoor activities be a better solution? i.e. free cross country ski rental, fat wheel bikes available for trails, etc.
      - Better explanation of "trail programming"
      - Include "encourage safe active living options" – people may not feel safe using trails or amenities later in the day/night
      - Remind encouragement of evidence-based activities to promote active living
      - Example: provide exercise areas for adults around playgrounds to encourage parents to be active while kids are playing – previous implementation has proven effective
      - Work on verbiage and specifics of partnerships listed under 1.2.
      - Add mention of culture to goal 2
      - Strategies under Goal 2 should be generalized – the current wording limits the potential groups/activities that could be encompassed
      - Explore opportunities for Park Board and School Board to work together on progressing health benefits, i.e. sharing classrooms, marketing to kids, etc.
   b. Public Art

- "Health" should be added to the list of themes under Goal 1
- Should the types of art/themes be specified or should it occur naturally? Staff answered with the plan should be more overarching as detailed criteria can be found in the Public Art Master Plan
- Explore ways to ensure 2.1.2. can be achieved. Student groups could be a possibility through service projects.
- Culture should be represented through art and is missing from this recommendation. "Seek opportunities to express all cultures through Rochester's public art" was suggested as an addition to the section

c. Programming
- Clarify wording of 1.1.2.
- 1.1.5 is too specific and could discourage private groups/individuals/businesses
- 1.2.2. Are there even bulletin boards? Publicize more
- Explain reasoning behind pricing model of 2.2.1. and potentially correlate with 2.2.6.
- Concept of sliding fee – problem with the model is that it could support the privileged
- Clarify wording of 2.2.2. to address where funding comes from
- 2.2.5 should tennis be used as an example?
- Don't let traditional forms of marketing get lost by suggesting social media in Goal 3.
- Include more verbiage about exploring additional opportunities, i.e. sharing space with similar programming to split costs and expand message base
- Having more events in parks will automatically cause attention to grow
- 3.1.3. Could be reworded and an example could be provided for clarification
- 3.3.2 – "front page" – does it mean web page? Reword.

d. Management + Operations
- 1.2.3. – added? Exploring other appropriate places in the future?
- 1.1. does not address the desire to improve efficiencies – change wording.
- 2.2.3. could prioritize trails that are part of the commuting system
- Goal 2 should be expanded to include donor opportunities to update/donate facilities
- "operate" in Goal 3 is strange wording – potentially change to "conduct"
- Goal 4 is missing the concept of volunteer coordination
  - Create a 5th goal "explore options to maximize the utilization of volunteers to support park operations and programming"
- Clarify whether Goal 4 is providing access to or delivering
- Is it the parks goal to fill gaps themselves, seek vendors to do so, or not provide gaps?
- Change "exciting" to engaging or something similar

e. Overall
- Recommendations are very thorough
- Market trail lengths to encourage walk timing/desired walk lengths
- Oversight of the strategic plan
  - Communication to public
  - Adherence to plan?
  - Tracking what the board achieves/didn't achieve
  - Specifying with RASC to avoid confusion

4. Parks and Recreation Image/Quality

To address issues brought up in online community surveys regarding the public's perception of quality in the parks and recreation system, the consultants asked the working group how this issue could be addressed.

- Seems like this is included in metrics/measurements
- Could there be an amenities/condition of amenities section?
- We want the Rochester system to be the best/leading system in MN OR we're going to provide a system that is comparable to other cities of similar size?
- Is there a standard that we want to try to reach?
- Push to create a new identity for Rochester (even more so than already) America's city for health
  - Is there a way to correlate the system with this? Support this mentality/image?
- Examples of public-private partnerships
  - Plaque that advertises sponsors?
- Show numbers of funding for similar cities/how does Rochester compare? Help people to see the vision of what we could do and what it would take
- Arts and welcoming trails start to hint at it – but it should be more formalized
- Address new funding streams to avoid having to conform to the "cookie-cutter" fundamental amenities

5. **Potential Areas of Need**
- Overlay layers of amenities with potential areas of needs?
  - Basketball/soccer/open play fields as most important – agree
- School amenities – not relevant to discussion?
  - Parks and rec doesn't have control – schools aren't acting public
  - Playgrounds are one that can be layered – different color from city playgrounds – see if addresses needs
  - Don't want to lose sight of school's assets – utilize ballfields/open fields that aren't permitted?
    - Rosemount/apple valley/Eagan – have a good method that could be utilized
- Have private parks been offered to the city for purchase

6. **Trails Review**
The consultants displayed maps of existing trail data and potential trail gaps to ensure accuracy.
- Connection to Chester Woods park to the east
- How do Rochester's trails compare to other communities – market better
- Connection between loops – lack of marketing? Loss of trail feeling makes the connection seem lost
- All loops should be included regardless of feel
  - Make distinction between nature experience vs. health
  - Ranked based on difficulty – i.e. topography

7. **Community Engagement**
- Facilities – which group does that encompass? Non-traditional sports as well?
  - Competitive sports should be heard separate from non-traditional
- Effort to make it to "red areas" and host open houses
  - Having to come to a meeting could favor those with more access
  - Hosting at a boys and girl club would be right in the middle of the higher needs areas
  - Schools? Invite young people? Same sessions? Ensure they know they are welcome and their input is necessary
    - "youth commission" - share with them to get input and ask them to provide a group to speak to
- Issue with regular old parks – not included in list (neighborhood parks)

- o Breakout session would be good
- o Subset of facilities category?
  - ▪ Already huge
- Subdividing too much could cause diverging opinions that don't have the option to bounce off each other
  - o "recreational conflict" – different types of use/users
- Can we use the online survey to capture some of the desire for breakout groups?
  - o Contact groups – meet on their own
- Feels like the right groups based on sections of recommendations

8. **Next Steps**
   a. Review of revised recommendations
   b. May 19th meeting will focus on reviewing community input