

September 17, 2007

MEETING MINUTES

Subject: Fort Smallwood & Weinberg Park Master Plan

Date of Meeting: September 12, 2007 / Meeting #6

Location: Downs Memorial Park Visitors Center

Attendees: **Committee Members:**

Jerry Ackerman	Master Plan Committee Member
Jay Albright	Master Plan Committee Member
Eleanor Bentz	Master Plan Committee Member
Bill Burton	Master Plan Committee Member
Denise Caldwell	Master Plan Committee Member
Bill Cyford	Master Plan Committee Member
Brenda Hodgson	Master Plan Committee Member
Mike Jacobs	Master Plan Committee Member
Terry Moritz	Master Plan Committee Member
Sue Ricciardi	Master Plan Committee Member
Jack Keene	Chief Planning & Construction
Deb Yeater	Superintendent, Ft. Smallwood/Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Parks, Dept. of Recreation & Parks
John Marshall	Chief Park Operations

Consultants:

John Rohde	Human & Rohde Inc.
Devin Leary	Human & Rohde, Inc.
Sally Malena	Human & Rohde, Inc.

This was the sixth meeting of the Fort Smallwood & Weinberg Park Master Plan Committee. Jack Keene opened the meeting and announced that he would be leaving the County September 30th and John Marshall will take over as the master plan facilitator. John then introduced Bolling Smith from the Coastal Defense Study Group who gave a presentation on the history of Fort Smallwood up to 1927 when the City of Baltimore purchased the property. Mr. Smith's presentation included information on both the Hartshorne and Sykes batteries, the barracks and other buildings and facilities that were constructed to support the Fort and its activities as well as a time line and costs of the various elements. He thought it unique that the barracks is still in existence given its wood construction.

After Mr. Smith's presentation Denise Caldwell of Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks and member of the Master Plan Committee gave a short synopsis of Fort Smallwood history during the years the City operated the site as a park.

Sally Malena from Human & Rohde Inc. then presented three schemes for boat ramps that the committee had requested at the previous meeting. The potential sites studied include at the ends of Dauses and Honolulu Lanes and in Fort Smallwood. Following is a brief summary of the plans including the pros and cons of each:

1. Dauses Lane:

- A. Widening out the existing Dauses Lane to 24 - 30'.
- B. Boat ramp with 4 lanes
- C. Pull- through parking for 72 vehicles with trailers 10' x 40'.
- D. 22 parking spaces for vehicles 9' x'18' and 4 accessible spaces.
- E. Restroom facility
- F. Individual picnic tables and grills.
- G. Bio-retention areas.

Pros:

- 1. Less than 2 acres of edge habitat would be impacted. (No interior habitat would be effected.)
- 2. Allows picnic area for the boaters along the waters edge.
- 3. Has the parking area a minimum of 300' from the closest residence.
- 4. This location is separate from other possible uses in the park.
- 5. Length of roadway to be constructed is considerably less than Honolulu Lane.
- 6. No significant environmental features that would be impacted.
- 7. Additional parking could be accommodated.

Cons:

- 1. Committee feels Fairview Beach Road is too narrow to accommodate additional traffic.
- 2. Securing this sight seen as a problem. The County already has a gatekeeper at Fort Smallwood.
- 3. Concerned that it would be a negative impact to the environment...removing trees, providing parking.

2. Honolulu Lane:

- A. Widening out existing Honolulu Lane to 24 - 30'.
- B. Boat ramp with 4 lanes
- C. Pull- through parking for 66 vehicles with trailers 10' x 40'.
- D. 6 parking spaces for vehicles 9' x'18' and 3 accessible spaces.
- E. Restroom facility.
- F. Individual picnic tables and grills.
- G. Bio-retention areas.

Pros:

- 1. Allows picnic area for the boaters along the waters edge.
- 2. Away from any neighbors
- 3. Has the parking area a minimum of 300' from the closest residence.
- 4. This location is separate from other possible uses in the park.

5. Length of roadway to be constructed is considerably less than Honolulu Lane.
6. No significant environmental features that would be impacted.

Cons:

1. Less than 2 acres of edge habitat would be removed, however it would lessen the interior habitat area. (Interior habitat is 300' from roads, parking etc.)
2. The usable land area (without disturbing slopes, trees wetlands etc.) is narrow and limits the number of parking spaces that could be provided.
3. Yates Pond to the west of the site is a wonderful environmental asset. It is most easily accessed from Honolulu Lane and would be negatively impacted by a boat ramp at this location.
4. The river is approximately 1700 feet from Fairview Beach Road. A long entrance drive to construct.
5. Committee feels Fairview Beach Road is too narrow to accommodate additional traffic.
6. Securing this sight seen as a problem. The County already has a gatekeeper at Fort Smallwood.

3. Fort Smallwood:

- A. Boat ramp with 4 lanes
- B. Partial pull- through parking for 48 vehicles with trailers 10' x 40'.
- C. 15 parking spaces for vehicles 9' x'18' and 4 accessible spaces.
- D. Restroom facility.
- E. Access from loop park road.
- G. Bio-retention areas.

Pros:

1. Security and gatekeeper are existing.
2. Fort Smallwood Road is wider than Fairview Beach Road.
3. Minimum amount of trees would be destroyed to provide parking.
4. Closer to the Bay.
5. Other uses for non-boaters (could also be a negative)

Cons:

1. Limited space; will have an impact on all the other uses in the park.
2. Close to the fishing pier and swimming area if that's a use desired in the park.
3. The use is somewhat incongruous with the historic 'fort and park' themes the committee talked about developing.
4. Water depths are unknown but thought to be similar to Dauses and Honolulu depths.
5. Will create congestion for all users accessing the park.

Many of the committee members supported the boat ramp at Fort Smallwood, primarily because of perceived impacts to traffic and residents along Fairview Beach Road.

The area residents in attendance were invited to express their comments and were generally the same as the previous meeting. Concerns about traffic and noise are the predominate theme.

The next meeting will be on October 10th at Downs Memorial Park at 7:00 P.M.

Sincerely,

Sally Malena
Human & Rohde Inc.

CC. Attendees
Committee Members