

DORCHESTER COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
VIRTUAL MEETING
February 23, 2021
6:00 pm

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, the Dorchester Eagle Record, the Summerville Journal Scene and the Post and Courier were notified and a notice was posted on the bulletin board 24 hours before the meeting.

PRESENT:

Mr. Eric Davis, Dorchester County Parks & Recreation Director
Mr. Jay Byars, Commission Chairman
Mr. Wesley Donehue, Commission Member
Mr. Joe Debney, Commission Member
Mr. Charles Brown, Commission Member
Ms. Rita May Ranck, Commission Secretary
Mrs. Taylor Corbin Varner, Parks & Recreation

ABSENT:

Mr. Mike Montei, Mr. Edward Tupper, Mr. John Welch.

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 by Chairman Byars.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE:

The invocation was given by Ms. Ranck who also led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Debney made a motion that the minutes from the January meeting be approved with one correction. Ms. Ranck seconded the motion. All present voted in favor of the motion, three were absent and none opposed. Motion carries. Minutes approved with one correction.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Beverly Stewart, 238 Eagle Ridge Road, Summerville expressed concerns about the Pine Trace Property both in the survey and in person to Mr. Davis. Her property adjoins the Pine Trace Property and she would like to see a solid fence erected between the private properties and the park property. Her other concerns were addressed by Mr. Davis as long as these plans and policies are enforced.

PINE TRACE NATURAL AREA:

Mr. Byars reminded the Commission of the history of the property. It was purchased in 2011 from the State for three million dollars. A parcel of the property was designated for Sires Elementary School which is now fully operational. The remaining property consists of three hundred and six

acres which is almost completely forested with a pond. Mr. Davis then presented on the plan specifics. A major goal for this property is to maintain as much of the tree canopy as possible. The property will include a disc golf course which will be the first of its kind in the County. The layout of this course will be designed with the help of a professional in the sport. Another goal is to lengthen the hiking trails and provide connectivity with a multi-use path for the Eagle Chandler Trail and The Sawmill Branch Trail. Boardwalks will be installed on the paths where they cross wetlands and the property will also include a small and large dog park. A forty foot by sixty-foot maintenance building which will hold equipment and offices will be located on the property as well. Clemson Extension may open an office here which will be good for management of community gardening. There will be a playground and perimeter hiking trail. The property has a six-acre pond which will allow for fishing from the piers. There will also be an ADA kayak launch as well as a gazebo with picnic tables. The far eastern side of the property will have a multi-use trail to Beverly Drive which will be for pedestrian and bicycle use only. A youth camping area is also proposed, and there will be a large natural area left for enjoyment of the public.

There are no plans to have any amenities next to the properties of homeowners. There will be at least a fifty-foot buffer between their properties and the amenities located on the park property. Any roads on the property that cross wetlands have already been permitted. The existing road will be continued further into the property. Eighty-one acres of historic rice fields are perpetually protected through deed restrictions. This is a national protected area. Phase Two of this project may include a Fire and EMS station which will be constructed by the Town of Summerville with frontage on Miles Jamison Road, and a future recreation center is called out in the plan next to the fire station.

The survey results showed great public support for this project. There was an overall satisfaction rate of 84% being very or slightly satisfied. The disc golf course and the camping sites were given the highest ratings. Connectivity with other areas was significant concern of the respondents. Of the 13% reported being slightly or very unsatisfied with the proposed project, their biggest concerns were the buffer area, accessibility and trespassing.

This property will be patrolled by DNR, volunteers, and the Dorchester County Sheriff's Office. There will also be Park Ranger Patrol as they will have staff housed on site at the maintenance building.

Ms. Ranck made a motion to approve the Master Plan and to recommend that County Council approve the plan as well. Mr. Donehue seconded the motion. All unanimously approved the motion and Mr. Davis will present the Master Plan to County Council at their next meeting.

After County Council approves the Master Plan, design work will begin and should take approximately three to four months. Mr. Davis expects the project will be ready to be put out to bid by the end of summer.

DAVIS-BAILEY PARK:

This project is still on track for time and budget. Mr. Davis expects that he will receive a certificate of occupancy for the buildings by the end of March. A committee has been formed to plan a grand opening event for the park. The tentative date that has been chosen is June 5, 2021. Mr. Burt Connelly is working with this committee to spearhead the event. It will most likely consist of a ribbon cutting ceremony, a three-on-three basketball tournament, kick ball, and whiffle ball games. The event would be capped off by a concert on the great lawn in the evening. Mr.

Connelly will be looking for sponsors to help with the costs of this celebration. Mr. Brown made a motion that the plans for the grand opening event be approved. Mr. Donehue seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion.

ASHLEY RIVER PARK:

Due to the overwhelming amount of rain that we have experienced, site work here had to be halted. Work on the buildings has continued. There is no firm schedule for completion right now as we await the impacts of the wet weather. Mr. Davis predicts it will be in August.

ARP-ROSEBROCK PARK CONNECTOR:

JNT Engineering firm is working on a couple of different concepts for the connector. The wetlands delineation is being included in this process. Mr. Davis expects to have a completed plan in about forty-five days.

SWAN DRIVE RIVER ACCESS:

A draft Master Plan is being developed for this property. The process for review and approval will be similar to that of Pine Trace. The Master Plan will be put out for comment by the public shortly. It will be open for two weeks and will be presented to the Commission at the March meeting.

Ms. Ranck asked about the progress on the Edisto Lakes property. Mr. Davis said that the County is still working out the particulars with the SC Audubon.

Ms. Ranck also asked about the CPW property. Due diligence is still underway.

ADJOURNMENT:

There was no further discussion and Mr. Brown made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Ms. Ranck and all voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rita May Ranck".

Rita May Ranck. Secretary