

CAUSEWAY IMPROVEMENTS REFERENDUM COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Causeway Improvements Referendum Committee, appointed by the North Brevard Commission on Parks and Recreation, an advisory board, held Monday, September 24, 2001, at 6:00 p.m., at the Brevard Room.

Members Present

Eric Dirschka, Chairman
Jiji Connolly
Kathy Keen
Paul Nydam
Maureen Wright
Ted Beck, Ex-Officio (NBCPR)\
Rich Votapka, Ex-Officio (City)

Members Absent

Laurilee Thompson

County Staff Present

Cheryl K. Page, North Area Parks Operations Manager
Chuck Mays, Construction Coordinator
Jill Hill, Recreation Leader

I. CALL TO ORDER

Cheryl Page called the meeting to order at approximately 6:05 p.m. and introduced staff present to the committee. The committee members then introduced themselves to the staff and the audience. Cheryl Page stated that the guidelines for being a member of this committee had been mailed to each member. Ms. Page stated all discussion between committee members regarding issues which might be brought to the committee for a decision must be discussed in a public meeting. She further explained it is a criminal offense to violate the Sunshine Law.

II. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

The committee members in attendance agreed that Eric Dirschka should be the chairman and he accepted the position. Maureen Wright agreed to be the Vice-Chairman.

III. NEW BUSINESS

Cheryl Page offered to give a brief synopsis of all Referendum projects and the committee chose to skip the briefing and move on to Causeway issues.

Woody Rice with Honeycutt & Associates shared a conceptual plan of the Causeway. Mr. Rice stated that these concepts were put together by a group of windsurfers in 1991, but there was no funding available at that time for the project. Paul Nydam arrived at approximately 6:28 p.m. Mr. Rice then explained the concept to the committee through diagrams and asked for the committee's input. Discussion ensued between staff and the committee about possible changes and additions to the conceptual plan. Mr. Rice also added that the city is looking at adding a new bridge which could take up to ten years due to funding. Mr. Rice asked the committee to

consider the building of the bridge when making decisions on Causeway improvements because he didn't want the Causeway improvements to be torn up by construction on the bridge project.

Mr. Rice then made some suggestions for the Causeway. He suggested a jet ski and catamaran launching area east of the Florida Marine Patrol (FMP) Station, some additional parking, and a landscape buffer from the traffic in the area. Paul Nydam inquired what the elevation of the parking area was. Mr. Rice stated that it is currently being investigated. Mr. Rice further stated that stormwater will have to be addressed and showed a diagram with the need for erosion control. Kathy Keen inquired if this would be a bulkhead. Mr. Rice responded that it would not and his firm would be meeting with St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) on Monday to review concerns.

Mr. Rice showed the committee another diagram with a possible bike path and landscaping. Paul Nydam inquired if the bridge would be closer to the FMP station or NASA. Mr. Rice stated it is still in the conceptual stage. Kathy Keen inquired if it will still be a draw bridge. Rich Votapka (City of Titusville) stated the bridge would be a high-rise bridge. Eric Dirschka inquired how high the bridge would be. Rich Votapka stated the Coast Guard requirement is 64 feet from the mean high water level to the bottom of the bridge. Mr. Votapka also stated that the old bridge is being considered as a fishing pier.

Woody Rice stated that a questionnaire was handed out prior to this meeting to the public regarding improvements to the causeway. He then shared some of the comments that were returned. Mr. Rice stated that the sailing and wind surfing area was the first choice, a boat ramp was the second choice, and the third choice was green space. There was also a safety concern because there are many vagrants in the area and the responses showed a desire for more policing in the area.

Woody Rice then discussed time frames for the project. He stated that the project is in the planning phase and needs to be refined. He stated that there is typically a 60-day planning phase and then he would return to the committee with a preliminary design. Following this phase would typically be another 60-day period that would lead to the final design phase. Mr. Rice then opened the floor to discussion.

Woody Rice suggested that the point near the launching area might be a great place for picnic table or a pavilion. He further stated that a 40'x30' pavilion had been approved.

Jiji Connolly inquired if a walking path with benches was possible. Mr. Rice stated that was possible.

Eric Dirschka believed the point was an ideal location for the pavilion. Paul Nydam suggested a pier at the point area.

Woody Rice stated that one of the biggest concerns would be irrigation. He stated that the irrigation would have to be researched. He further stated landscape materials that are drought and salt tolerant would have to be selected. Eric Dirschka stated that Jiji Connolly expressed an interest in zeriscape and inquired if plants were possible without irrigation. Jiji Connolly stated

that they were to a certain degree. Ms. Connolly stated that she could work on a list of some plants that are suitable. There is a new plant out called Asiatic Jasmine that is drought tolerant and she would have to investigate whether or not it was salt tolerant. Woody Rice stated that his agency could provide a list of drought tolerant plants. Jiji Connolly offered to do that also for the committee.

Cheryl Page stated that the current water system that is in place runs under the channel and is a 2 inch line. She further stated that the water is used for the rest rooms at Parrish Park and the FMP Station. Ms. Page stated that the current system is not very reliable and that staff is looking for a new water system somewhere in the future. Woody Rice stated that this issue may be worth getting geo-tech information to explore this water issue. Mr. Rice stated that if water has to be brought in, it will be brought across the bridge, drop it, cross the channel and then bring it back up. He further stated if it is not done that way it will impact sea grass beds, there will be major permitting, the DEP will get involved and this will eat up the budget quickly to get water over there. Kathy Keen inquired if the water issue should be addressed first to see what type of landscaping is feasible. Woody Rice stated that he believed the geo tech information was critical in the decision process. Mr. Rice stated that he believes this project is a show piece and the committee should be sure they have the right species and proper irrigation. Discussion then ensued about the green area.

Eric Dirschka then stated that he is very interested in the xeriscape that Ms. Connolly had referred to.

Ted Beck stated that there is no promise for any additional funds, but in some cases additional funds can be found for projects through the Board of County Commissioners.

Woody Rice stated that the critical area, in reference to irrigation, is the large open green area. Mr. Rice stated he had no doubt the xeriscape could be done, but he was concerned about the green area that would get a lot of use and the irrigation for it.

Ted Beck stated the bike path will go from the Causeway to Sand Point Park to the Marina and possibly up to Chain of Lakes. Jiji Connolly inquired if the bike path would be paved. Woody Rice stated that is another decision that the committee can make. Eric Dirschka inquired if the road would be widened to provide the bike path. Woody Rice responded that it could. Kathy Keen inquired if the bike path is going to connect with other areas such as Sand Point Park, should there be continuity with the landscape and those areas. Eric Dirschka stated that with other improvements the continuity would be nice. Rich Votapka stated that the new bridge would have provisions for the bike path.

Eric Dirschka inquired what type of pavement alternatives are available. Woody Rice stated that there is a shell-based surface, concrete, geo-tech type fabrics that allow grass to grow through. Ted Beck stated that Kennedy Point Park has an impervious parking area that has grass growing on it. Eric Dirschka inquired if pavers would be an option. Woody Rice stated that he would bring back some ideas for an impervious parking area to the committee. Mr. Rice requested that the committee keep long term planning in mind.

Kathy Keen inquired what would be advantageous as far as the water lines and erosion were concerned. Woody Rice stated that he is meeting with Stormwater to discuss that issue. Mr. Rice stated he would bring back a conceptual plan with the pavilion on the point and will have the survey data for the committee. He further stated there will have to also be some type of stormwater conveyance system also that will use the areas along the roadside for stormwater. Mr. Rice stated he would basically keep the layout the way it is with a few additions.

Kathy Keen stated she believed there needed to be a barrier for the green area. Mr. Rice stated there would be a curb stop. Ms. Keen also stated that the launch area will need to be wide enough. Mr. Rice stated he would discuss this with SJRWMD.

Cheryl Page stated that Laurilee Thompson was unable to attend but sent a letter with her concerns. Ms. Thompson would like to see shoreline stabilization for bird watching and would like to see a shallow sloping beach.

Maureen Wright inquired if the area at the point was enough space for the pavilion. Mr. Rice stated he believed it would and there would be an additional parking area with approximately 50 spaces.

Motion by Jiji Connolly, seconded by Paul Nydham, to proceed with pavilion suggestions, and other engineering projects such as geo tech information and bring this back to the next meeting.

AYE: Connolly, Dirschka, Keen, Nydam, Wright

NAY: None

Carried 5-0

Cheryl Page inquired when the committee would like to meet next and a meeting date was set tentatively for October 29, 2001, at 6:30 p.m., at the Brevard Room with a secondary date of November 5, 2001 if all needed information is not collected by October 29.

IV. PUBLIC INPUT

No public input.

VII. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Dirschka
Chairman

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