SOUTH AREA PARKS AND RECREATION

Rodes Park Referendum Committee

PUBLIC MEETING
February 27, 2006

A public meeting of the Brevard County Department of Parks and Recreation, Rodes Park Referendum Committee, was conducted on Monday, February 27, 2006, 7:00 p.m., at the Council Chambers of West Melbourne City Hall, 2285 Minton Road, West Melbourne.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Debra Thompson
Joe LaPointe
Ken Dyke
Al Genchi
Carol Burns
Bart DeNitto
Steve McKibben
Ted Whitlock

MEMBERS ABSENT

Keith Barton
Mallena Urban

STAFF PRESENT

Greg Minor, Construction Manager, Parks and Recreation
Marsha Cantrell, Parks Support Services Manager
Jerry Gust, South Area Maintenance Superintendent
Fred Poppe, Park Supervisor II, Rodes Park
Lisa Nicholas, South Area Administrative Secretary

PUBLIC

Rob Medina
Sheila Miller
Dick Thompson
Barbara Meyer
John Wilt
Dave Larsen
Sidney Kingery
Sharlene Keet
Al Keet
Bill Palmer
John Cox
Roger Cottrill
Amanda Messer
Shannon Messer
Mark Mannarino
Dawn Wilson
Jeff Wilson
Dwyane Thompson
Richard Martel
Jeff Hattendorf
Richard Wright

MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Ms. Nicholas called the roll, and Ms. Thompson noted that a quorum was present and that the meeting would be conducted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Members were provided with a copy of the minutes from the January 23, 2006, meeting. After review, Mr. McKibben made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes, and Ms. Burns seconded. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

STAFF REPORTS

Staff informed the Committee that there was no new information to report.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Thompson inquired as to whether Miranda Homes had put in writing its intent to install the sidewalk, and Mr. Minor replied that a letter had been requested.

There was a question as to whether an appraisal had been done for Rodes Park, and Ms. Cantrell responded that one had been received and one was due to come in during the week. The information would be confidential until the process was complete. Ms. Cantrell also noted that all outparcels had been acquired and that a public input hearing was scheduled for March 21, 2006, regarding vacating the road rights-of-way. Mr. LaPointe asked if residents around the interior of the park were sent notices, and Ms. Cantrell responded affirmatively, as steps had to be taken to ensure that no one was denied access.

Ms. Thompson stated that the Committee was opposed to having the School Board acquire the property, and Ms. Cantrell noted that, once property is designated as surplus property, it goes out to bid, and the highest bidder acquires the property. Mr. DeNitto inquired into what the School Board's intentions were for the property, and Mr. LaPointe indicated that the property would be utilized for construction of an elementary school.

Ms. Thompson noted that the original referendum provided $5.2 million and asked what had been spent to date and what was remaining. Mr. Minor responded that the most substantial expenditure had been the purchase of the land, which brought remaining funds down to $2.9 million. After design costs, there is about $2.5 million remaining, plus whatever funding the grant provides.

Mr. LaPointe asked if the playground would be moved, and Mr. Minor responded in the affirmative. Mr. LaPointe also inquired into the relocation of the lights, and Mr. Minor indicated that this would not be possible because the specifications within the code had changed and the lights were now obsolete.

Ms. Burns asked about the exotic plant removal, and Mr. Minor stated that removal of exotics was required by St. John's River Water Management District but that the plants would be replaced with native species.

Ms. Meyer indicated that Transportation Planning was continuing to work with the developer on easements for a five-foot sidewalk. Ms. Thompson indicated that, at the previous meeting, Mr. Whitehead stated that the developer would pay for the sidewalk. Mr. Gust noted that Mr. Whitehead had received a verbal commitment on the same morning of the last meeting and that something in writing had been requested. Ms. Meyer stated that the only commitment she was aware of to date was for the easement.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Minor introduced John Wilt and Dave Larsen from the architect and engineering firm of Post, Buckley, Schuh & Jernigan (PBSJ). Mr. Wilt noted that there was a major concern with wetlands on the proposed site but also indicated that Mr. Larsen was able to fit in all of the elements. Mr. Larsen stated that the proposed site is a wonderful piece of property and that Rodes Park could be an outstanding facility even with the constraints posed by the wetlands. Mr. Larsen stated that it would be necessary to determine which of the two roads, between Fell and Flanagan, would be the better fit for the main entrance and indicated that the plan he had developed allowed for both.

Because mitigation is very expensive, Mr. Larsen tried to avoid disturbing the wetlands as much as possible in his design. Mr. Larsen noted that, because of the way the wetlands were situated, the property was divided into two distinct halves. Fields could be located on either side of the wetlands, but it would be more cost-effective to group fields together as closely as possible.

Mr. Larsen then referred to a large-scale plan in order to illustrate where the various elements of the park would be located. Mr. Larsen noted that the entrance on Flanagan could be eliminated altogether and just Fell could be used. Ease of pedestrian movement was taken into account in the design, which would also be a plus for the maintenance staff. The multi-purpose fields were separated with parking areas. There would more than likely be over one acre of mitigation necessary, which would be based on the quality of the wetlands. Mr. Larsen ensured the Committee that the new Rodes Park would be both recreationally and ecologically friendly.

Ms. Burns indicated that she liked everything about Mr. Larsen's design. Ms. Thompson stated that she noticed that one concession stand was missing and wondered about trading the tennis courts for another building. Mr. Larsen noted that there was plenty of room on the site to make adjustments. Mr. Dyke asked if consideration could be given for a separate facility for wrestling. Mr. LaPointe mentioned the need for equipment rooms for baseball. Mr. Larsen stated that parks were typically under-built with regard to maintenance and storage facilities but that there would be many opportunities to install these types of elements. Mr. Larsen reminded the Committee that what he was presenting was a master plan – a long-term document – and also noted that the Committee should not cut short its vision for the site.

Mr. Genchi indicated that he, too, had concerns with regard to storage and asked whether space should be set aside on the plan. Mr. Minor responded affirmatively and indicated that areas for storage buildings should be identified. Mr. Larsen noted that a storage area could be placed in the same vicinity as the proposed maintenance area.

Mr. LaPointe felt it was necessary to look at multiple entrances, and Mr. Minor noted that traffic studies would more than likely be conducted.

Mr. Dyke asked what PBSJ's scope of work included, and Mr. Minor responded that it included design and permitting.

A member of the public inquired as to whether there would be a pedestrian or bike entrance on Colorado and staff responded that there would be. It was then asked if putting a vehicular entrance on Colorado would be an option, and Ms. Thompson indicated that it would not be because an entirely new road would have to be constructed. An individual from the public asked whether there would be the possibility of having additional storage in the community center, and Mr. Minor indicated that nothing within the community center could be altered. Ms. Cantrell reminded the Committee and participants that the County had to obtain special permission just to incorporate an 18,000 square-foot facility because the maximum size the grant would allow was 15,000 square feet.

Ms. Burns inquired as to how much PBSJ is being paid, and Mr. Minor stated that the price for the design phase was negotiated and that subsequent phases would be negotiated at the appropriate times. Ms. Burns then requested a larger size of the plan for the community center, and Mr. Minor indicated that larger copies would be made available at the next meeting.

Mr. Dyke stated that wrestling tournaments would have to be held in the gymnasium but that a 50-foot by 100-foot building would be ideal. The wrestling area could be close to the football area. Other additional elements for consideration that were suggested by the Committee included: a concession stand by the football area; a 50-foot by 50-foot building for storage for football and cheerleading; and a 30-foot by 30-foot storage building for baseball.

Ms. Thompson then inquired as to whether everyone was satisfied, with the exception of determining the entrance situation.

Mr. LaPointe made a **MOTION** to approve the conceptual plan with the recommendations set forth by the Committee, and Ms. Burns seconded. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

There was brief discussion on establishing a regular meeting date for the Committee, and it was determined that the fourth Monday of each month worked well for all involved. Mr. McKibben made a **MOTION** to establish the fourth Monday of each month as the Committee's regular meeting date, and Mr. LaPointe seconded. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**.

PUBLIC INPUT

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Seeing no further business, Ms. Thompson called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Burns made a **MOTION** to adjourn, and Mr. Genchi seconded. **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**. Ms. Thompson adjourned the meeting of the Rodes Park Referendum Committee at 8:41 p.m. and noted that the next meeting would be held on Monday, March 27, 2006, 7:00 p.m., at the Council Chambers of West Melbourne City Hall.