

Parks with Purpose Community Task Force Newsletter and Meeting Summary

February 18, 2019 Meeting | St. Ambrose Episcopal Church

Participants of February Meeting: Frances Carmichael Jones, Stacie Hagwood, Claudia Graham, Yasmin Fozard, Stacia Turner, Claire Cooney, Bettie Thompson, Jemonde Taylor, Wayne Shore, Kofi Boone, Kevin Boyer, Christy Perrin, Louie Rivers, Kristi Moyer, David Proper, Shannon Lee, Kelsi Eccles, Randy Senzig and NEC students Jaydn Taylor, Alyssa Taylor, Mikiya McClain, and Elijah McClain.

Task Force Actions and Decisions:

- Next meetings: **March 18 from 5:30-8:30pm at the Norman and Betty Camp Education Center.** Landscape Architecture students will share the Studio designs and facilitate feedback discussions with the Task Force.
March 25 from 5:30- 8:30pm at St. Ambrose Church. The Task Force will decide upon a project site and general concept to implement with the Parks with Purpose grant.

Parks with Purpose Team Updates:

- A timeline based on the year 2 contract with The Conservation Fund was shared. Milestones include reaching out into Rochester Heights and Biltmore Hills to inform and seek feedback about this project in Feb/March, holding a public event to get feedback on ideas in late March, selecting a project(s) for implementation by April, and professional design of a site plan for the site in spring/summer.
- The Conservation Fund will host a Parks with Purpose Peer Exchange April 10-11 at Walnut Creek Wetland Park. Colleagues working on similar projects through the Parks with Purpose grant will join ours and the Ellerbe Creek Watershed teams here. All are welcome to join for part or all of the meeting at no cost.
- Racial Equity Training Opportunity – more workshops have been announced for 2019. Contact Christy if you are interested in going to one. So far six people from our team have participated or registered to participate!
- Upcoming community events: **Big Sweep is April 13, Mud Day is May 18. Both events are at the Walnut Creek Wetland Park. We'd like to have representation at both events- let us know if you can join us!**

Meeting Summary

Debriefs on Parks with Purpose process and Family Fun Day

A powerpoint overview of the Parks with Purpose Task Force's process since it began less than a year ago was shared with the group in response to a request at the previous meeting. The PPT is posted on the website at go.ncsu.edu/walnutcreekwetlandpartners

The Feb. 16 Family Fun Day was advertised by a group of Task Force members, including NEC students, providing 100 fliers door-to-door in Rochester Heights, some in Biltmore Hills and at the apartments on Peterson St. A Facebook event was created and boosted through an advertisement during the week leading up to the event that reached 900 people in a 1.5 mile radius around the park, and a posting was shared on Nextdoor. The actual event was lightly attended, with mainly church congregants and a few Fuller PTA parents and children attending. Task Force members brainstormed ideas for why attendance was low and how to reach additional community members moving forward.



Participants look at map of project area at the Family Fun Day on Feb. 16

Concerns voiced included:

- Weather was cold and wet
- Very few people from the community there
- Messaging in flyer was confusing- seemed like event was about Wetland center, and not understanding where projects would go in Biltmore Hills and Rochester heights
- Black History month events and other things going on competed with it
- Not a lot of input from the two neighborhoods.
- The timeline was too short for notification of the event happening. Longer promotion period needed.
- Have events in times where you can promote at CACs
- Social media isn't good for older populations and those with no internet
- People come to events when you connect them with things going on in the community- emphasize needing help with community input
- Look at demographics of both communities- how many are older residents and how many have children at home?
- Are there many families here? Some kids are being dropped off in the neighborhood to walk to the school, not necessarily residents.

- Fewer students in Fuller elementary school now (525 kids). Some are known to live in Rochester Heights. Some teens have been seen walking around on weekends (during door-to-door efforts).

Solutions for improving outreach included:

- Share event dates at upcoming CAC meetings; don't need details just raise awareness of likely dates to keep eyes out for
- Seek feedback at existing groups' meetings (like CACs)
- Pick weekends where there isn't a lot going on
- Planning in advanced with marketing students from Shaw to help with future events
- Place flyers in civic spaces, libraries, might be helpful with capturing older audience
- Consider what time of day that you're "flyering" to increase engagement
- Promote events on Spectrum TV Cable news roll
- Include yard signs in the neighborhood (signage) alerting people to event
- Event at Contemporary Art Museum (one of the NEC students volunteers there)
- Have our next event outside at the location where the project site is selected, invite community members and local vendors to engage with community members, share multiple potential designs for feedback
- Vendors could be local artists or residents with small businesses
- A young father in Rochester Heights asked about the project tonight when he saw his neighbor coming to our meeting- this shows the power of one-on-one connections (he did not get a flyer because of a "No Trespassing" sign)

The lowdown on Grant requirements from The Conservation Fund

- Project needs to be selected by end of March and must include the following criteria:
 - Environmental feature (environmental education, green infrastructure, etc.)
 - New or revitalized public park greenspace
 - Participation in decision making process with residents in Baltimore Hills, Rochester Heights because TCF wants to target minority/ under represented communities.
- Project budget \$250,000 for phase 1 (just the initial project, not only)
- Project is not limited to \$250k but can be used to show leverage to potential funders
- Show more than one rendering to have options and get input from community
- Incentivized survey so people can give thoughts and feedback who don't attend the meetings

- Larger component of decision making: What's going to happen on that site
- Get people to help decide what should happen on site, once site is selected
- People need to see scaled down vision of the site to get people more engaged as opposed to larger area map

Group discussion points included:

- What would the project look like if it were on Bailey St.
 - An idea is to keep trail on southside of creek and come to State St. and cross wetlands there. George Hess' NCSU Natural Resources Measurements class is looking at where a trail could be located.
- Think about leveraging funds-understand that \$250,000 could be a part of the total amount, the project is not limited to a \$250k budget
- Start with a smaller demonstration project but Dream big for future projects
- If one of our priorities is to increase usership of parkland, think of opportunity sites to build momentum – start getting all the projects checked off
- NEC: How were you received while doing door to door?
 - Not a lot of feedback, people were just accepting of the flyers
 - One guy was saying impactful because he had kids
- Event planning calendar needed

Update on Landscape Architecture students' work

Kofi Boone provided an update about his students' work so far. He reminded the group that he has 8 students in his Design Studio class- six are studying sites south of Walnut Creek, two are studying sites north of the creek. Additionally, students in his Environmental Justice and Design seminar are helping with the community engagement aspect- they came up with the activities for the fun day and will help with the March 18 Task Force meeting discussion about the sites and how they may show the group's priorities. The students' mission is to help the group make a good decision. The students' images will show:

- Why they selected the particular site to design
- What they could see there
- Preliminary costs and generate phase 1 idea
- Digital rendering of the site plan

Students hope to hand images off to a Landscape Architect for professional development and create an actual plan. Kofi is working with a student on an artificial Reality app to be able to stand on a site and see what the students' designed- this may be a future field trip.

- Students complete and share final projects on Feb. 27th 2-5:30pm at College of Design. Parking free if you notify Kofi you want to attend. The students' work on this project is done at that time.
- March 18th taskforce meeting at Wetland Park meeting for formal presentation

Group discussion points:

- Would there need to be approval on the sites selected logistically, without going through a lot of channels?
 - Depends on partners we decide on; doing project on Walnut Creek Wetland Park property would be likely easiest as the City of Raleigh Parks Dept. is at the table and interested in working with the group
- Need to work with City if educational signage is added to streets
- Can Biltmore Hills Park continue as a possible location? It has a paved walking trail with no amenities.
 - Will need to add it to our priority map
 - Biltmore Hills Park will improve tennis courts
 - Biltmore Hills Community Center will begin construction in Sept. 2019
- In 2020, Fuller Elementary will be torn down and rebuilt higher up, so something to consider on whether to conduct a 1st project there or not.
 - Conversations are happening between City of Raleigh Stormwater and Wake County Public Schools- green infrastructure on the site may go forward without funding needed from the Parks with Purpose grant
- Regarding the needs to have some environmental feature, what does that mean?
 - A pollinator garden, stormwater infiltration device like a rain garden, or



1939 aerial photography shared by the College of Design- the yellow sticky is the current location of St. Ambrose

educational signs embedded into project plan.

- The selected project should align with community goals, have public access and a landowner who controls and maintains the site.

Walnut Creek Wetland Community Partnership Priority Projects

