



Stakeholder Meeting Notes

Thursday, January 14, 2016

*(Meeting Held at the Village of
Richfield Town Hall, Mayor's
Conference Room)*

STAKEHOLDER GROUP #4 MEETING FOCH, OHC, OBTA, Richfield Interfaith Group, National Park Service, National Park Conservancy

5:00 P.M.

In attendance:

Beth Sanderson, FOCH
Cynthia McWilliams, OHC
Molly Eastwood, OHC
Deb Yandala, Conservancy for CVNP
Janice Mattucci, Conservancy for CVNP
Lynn Richardson, FOCH
Corey Ringle, FOCH
Rory Robinson, National Park Service, Rivers & Trail conservation
Patrick Hayes, Ohio BTA
John King, Interfaith Coalition Richfield
Judy Sorozcak, Village of Richfield Parks & Recreation
Ruth Jocek, Village of Richfield Parks & Recreation

Mr. Keith Shy, Capital/Public Improvements Consultant/Manager
Mrs. Debbie Bluso Rogers, Administrator
Mr. Jeff Kerr, Environmental Design Group, Facilitator & Master Plan Consultant
Mr. Bob Becker, RJRD Board of Trustee
Mr. Ralph McNerney, RJRD Board of Trustee
Mr. Pat Norris, RJRD Board of Trustee

Introductions & Remarks

Mr. Jeff Kerr opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m. with an introduction and reviewed the agenda. Participants went around the room and introduced themselves. A sign-in sheet was provided as reflected in the above list of attendees.

Review of the Master Plan Process, Schedule and Objectives

A summary of the master plan process and schedule was outlined to the participants. It was noted that RJRD has contracted with Environmental Design Group to assist in developing a master plan for the Crowell-Hilaka property. The master plan process will evolve over the next three-four months. As part of the master plan process, the RJRD board wanted to reach out to the local stakeholders to better understand local perspectives related to opportunities and desires of the park. This is the first of those six scheduled stakeholder meetings.

Mr. Kerr stated that the meetings would be one hour in length and it would include a series of questions to prompt comment and it would be "*just a conversation.*" The following are the salient points from the General Discussion.

Mr. McNerney welcomed the group and provided opening remarks to the group.

General Discussion/Comments Heard

Opportunities:

JK [John King]: Keep the historical aspects

LR [Lynn Richardson]: Question on which direction: a park to serve local residents or is it a tremendous opportunity for the region. Something that will draw tourism. Preserve the Kirby Estate and tell the Kirby Story. Promote engineering education.

BS [Beth Sanderson]: Market outside of the community for raising funds.

JK: Retreat center, Places for groups to rent, Corporation retreats, overnight stays. For the overnights, can they be adapted for kitchen facilities? Overnight availability is important.

ME [Molly Eastwood]: Need horse trails and trailer parking for the horses. Camping with horses. Need work on the drainage and OHC is willing to assist.

LR & BS: Connect the trails with other trails in the area: Hinckley, Brecksville, and Cuyahoga Valley. Northeast Ohio has really good trails. Establish uniqueness and complement each other.

JM [Janice Mattucci]: This is not an isolated network; it is part of a greater portfolio. Need for camping but there is not anything available. Utilize tourism; national visitation. Car camping is not well represented in the area; it's an opportunity. Complement uses with other areas.

Can we get the study from the NPS?

ME: People will come if there is primitive camping available and they can trailer their horses.

LR: Girl Scout Alumni are waiting for the cabins to be open; mostly from Cuyahoga County. There is unique vegetation because of the fencing and deer browse.

JK: Interfaith Group is very interested in a fitness trail and they are willing to raise \$10K for the apparatus and the group will volunteer and construct the apparatus. They will do as much work as they can. They want signage that states their sponsorship and notoriety. There are 20 stations and it is a 1-2 mile loop trail that is spaced. Will work side by side but may need concrete for the posts.

General Discussion Regarding the Buildings:

With limited funds and resources, commercial code requirements and infrastructure issues, thoughts on the buildings....

LR: FOCH can raise funds from outside sources; i.e. GS Alumni, the Mill is their test case and \$200K is the goal to assist with structural and code compliance. The professional feedback states that it is all doable but the dam needs to be repaired. Use of mill for education.

RR [Rory Robinson]: To solve the problem have a “adopt a building” program. Use private and public sponsors, corporate. User groups can raise enough money to renovate and maintain it. Camping is a missing piece to fill a void and collect use fees. Should be profit based.

BS: Use for religious and church camp opportunities. Youth camps and churches could rent the facilities.

CW [Cynthia McWilliams]: Buildings add to the property and history and every effort should be made to keep the buildings.

DY [Deb Yolanda]: Make money to sustain; Important not to give it away things that could support the rest of the programs. Engage the community to preserve and protect the buildings and property. How do you drive the money to sustain the things that benefit the community? What activities support the community? Get the community engaged.

RM [Ralph McNerney]: Is it feasible to have separate areas for camping? CW stated west of Oviatt. LR stated to designate an area.

BS & LR: They plan on day usage and programming. Use of the lake of the pool.

JK: Speaking for the astronomy club, they want to host star parties. Need an observation area designated that would include a scope shed. It is done at night around 1:00-2:00 a.m. Camping would be required and close to parking but far from lights.

JK: Sledding

BS: The logistics of the property are good; not too far away

LR: Location is good for the in-between and complimentary uses for the Akron and Cleveland cultural events.

BS: Bring BWU on board so they can have a field house on the property; Inside and outside classroom.

DY: Residential type centers are trending away from camping. The use is not very complimentary and it is financially not so good

General Discussion Regarding the Name:

LR: You can change it and FOCH will change with it but made the point that when you Google CH will come up and there is value to that.

CM: Hard to name the property when the vision isn't complete.

JK: Current name is very hard to pronounce and learn. Search engines can be changed.

ME: Hilaka Hills

CR [Corey Ringle]: Lake Kirby and FOCH could change to FOLK.

RM: Should be in deference to the Girl Scouts and a display of RJRD's allegiance to the fund raising group.

PH [Pat Hayes]: OBTA wants connectivity in order to get the trail off the roads. There are 1400 miles of trail in the system. OBTA wants primitive low impact camping and Adirondack structures. Recognize that neighbors might have issues; how do we exit the park? 60-foot section in northwest corner? Using the main exit for now.

Regarding Gund Hall:

DY: Happy Days is bursting at the seams. It is very appealing and there is a need to manage. Control access to parking. Work needs to be done. Spectacular building that does not require much work. They have business interests. The facilities, storage, restrooms, and kitchen need to be upgraded so rental groups can use. She visualizes rustic chic and it is in... for a very long time. However there is a lot of completion. It needs a full kitchen. The wedding and lodging should be available for destination weddings. Property is close to hotels in Akron and Cleveland.

JK: Questioned the timeline for the work to be completed. Ralph stated that there has been no decision and the details are being worked out.

Regarding Inappropriate Uses:

Casino

Need to balance camping; i.e. no RVs and no hook-ups. Need gravel. Use the buildings for lodging plus tents.

Wary of motorized trails; ATV, dirt bikes, snowmobiles, jet skis, no motorized water craft.

Mountain bikes are ok if done in the right place

KS: All great ideas but only 336 acres.

RR [Rory Robinson]: Property should be a 101 experience. A place for basic stuff which is revenue driven just like it was with the Girl Scouts.

LR: People will pay for the experience but ultimately it is up to the Richfield residents. Hands on engineering. Zip line. Whole day package.

DY: Educational experience and simple accessible trails. Early childhood education; outdoors . A land lab for Revere Local School District.

Meeting Concluded at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Bluso Rogers, Administrator to RJRD Board

I, ***Mrs. Debbie Bluso Rogers***

Administrator, of the Richfield Joint Recreation District, Richfield, Ohio, hereby certify that

the foregoing is a true correct copy of the

January 14, 2016 Stakeholder Group #4 Meeting

Accepted as part of the record by the RJRD Board of Trustees on **Thursday, January 28,**

2016 through motion.

Signed: _____
Richfield Joint Recreation District Administrator