



Special Meeting with Work Session April 5, 2022

Call to Order: The Board met in person in the mayor's large conference room at Richfield Village hall. The meeting was called to order at 5 p.m. by Anita Gantner, Board Chairperson.

Roll Call: Sandy Apidone, Anita Gantner, Jeff Deluca, Maureen McGinty, Mark Robeson, plus Michael Selig and Dave Wehner who both arrived late due to work commitments

Also in Attendance: Kelly Coffman/Cleveland Metroparks, Administrative Coordinator Polly Wheeler, and Volunteer Coordinator Susan Czaplicki, and other guests

Special Meeting

Introduction and Background

Strategic planning session was moderated by Kelly Coffman, consultant from Cleveland Metroparks. Ms. Coffman introduced herself, mentioned being mindful of the board's serious responsibility to plan for the future of Richfield Heritage Preserve, and stated that this is the planning working group. She expects to include a stakeholder group and encourage community engagement, since everyone should feel heard.

The role of the working group is to guide the effort, review the scope of the plan, consider all views and archive consensus, and determine any other goals.

A history of the park and the area was presented, including the conservation/Clean Ohio easement to protect natural resources. The question was asked whether the board could go back to Clean Ohio for funding of site improvements once the plan is in place. The park is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but that does not mean that all aspects must be preserved exactly as they are or were. In today's role, the mission statement currently applies to Richfield Joint Recreation District (RJRD) and to Richfield Heritage Preserve (RHP).

Ms. Coffman handed out Post-it notes and asked the group to write down why RHP is special to them. The key elements of responses were discussed: people throughout time; habitat and natural resources; historic structures; women's empowerment/Girl Scouts.

General summary of plans since park creation in 2014 was reviewed. How can we use all this as a foundation? Estimated expenditures on planning are over \$130,000 plus volunteer hours. Ms. Gantner stated that qualifiers would be needed for clarification if the information were presented to the community. Ms. Coffman presented the stages of an organizational life cycle: Creativity, Direction, Delegation, and Consolidation.

Working group input

There are gaps in plans and disconnects between the plans and implementation. There are lots of good ideas, but they are not prioritized. The park has an identity crisis.

A discussion of camping options followed.

Fundraising was discussed. Better communication is needed between the Friends group and the board. The MOU restricts the Friends' involvement. Both groups need to be able to carry out plans and agree to work together on them.

Buildings and historic preservation: things to consider

What's the goal?

Management of natural and cultural resources

Different ways to interpret cultural history and also natural resource interpretation

Downstream/downhill/downwind – invasive species and pollution both travel this way

Utilities and bridges need to be considered.

Discussed work products to reach a coordinated effort. This becomes a decision-making tool.
Looked at maps and building inventory

Need to revisit plan components. There are things with a small environmental component but that make an emotional connection.

Future planning events:

Broader stakeholder group meeting with abbreviated presentation, maybe an hour.

Open House with ribbon-cutting – open the buildings and the park as a whole to the public, especially the residents.

Survey later in the process. Mr. Wehner suggested moving the survey up on the calendar to get earlier feedback, maybe following with another survey later.

Need a list of funding sources and what has been done with taxpayer funds - sets stage for future work.
Need to recognize that money is spent in the community due to park visitors in Richfield.

Mr. DeLuca stated that he would like to see Richfield Community Day held in RHP at least once to familiarize the public with the park.

There are bed & breakfasts in Richfield. It might be possible to get them together and collaborate with them regarding Lodge events, specifically weddings. Need to tell Shari Green.

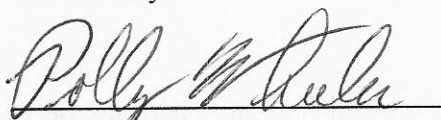
Next stakeholder meeting will be held April 25, after the board meeting.

Adjournment:

MOTION by: Mr. Wehner and seconded by Ms. Apidone to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

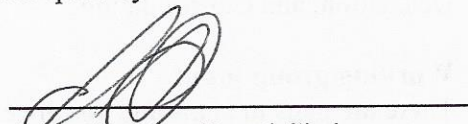
MOTION PASSED: Vote taken by voice; all in favor except Jeff DeLuca who abstained.

Submitted by:



Polly Wheeler,
Administrative Coordinator

Accepted by:



Anita Gantner, Board Chairperson