



Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

Mayor Raymond M. Morriss
Councilman Richard J. “Rock” Cioni
Councilman Eugene T. Frazier
Councilman James L. Furstenberg
Councilwoman Laurie P. Marchini

City Administrator Jeffrey F. Silka
City Solicitor Michael S. Cohen
City Clerk Allison K. Layton

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WORK SESSION

City Hall 2nd Floor Conference Room
57 N. Liberty Street
Cumberland, MD 21502

Tuesday, February 20, 2024, 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Raymond M. Morriss; Council Members: Rock Cioni, Eugene Frazier, Jimmy Furstenberg, and Laurie Marchini

ALSO PRESENT: Jeffrey F. Silka, City Administrator; Allison Layton, City Clerk; Chuck Ternent, Chief of Police; Greg Kerr, Representative of the Cumberland Skatepark Committee

Media: Greg Larry, Cumberland Times-News
Kathy Cornwell, WCBC Radio

I. CUMBERLAND SKATEPARK UPDATE

Mr. Silka began the discussion with an update on the Skatepark – he’s been working with Mr. Greg Kerr and the Skatepark Committee and have a rendering of what the Skatepark would look like to show to the Mayor and Council. A community analysis was done to determine what community members wanted in a skatepark and the resulting rendering is where they landed. Mr. Silka reminded Council that this is a \$575,000 project, with \$325,000 coming from the City, \$250,000 coming from the County and with some of these funds being ARPA money, we need to get this under contract soon. To date, they have contracted with SPECS Engineering to do the site work and permit work, which will begin at about the end of March or Early April.

Mr. Silka shared the rendering with the Mayor and Council stating that what it shows is about \$494,000 in cost and invited Mr. Greg Kerr to speak about the rendering. Mr. Kerr explained that a lot of the features chosen were “street features” and were selected based on community desires/needs. They took the bowl out as it was a significant cost savings to go without it - it just wasn’t in the budget and they’d rather have a larger park than one large feature. Mr. Kerr continued that to make up for the loss of vertical by taking out the bowl, a half pipe was added at the bottom, running over 100 ft long. It would be about 10 feet at its highest spot going down to 5-6 feet and would work with skateboards, bikes and would be as accessible as possible.

Mr. Kerr continued to explain that the Pump track ran the perimeter of the park and would be quite large and that in terms of square foot price, it was currently sitting between \$30-\$35 per square foot, which is much better than the \$70 per square foot that it was two years ago. He indicated that there's been discussion that we are missing out on things, but we are actually getting more for our dollar with this design.

Mr. Kerr explained that Rampage Skate Shop out of Connecticut did the rendering, which may not have been as fancy as some with Google Earth overlays, but at the end, this was a nice rendering at a reasonable cost.

Councilman Cioni questioned how we would get on their waiting list and Mr. Silka replied that upon approval of engineering, we'd get permits and form a contract with Rampage contingent on engineering approval, which most likely would happen within the next three months. Mr. Silka continued that we'd also have to sign the contract with the County as we'd have to commit the ARPA money from the County.

Mr. Greg Larry from the Times-News questioned whether a contractor had been selected, and Mr. Silka responded that Rampage is both the designer and builder of the project, they are a sole source provider.

Mr. Silka reported that the momentum is building, the funding is in place and the design is done. He reiterated that the Gray area on the rendering design is not being built, but would be budget dependent or something for future expansion.

Mr. Kerr explained that the plan is during construction to start on top and move down – as we go, if the gray part is in the budget, we will proceed, and if not, a good stopping point in design will be formed.

Councilman Cioni questioned if the site work would include the ability to add on and Mr. Silka responded that yes, we are not consuming the entire site, so there will be room for expansion.

Mr. Kerr explained that the floodplain is the biggest hurdle right now.

Mr. Larry asked if we'd see construction this summer to which Mr. Silka responded most likely early Fall, depending on the flood plain.

Mayor Morriss stated that he was not claiming knowledge, but listening to discussions, he thinks we are getting what the young people really want in a skatepark. It's good that we were able to get input from the community. He feels this looks like a very nice rendering and thanked Mr. Kerr for his work on this project.

II. ALLEGANY SCHOOL SITE GREENSPACE PROPOSAL

Mr. Silka stated he's been working with the County on the development of the Allegany School site, and that they would like to have an expanded greenspace or park. The City owns a 3-acre site in blue (see drawing) and the developer would like to have permission to develop a park on the City's property, which would be a public park for the west side. Mr. Silka proposed doing an MOU to allow them to utilize the land to develop a public park. He explained it would be a joint venture in the design of the park, including pickleball. The development of the park would have switchbacks to the trail, so there would be trail access. The County wants the City's blessing for the developer to design, build and pay for the park, but the City would operate the park – it would

be a joint effort between the County and the City. Ultimately, they are looking for the OK to let the engineers start designing this.

The Mayor and City Council members were on board with allowing the architects begin the design phase for this park.

Mr. Silka reiterated that the land is not usable otherwise. He will advise the County that there is consensus to engage in the project.

III. AGENDA REVIEW 2/20/24

Mayor Morriss went over the public meeting agenda. Councilman Cioni questioned the third Order on the agenda and Mr. Silka explained that we were abating taxes on these properties as they are all City owned properties. Councilwoman Marchini gave kudos to Chief Ternent for all the grant funding the police department has been obtaining.

IV. MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL UPDATES

Council Member Frazier had no update.

Council Member Furstenberg talked about attending the NAACP event this past Saturday with some staff from the Police Department as well as other Council members.

Council Member Cioni talked about the upcoming Parks & Rec board meeting on March 4 which he will be out of town for. He asked Chief Ternent to speak about the Opioid Restitution money.

Chief Ternent spoke of a meeting with Opioid Restitution committee members – the City is responsible for coming up with ideas of how to use the money, so they met to brainstorm ideas with Chief Ternent and Lieutenant Bonner. The ideas are due to county by March 1 and then the County will write the proposal.

Council Member Marchini advised that people would be seeing more signage around Baltimore and Liberty streets as traffic shirts. The parking moved on Baltimore St. Asked Council members to share that a lot of the businesses have back door access.

She continued that Groundhog Day was successful – there was even a featured clip on WMAR. She spoke of the Bar-athalon is coming this weekend from 12-4 on Saturday. The Hooley Pub Crawl is March 16th and the Hooley Plunge is March 2nd.

Marchini continued sharing that the Allegany High School's historical research class is doing their project on the history of the Baltimore Street area, which will be displayed at Allegany Museum. Ruth Davis-Rogers, the City's Historic Preservation Planner helped them get a grant from Preservation MD. IT will coincide with the opening of Baltimore Street.

The Main St. committees continue to meet and are productive and they will bring recommendations to Mayor and City Council, and she reminded Council that there needs to be follow up on high voltage chargers that were presented to them some time back.

Marchini reminded everyone to pick up yard signs to support downtown businesses from Melinda Kelleher.

Marchini continued that several of them had attended the Friends Aware 70th anniversary event that took place on Valentine's Day and she attended the Canal Place Bboard meeting for the discussion of Senator McKay's proposed legislation.

Marchini reminded everyone that there was trivia at JZ's on Wednesdays, which has been well attended.

Marchini detailed that Frazier, herself, Allison Layton and Ruth Davis-Rogers attended a Susan B. Anthony birthday party at Sandra Roeder's house. There were good discussions, also the anniversary of when her mom, the first female councilwoman declared her candidacy.

Mayor Morriss discussed the interesting progress in watching the construction on Baltimore Street. You can see the streetscape and pavers and it is neat to watch it come together and take shape, though it is a little bit of an adventure to drive. He continued that there are now 6-8 parking spots on Baltimore Street which gives people a chance to come down and park on that street for the first time in 50 years.

The Mayor reminded everyone that some businesses have access in the back but the sidewalks are open and every business is accessible. People can get everywhere they need to – and there have been some nice crowds. He finished by saying it is good to see everything coming along.

Councilwoman Marchini added that Ottaviani's has started serving brunch on Saturdays and Mayor Morris stated that it is sometimes difficult to get into the businesses, so that means they are busy and that is a good thing.

Mayor Morriss added that a Canal Place board meeting and Carver Center board meeting happened recently. The Carver Center Board is working on a strategic plan and will be reaching out for community input. He finished by saying that when it comes to the Carver Center – don't believe what you read on Facebook. While Congressman Trone got an earmark for the center, but there isn't access to the \$800,000 yet until the budget passes.

V. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 5:44 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted,

Allison K. Layton
City Clerk

Minutes approved on: _____