

# Mayor and City Council of Cumberland

## WORK SESSION

City Hall Council Chambers  
57 N. Liberty Street  
Cumberland, MD 21502

Tuesday, November 23, 2021  
4:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Raymond M. Morriss, President; Council Members: Richard Cioni, Eugene Frazier, and Joe George. Council Member Laurie Marchini was absent

**ALSO PRESENT:** Jeffrey Silka, City Administrator; Ken Tressler, Director of Administrative Services; Marjorie Woodring, City Clerk; Robert Smith, City Engineer; Cheyenne Jenkins, Skate Park Task Force; Phil Scolaro, Chairman-Hagerstown Skate Park; Kiera Shilling, President - Western MD Jaycees

### I. SKATE PARK DISCUSSION

The skate park task force presented an Agenda with items they wanted to cover:

#### **Location:**

Mayor Morriss advised that the two places left that are being proposed are Jaycee Field and Constitution Park. The Mayor said the task force wants to propose that Jaycee Field would be the best option.

Cheyenne Jenkins of the task force committee advised that Spawn Ranch stated that land owned by UPMC Western Maryland would not be advisable due to not being able to fit all their equipment in there, as well as having issues with trees, tree roots, and existing structures, that would cause the budget to skyrocket. She added that the entire skating community is not in favor of this site.

Ms. Jenkins stated that Jaycee (Pogey) Field is favored by the skate park task force as well as the skating community. She advised that there are already existing restrooms and a parking lot. She added that the President of the WMD Jaycees advised that they are willing to fundraise as well as place a camera system on the City's behalf to deter vandalism. She said that the task force would like for the City to update the basketball courts, and said they want to have a meeting with Chief Ternent to have the CPD begin patrolling the area to "set the tone" of the property. She said she also spoke with Chuck from At Ease Security, and said they will get them a price quote by next Monday which is expected to be between \$8K and \$15K.

Ms. Jenkins discussed Jaycee Field being on a 100-year flood plain, and said they have a basic understanding of what it will take to build on a flood plain, and said they've done research. She said their research showed some parks building a drainage system or retaining wall, and provided dimensions on the park and street plaza they are proposing. She added there will be a pump track for beginner, older skaters, BMX, roller blading, wheelchairs, and said the street plaza is for all forms of wheels. She stated that they weren't really looking to build any big bowls, and said she thinks the build will work.

Phil Scolaro, Chairman of the Hagerstown skate park committee, stated that bowls require the most excavation, and said the group has chosen the least invasive. He also explained the differences between the types of tracks, and said all of it will be concrete.

### **Funding and Grants:**

Ms. Jenkins discussed funding, saying the County has pledged 250K, and said they are currently looking at a \$450K budget. She said if the City could put up the \$10K necessary for the CTF account, the community fundraising goal is \$20K, leaving \$170K left for grants, etc. She asked for clarification on Open Space grant deadlines, and said she spoke with Lee Borrer about CDBG funding. She advised that CDBG funded the Hagerstown park, and said she was hoping for \$70K from CDBG. She also mentioned the Tony Hawk foundation, as well as the Coca Cola foundation.

Ms. Jenkins stated that Spawn Ranch is willing to have a Zoom session with Engineering, Council, etc. about any concerns and to discuss the flood plain. She also asked for signage to be placed throughout the area to indicate a recreational area there, and said a lot of kids don't know that Jaycee Field even exists.

Mr. Scolaro said that they had an afterthought for cameras, and said they are beneficial for policing, but they benefit other marketing purposes for the City as well, and mentioned filming events as well as doing a live feed.

Mayor Morriss advised that M&CC has been discussing the park, and said they are interested in figuring out the possibilities, but said they are probably not the people that can do the dissection of information and figure it out. He suggested the best thing to do is let staff start digging into numbers on budgeting and engineering, so they can come back with a package and say "this is what it would cost at Jaycee Field", to do it right. He stated that they will ask staff:

- 1) Engineering and what it would take at Jaycee Field, the cost, and do due-diligence.
- 2) Look at Constitution Park; talk with Spawn Ranch and get their concerns
- 3) Funding – Commissioner Shade seems fully committed to \$250K

There was discussion on funding in Hagerstown, with Mr. Scolaro stating that from CDBG and Open Space they got \$550K, and said they raised about another \$50K in addition to that funding from events. Mayor Morriss advised the task force to set their goal higher than \$20K, and said the more money from the private sector, the better the park. There was more discussion about the Hagerstown Park. Mr. Scolaro advised that their park in Hagerstown is pretty big, and has had tracks, etc. added onto it. He mentioned that he has calculated that the average square footage of a skate park can cost \$40/sq. ft., and said the task force is already budgeting up.

Kiera Shilling, President of the Western MD Jaycees, stated that they have weekly committee meetings and said they met last night to discuss fundraising. She advised that they have a list of fundraisers they are willing to do, but said the CTF account has to be opened first. She said in addition, the grants have time-lines, so the sooner they can get the CTF commitment, the sooner they can start fundraising. She said the Jaycees are looking forward to this, and said they look for diversity and inclusion, including the skating community. She discussed Jaycee Field having a bad name for years, it being a secluded place, and spoke about having competitions and events to pull people in and help tourism.

Mayor Morriss agreed that The Jaycees involvement is great, and mentioned their track record of success. He said he wants staff to figure out the best way to approach this going forward. He said as far as CTF, all of Council is in agreement, and said he can talk with them to get that established.

**Timeline:**

Mr. Smith inquired as to a conceptual plan, and said Jaycee Field is problematic, not just because of it being a 100-year flood plain, but because the “flood way” is on that site and takes up the majority of the field. He explained that the flood way is where rapid water flows. He advised that he has spoken to MDE, and said they are all for this concept in the flood plain, but said it has to be configured it to stay out of the flood way. He added that he will need the configuration so that Engineering can piece it into the site.

Mr. Scolaro advised that for their Hagerstown project, Spawn Ranch had to have the site before the design conception, and said if they could get site samples and information to Spawn Ranch, the head designer may be able to say if it’s a deal-breaker. The Mayor stated that might be the most critical information so far.

Mr. Silka suggested that instead of trying to hit all these topics tonight, let Council and staff get together with their team, then get with the committee and discuss what is needed to develop a work flow from there. Councilman George stated that they support the committee for their hard work, but said M&CC also has to consider the needs of the community at large. He discussed Jaycee Field being the only field in North End, and asked them not to limit themselves to that one location, because a half million investment is something the City wants to showcase. He suggested putting the skate park in an area where it can entertain large groups and feature the City.

Ms. Shilling stated that she would agree 100% if Jaycee Field was being utilized, but it’s not, and said the big issue is not whether to have a skate park, but where. She stated that wherever the location is, it is not going to please everybody, but stated that the Jaycees have discussed the location at the board level, and wherever it is, they will be in on it.

Councilman Frazier stated that the field is not being used right now because of Covid, and said it was used for softball in the past and was maintained. He also mentioned that the limited parking there will hurt the success of the skate park.

Ms. Jenkins stated that the skate park committee is not looking for the park to be a major tourism point, but just want it to meet the needs of the community. She advised that their meetings are at Dig Deep every Monday at 4:30, and are open to anyone. She stated that not a single person in the skating community wants the skate park at Constitution Park, and said they told her they would protest it and would continue to use the Dig Deep parking lot. In answer to a question from Council, she stated that there are approximately 100 people at the professional level that would use the skate park. She discussed the location of some parks being hidden and are not wanted close to neighborhoods due to noise issues.

Ms. Jenkins discussed the Mason Recreational Complex, and said her group ruled that out due to heavy traffic and not being safe to bike or skate to, as well as being away from small businesses that skaters like to frequent. She said the safest way to get to the field for bikers and skaters is the Canal towpath, which isn’t paved, and said that would have to be done quickly.

Ms. Jenkins discussed all the pros of why the committee chose Jaycee Field, and said she wants the park to be in a place that fits the skating community. She spoke about a new skate park in Rockville that is sitting empty due to rules, regulations, fees, etc., because they didn't listen to their community's needs.

It was decided that Mr. Scolaro will email Mr. Smith a general mock-up so his team can run some plans and numbers. Mayor Morriss reiterated getting the connection between staff, Spawn Ranch, and the skate park committee.

**II. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business at hand, the meeting adjourned at 5:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marjorie A. Woodring  
City Clerk

Minutes approved April 5, 2022