

MEETING NOTES FROM COMMUNITY MEETING

The David and Pauline Jarrell Center City Garden, Asheboro

February 23, 2023

Location: Asheboro Library

Attendees: Approximately 35 people signed in

Staffing the Meeting:

Trevor Nuttall, City of Asheboro Community Development
Justin Luck, City of Asheboro Planning
Jesse Day, PTRC
Grace Messinger, PTRC
Shawn Patch, New South Associates
Jennifer Wagner, PLA

City staff and consultants were available to discuss elements and answer questions at several “stations” around the room that contained different information related to the site and project. These stations included: Existing Site Conditions; History & Archaeology of the Site; Public Participation process; Proposed Master Plan; Visitor Center Preference Board; Grant Funding and Timeline. The following notes were collected both verbally and via written comments.

Verbal comments made at History & Archaeology Board:

1. Dog park should be considered.
2. The name of the park may lead some to think that this is a community vegetable garden.
3. Information on the enslaved people, including their names and when and to whom they would have been bought and sold, should be available.
4. The County’s master gardeners would very much like to be involved and included.
5. The project is growing in size and scale from what had been originally envisioned – it should be scaled back to a small, passive, urban greenspace.
6. The garden should not be positioned to compete with private venues, such as rental/meeting venues.
7. The property’s history should be told and any artifacts connected to it displayed.
8. Any walking surface should be handicap accessible.
9. Any new structure built or located on the property needs to fit the character of the neighborhood.
10. The project needs to move forward soon so that Mayor Jarrell can see it come to fruition.
11. City should consider opportunities to allow people to purchase commemorative bricks for walkways, benches, or memorial plants to support the project.

Verbal comments made at the Proposed Master Plan station:

1. Look at downtown Salisbury – Belltower Park for seating options. There are lots of different seating options in a small space.
2. The parking seems like it's too much – do we need that much?
3. The parking may not be enough – this will become a popular place to come.
4. Could there be a dog park here? Lots of neighbors walk their dogs and would enjoy a dog park. There will be one at the Sportsplex but it's farther away.
5. Can water collection and bioretention be included to use the stormwater and to clean stormwater (especially off of the parking lot).
6. Irises in the wetlands would be lovely. (Heather from Ramseur grows irises on her farm)
 - a. Use Louisiana irises – not invasive type.
7. Incorporate signage/ brochures around the park to talk about the types of plants. (Cody Craddock with Agriculture Extension)
8. Reminds me of Ronalda Gardens in Winston Salem, near Wake Forest University (April – master gardener.)
9. Love the heirloom garden idea. (April, Cody, others)
10. I have camellias to donate – camellia grower and enthusiast (John Cameron)
11. Consider bus parking/easy drop-off for school field trips.
12. City needs to purchase land to the east and to the north in order to create the pedestrian access shown as a potential connection in the plan. (David Jarrell and Dr. Francis Jones)
13. Include programming for school children in the park, at the visitor's center. (Dr. Francis Jones)
14. How to prevent people from sleeping or vandalizing the restrooms?
15. How to prevent encampments in the park?
16. Why not keep the existing house on the site for the visitor's center? If it is in good condition and it is not too expensive to upfit to work for the city's needs, seems like we should keep the house. (several people)
17. Is the police station moving to the north?
18. Include native plants for wildlife (Pat Holder – NC Native Plants) include native grasses and pollinators.
19. Will there be a fence around the park? We think it would be good to have.
20. Community garden would be nice (Mike – work at NC Zoo); could be maintained by volunteer gardeners and harvest shared.
21. Sidewalk connectivity is poor around the city so a lot of people will likely drive to the park.
22. Excited; love it; Want to see it built soon! (lots of people said)

Written Comments at Public Participation Process board:

1. Dog run with bags and trash and water dishes and shaded area.
2. Bathrooms locked unless welcome center is staffed.
3. Welcome center to include educational piece to curriculum “weather station”.

Verbal comments made at the Visitor's Center Preference Board:

1. No public support for prefab structure.

2. Received questions as to why existing brick structure could not be reused. Multiple attendees expressed a desire to further explore reuse of existing structure.
3. Moving an existing historic structure, such as the Gatekeeper's House or Robbins Law Office received support for consideration.
4. New construction received support for consideration, however, multiple attendees voiced displeasure with the architectural concepts presented and stated they would prefer a structure more in keeping with the historic nature of the neighborhood.
5. Space for classrooms, meetings, environmental programming, and education received support.
6. Restrooms clearly supported. Some concerns were voiced regarding security and maintenance of the restrooms.
7. No public support for concessions or city staff offices.
8. Strong support for storage of gardening supplies, particularly supplies for use by garden volunteers.
9. Mixed comments regarding event rentals, some voiced that events could disrupt or damage the garden.

Preference Dots at the Visitor Center Preference Board:

1. Classrooms for field trips (12 dots)
2. Educational center (12)
3. Environmental programming (12)
4. restrooms (15)
5. concessions/café (0)
6. rentable venue for events (6)
7. large room for meetings (7)
8. storage for gardening supplies, etc. (8)
9. city staff offices (0)

Witten comments at Visitor Center Preference Board:

1. Dog park
2. Use current brick house as welcome center – has room for educational space and restrooms. Lock it unless staffed.
3. Restrooms will be used by homeless, etc. That is ok, but you should plan for it. Anticipate it.
4. Think twice before removing present brick house. Can always be replaced later.
5. Please consider/reconsider using the existing brick house for the welcome center. It will best fit the aesthetic of the area and renovating is quicker than tearing and rebuilding.
6. If new building is determined to be a replacement to the older home, could it be an example of sustainable architecture?
7. Reduce number of car slots.
8. Keep old house.
9. Reduce types of activities and keep focus on nature.
10. More historic character.
11. Reuse existing building
12. Do not use to rent for events.
13. No to new construction without attention to historic return of property.