

# MEETING NOTES



**DATE:** January 13, 2021, 2p-4p | Zoom

**RE:** **Steering Committee Meeting #2: Technical Advisory Committee Minutes**

**PROJECT:** Riverside Park: *Adventure in the Making!*

**ATTENDEES:** Andre Denman (Indy Parks), Brad Beaubien (Visit Indy), Brent Kintner (Indy Parks Rangers), Don Miller (Land Stewardship), Don Colvin (Indy Parks), Gretchen Zortman (DPW), Jake Brinkman (Land Stewardship), Jamaal Diaby (Indy Parks), Jenny Cash (Parks Alliance), John Trypus (CEG), LaShawnda Crowe Storm (artist), Linda Broadfoot (Indy Parks), Mark Taylor (DPW Maintenance), Phyllis Hackett (neighborhood historian), Ronnetta Spalding (Indy Parks), Taylor Firestine (HBD), Tony Johnson (Indy Parks)

---

## 1. Welcome + Check-in

- a. Julee welcomed everyone and thanked everyone for attending meeting. The committee's feedback is crucial for finalizing the Riverside plan. Encouraged folks to share honest thoughts about the plan.

## 2. Timeline + Updates

- Open House was in September. There was a great turn out.
- Surveys were collected and feedback was analyzed.
- We are now in Phase II of the project which consists of Opportunities and Constraints analysis and concept development. With the feedback given today the design team can better refine concept.

## 3. Open House event re-cap + Survey feedback

- a. The open house was different than a typical public meeting. Due to COVID restrains, it was decided to instead have a celebration of "re-opening" the park. About 500 people attended. Attendees were given information about the park, tours were given, and surveys were filled out on site, online, or were mailed in from neighbors. The survey was open for 8 weeks and over 304 surveys were turned in with about 92 of them being hard copies.
- b. Demographics:
  - The average age was 30-39 years old. With equal male and female.
  - The average income was below \$50,000 a year.
  - Approximately 1/4 of respondents lived within 5 blocks of the park; 1/3 live between 1-5 miles away; 1/3 live over 5 miles from the park. The farthest came from Plainfield and Beech Grove
  - Approximately 60% of participants were White; 35% were Black. Majority of participants were not of Hispanic or Latino origin. There was outreach to the Latinx community but there was not a large response.
  - Largest response in Programs:
    1. Adult Fitness
    2. Outdoor Youth Camp
    3. After School Programs
  - Largest response in Activities:
    1. Walking, jogging, running, hiking on trails.
    2. Gathering with family and friends
    3. Boating, canoeing, kayaking, and watersports
  - Amenities
    1. Restrooms/Comfort stations

2. Natural Areas
  3. Multipurpose trails
    - Many are hoping to keep natural beauty and preserve what is already there.
    - Art in the park was an opportunity for public art in the space. Artwork ranged from traditional to more non-traditional. The majority of survey participants want to see more.
    - Because of COVID, artwork will remain up through spring so get the word out and go see the artwork.
  - c. The Design team went back to Master Plan elements list and added to it with new ideas tested from survey. The survey was then analyzed and an Opportunities and Constraints analysis was performed to identify where elements might happen in the park and the general size they would need.
- 4. Program and Opportunities + Constraints**
- a. Opportunities and Constraints takes the proposed program elements and organizes them to see where they can all fit within the project limits. This includes seeing what elements could be paired together and could share an infrastructure.
  - b. Riverside Opportunities and Constraints model includes zones, where similar elements are grouped. These include:
    - River Zone – located at the southeast corner of park. There is close proximity to the river, watersports and river access at this location. There is connectivity to the rest of the river.
    - Racing Zone – located at 30<sup>th</sup> and Cold Spring Road. Soap Box Derby elements will stay and outdoor fitness elements will be added as well as a tree top walk.
    - Winter Zone – located north of Racing Zone. This area will include sledding, skating ribbon, event area, toboggan run, biergarten, and will be multi-seasonal.
    - Wetland Education Zone – located at Crooked Creek and Lake Sullivan area. The Major Taylor Velodrome and mountain bike trails will remain and an added bike pump track and skate park extension is identified for this area.
    - Central Nature Zone – includes the old clubhouse which could be converted to a nature center. This area connects to the large open passive recreation area and also includes an archery area.
- 5. Concept Development**
- a. Concept was presented as cohesive plan and then reviewed by Zone; Each member then was asked for feedback.
  - b. Because of physical characteristics and restraints of the park, the elements are mostly arranged around the perimeter because of the large floodplain. The plan is not finalized but is a working idea that has taken into account the functionality, practicality, political aspects, and maintenance with the help of the Indy Parks team.
  - c. The Zones
    - River Zone – This area is located at the finish line to Soap Box Derby and includes a large event space. There will be river access, a parking lot expansion that will total 250 spaces, restrooms, small stage, picnic groves, and an event lawn. A shelter and picnic plaza will be located at the location of the old historic pavilion and casino. The team hopes to incorporate the history of the pavilion. Current paved cart paths will remain (shown as dashed lines on concept) and additional connection paths will be added (solid line on concept). An overlook at White River Parkway and 30<sup>th</sup> street is proposed and would include a plaza.
    - Racing Zone – This zone will include a new building for the Soap Box Derby that will have an indoor practice area and storage. A pagoda similar to the style of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway will create a public presence feature. A parking lot is proposed and entry plaza at the building. An RC track, a small dirt track for remote control cars, is identified for this area. One could choose a more park-like trail along Cold Spring Road or a trail leading to the SBD structures. Also added is a fitness trail with stations around a measurable track and a dog park. A treetop walk includes an overlook over the historic bear pit, which could be an

opportunity for an interpretive site. There is also a break off from treetop walk into more of an adventurous suspension bridge walk.

- Winter Zone – this zone includes a year-round skate ribbon and toboggan run. The current sledding hill will remain with added sledding located at the previous 18<sup>th</sup> hole. This area has great views; a proposed overlook terrace will be located at the top of the hill. A pavilion with fire pits and a biergarten would also be located at this area. A stage would be located off the biergarten and could be aimed toward biergarten or the event lawn and skate ribbon.
- Wetland Education Zone – This zone includes Crooked Creek and Lake Sullivan. The wetland creates a delta for education opportunities. A trail system with observation deck could include interpretive signage. For safety purposes it is suggested to minimize road crossings and due to illegal dumping and activities, restricting vehicle access to the area near I-65. A boardwalk is proposed over the pond and a trail link to the nature center. A bike pump track and skate park extension will fit well with the proximity to the Velodrome.
- Central Nature Zone – The old clubhouse will be expanded to become the new nature center and will include expanding the parking lot. An archery range is proposed and can be developed quickly in phases. The existing drive can be used and as the archery range grows the drive can curve further south to accommodate and eventually additional parking can be added. Nature play and education areas are location in this zone, as well as educational demonstration garden. Picnic groves and shelters are suggested. Mounds which used to be part of the railroad through the park will be used to help celebrate the past and provide high observation gathering spaces. These spaces could be used for locations for art or bird blinds could be added.

d. Feedback

- Andre: Kuddos on implementing comments and changes that were recommended. He likes that plan implements existing cart paths. He feels the entry drive to the clubhouse may not be implemented because of cost. He is interested in how the public will embrace the biergarten and some of the SBD improvements. He mentioned that people will not walk over a half a football field for a picnic spot. We need to look at some of the picnic areas and their location to parking.
- Gretchen: Wonders if there is opportunity for a larger fitness loop? Also thinks the loop should be a soft surface for runners. Not sure if this could benefit more residents from the east side of White River by placing it on the southeast area of the site. She loves the treetop trail but wonders if there is a better viewshed from northwest corner or adjacent to River. Suggests adding a playscape area and family programming at the biergarten. She loves the year-round toboggan and skating loop but is concerned about maintenance. She would vote for the toboggan run over skate loop if had to choose. She mentioned that scooters are very popular at skate parks not sure if there is a difference in design for a scooter area. She wondered if it is possible to move the archery to a more open space to retain existing trees in the proposed location, not sure if there would need to be tree removal and if any mitigation required. She wonders if there were any thoughts to reuse the park/restaurant on the other side of White River Drive. Is mountain biking trail option out? Are there plans for art space with programming and outdoor education space for Riverside High School.
- Tony: Likes the overall year-round experience. Likes the nature aspect, archery, nature play areas, the shelter in the River zone and ability to host small events. He agrees that the fitness trail could be bigger. He likes the SBD improvements and getting the neighborhood kids involved. Loves the treetop trail and winter zone and has a history of sledding the hill.
- Jenny: Thinks plan is awesome. Feels park is enjoyable as is with existing elements and excited about adding other elements. Specifically, the winter zone which will help get people out in the winter months. Also, great opportunity for visitors to come to Indy. The racing area is a great theme for Indy and there is opportunity for sponsorship and funding.
- Brad: Excited about winter area, there is a definite deficit in entire region. Wondering about livery? Sarah: The idea of a livery was discussed in the River Zone but needs to be discussed

further in regard to vendor to provides service etc. and need to be refined. Brad: There is an interest in Noblesville because the of the dam, there is a loss of water recreation. Also, curious what happen to the ropes course and zipline idea? Sarah: The team investigated the site at Eagle Creek Park; there are concerns about proximity to that existing location and not creating competition/draw away from Eagle Creek. That type of zipline could also be limiting because of fee- based activity. The treetop walk gave us a similar smaller experience that more people could enjoy. Brad: Thinks there should be Native American historic interpretative history as well as keeping with the more modern history.

- Phyllis H.: Loves the concept and ideas overall. Think there should be a focus on Indiana as heartland and agriculture and opportunities in agri-nature. Believes public land should have an emphasis on economic development for future and create career-based opportunities and options. Believes good concept to be part of future for those who live here vs. people who come here. She is more concerned about intergenerational options for trails. Walking long ways for older adults can be challenging. Acreage similar to Central Park, but Central Park has bicycle carts for impaired pedestrians. Towards Brads comment on Native American interpretive history, this is planned for the Promenade.
- Jamaal: Love the zones. He feels there is may be too many stages, considering Taggart is close by.
- Mark: Great concept. From a maintenance side it seems like a mess. It looks like someone would need to be on site depending on how many visitors on a regular basis. The location of shelters, if too close together could be a problem with people walking by and disturbing. He and team would need to get in there to clean and other maintenance concerns. Sarah: we will look at more of these logistic elements in the next phase and the team would like to meet with Mark and team to get specifics for implementation into the plan.
- Jake: Likes the variety and year-round opportunities for different ages and interests. He is looking forward to planting plans.
- Ronnetta: The plan looks wonderful and creates different experiences. Eager to hear public feedback and creating an outreach plan for communication of the concept.
- Matthew: Excellent. Excited for the community. He thinks it is a great opportunity. Concerned about how utility vehicles will maneuver through park. Sarah: Existing trails would be used and there is mowed turf grass along the cart paths to accommodate maintenance vehicle widths. Matthew: Will need to think more about logistics of risks, strategies, security measures, etc.
- Taylor: Excellent. He does not live in the immediate area, but as long as the community input is utilized, that is his desire. Concerned about parking lot on southeast side at Parkway on levee and the drainage next to the waterway. Also wondering about connectivity across 30<sup>th</sup> and Cold Springs Road. Sarah: there is an existing crossing at the intersection and DPW multi-use trail on west side of Cold Spring Road. There is an entry plaza which could include gateway experience. Don S.: There is a new drive entrance proposed for the Winter Zone that could also have a crossing. On Cold Spring Road and Marian side team is being sensitive to landscape complimentary to Marians manicure landscape. Whereas the more native landscape is further in park. Taylor: Viewsheds are what struck him most about park. He had no ideas there were hills like that in the park.
- Brent: Agrees with Andre about the picnic shelter locations and accessibility. Feels the concept looks great.
- Don C: Is pleased with the way the plan has evolved and included all points of view. He feels the fitness does not need to be larger, because people could just use the paths in the Central Nature Zone for longer loop. There is a need for Archery in Marion County and the location proposed in not in a sensitive area, but in a maintenance area that has been highly disturbed. For the livery, we need to figure out. He said we also need to figure out a water source for the snow activities for snow making, which would require a pond or other non-clean water source.

- Don M: The parking lot at the Marina could be a good place for livery, the Lake Indy area. Don C: No additions can be made to Marina, not a big enough lot, at our maximum. It is also right next to dam that would not be a good spot. Don S: V3, as part of the Marina site master plan, has identified an enhanced boating access with a pull-off and walkway that lead to the 30<sup>th</sup> Street bridge for boating access. Julee: Marina drop off and Lake Indy pull out possibility. For a livery do we need an actual storage facility or could it be on trailers? Don C: Could be on trailers have even seen them in shipping containers. May not need actual structure.
- John: Great concept. He likes the biergarten and thinks it will bring people together.
- LaShawnda: Wonders about the arts component and the space within the context of art. Sarah: The former railroad mounds are identified for art installations. There is flexibility on location once artist is on site. The Central Nature Zone is a good place for art features to happen. New infrastructures, shelters, and entry monuments could also serve as functional art piece areas. LaShawnda: This an overly programmed area in Marion County. Interested in how this will work in the ecosystem of cultural programs, i.e., 16 tech art component, Newfields apprenticeship, and equitable spaces with arts.

#### 6. Next Steps + Closing Thoughts

- a. Team will take feedback from this meeting and the morning committee meeting and apply it to the concept.
- b. Team will then refine preferred concept, refine sketch, and move on the Phase III which includes schematic renderings and budget.
- c. Final Steering Committee meeting will be late April, early May.
- d. Team will meet with Ronnetta to formalize a community update communication.