

# MEETING NOTES

## MACON/PLEASANT HILL PROJECT

MASTER CONTRACT#: TOOELENV100523 · TASK ORDER#: 10 · PROJECT#: NHIM0-0016-01(092), BIBB

Version #: 1.0

Issue Date: 2/18/14

**Attendees:** GDOT: Clinton Ford, OPD; Kimberly Larson, Communications; Kraig Collins, Area Engineer

URS: Nick Castonova; Mickey O'Brien

EnviroResolution (ER): Banks Craig

Macon-Bibb County: Julie Moore; Wanzina Jackson; Stephen Lawson; Alex Morrison

PHNIG: Captain Willie May

Pleasant Hill Community: Yolanda Latimore; Pastor Tony Lowden; Pastor Jason McClendon; Alice Jackson

**Location:** GDOT Macon Area Office-4499 Riverside Drive, Macon, GA

**Date:** 2/18/14

**Purpose:** Pleasant Hill Community Jefferson Long Park Meeting

**CC:**

### Discussion

#### Agenda Item 1: Discussion of Jefferson Long Park Framework

##### Action Item(s)

- Clinton Ford began the meeting by welcoming everyone and asking for introductions.
- Clinton said there will be a Community vote at the end of the meeting about the final Jefferson Long Park framework.
- Clinton turned the meeting over to Mickey O'Brien.
- Mickey began with an overview of past meetings related to the Jefferson Long Park design.
- Mickey said at a meeting on May 23, 2013, URS discussed elements of successful parks and important park design elements.
- Mickey said the Jefferson Long Park is bounded by Pursley Street, First Avenue, and Craft Street.
- Mickey stated: One desire of the Community is to have a good flow to the park.
- The Community is very fortunate to have the park. Mickey said the park is a wonderful site opportunity due to the park's mostly flat topography. In addition, the park already has a community garden.
- The park offers opportunities for sun and shade.
- Parks need to consist of some public and some semi-public experiences.
- There are some pecan trees in the park which offer nice shade opportunities.
- Next, Mickey drew on a map of the proposed Jefferson Long Park.
- Mickey commented it is very important to have a connection between the Jefferson Long Park and Pursley Street. He also said Pecan Street will be demolished to create a larger green space.
- Mickey said it is also a good idea to create some parking for the park on Pursley Street.
- Mickey also stated it is important to create a connection from the Great Lawn across Craft Street to the Penniman House.
- Mickey stressed that the reason everyone attended the meeting is to get more feedback from the Community in order to design the best park possible for Pleasant Hill.

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- Clinton Ford said there are comment sheets to leave comments. Clinton asked if there were any questions.
- Yolanda Latimore asked if the acquisition of the four parcels near the Founder's Garden will hold up the construction of the park.
- Mickey O'Brien said the City of Macon is already trying to acquire these four parcels. Mickey mentioned that if the City has trouble acquiring the parcels, the park could be constructed in phases as more parcels are acquired.
- Julie Moore said up until last week the City thought the Penniman House was going to be located on the four parcels next to the Founder's Garden. The City realized the Community wants the Penniman House located on three parcels across Craft Street. Julie said the three parcels are owned by three different owners.
- Captain May said the Community wants the Penniman House to be located near the Jefferson Long Park. The Penniman House should be as close to the park as possible centered with the Community Garden.
- Julie Moore said the City is now trying to acquire the three properties, but it could be a very long process.
- Clinton Ford said GDOT is almost ready to move the Penniman House, but it doesn't have to be moved right now.
- Julie said the City needs a set of park design plans since federal money is involved. Julie said the City needs the final design plans before the City will be able to acquire the three properties.
- Yolanda Latimore asked who will maintain the Penniman House.
- Clinton Ford stated GDOT already purchased the Penniman House. Clinton said GDOT will renovate and relocate the House, but the City will have responsibility to maintain the House.
- Yolanda asked what the significance is of the Penniman House being relocated near the Jefferson Long Park.
- Captain May said the Community wants the Penniman House to be near the Jefferson Long Park so the Community Resource Center can be an attraction of the park.
- Mickey O'Brien suggested the possibility of breaking the Great Lawn in two separate areas. Breaking the park into two pieces will create an upper and a lower lawn area.
- Mickey said this is a good way to deal with the eight percent change in slope. Mickey said there will be a sitting wall dividing the two levels of the park.
- Mickey said there is the possibility of planting more shade trees in the lower area of the park.
- Mickey also said dividing the park into two areas will help the park remain a passive park.
- Julie Moore asked if the Community is open to the idea of the Penniman House being relocated to the four lots near the Garden if the other three lots cannot be acquired.
- Captain May said the Community probably needs a plan A, B, and C. Plan A is the desired plan where the Penniman House is relocated to the three parcels across Craft Street. Captain May said the Community needs to regroup and develop backup plans if needed.
- Mickey O'Brien said some thought needs to be given to the community resource center. The Community doesn't want too much sunlight getting into the Penniman House. You don't want to create a building which will destroy the artifacts located inside.
- Yolanda said the Community needs to go ahead and apply for funds needed to maintain the community resource center.
- Alex Morrison said the City wants to help and has already invested a large amount of money into acquiring the four parcels. Alex said the Community needs to be realistic about other alternatives for the location of the Penniman House if the land acquisition process for the three

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- parcels across Craft Street doesn't go as planned.
- Stephen Lawson said planting a lot of trees and grass will help the City maintain the park. Keeping the park design simple will help the City to maintain the park.
  - Captain May said it is important to have an ordinance in place which states people can't be in the park after 11:00 p.m. in order to avoid vandalism.
  - Mickey said the eyes of the community are the best line of defense.
  - Mickey said the environmental document specified there will be a water feature located in the park.
  - Clinton Ford asked whether the Community desires to have a water feature.
  - Tony Lowden said he has mixed emotions. He wants to have a water feature and doesn't want to avoid installing the water feature for fear of vandalism.
  - Stephen Lawson said water features are hard to maintain because the piping for water fountains is usually six feet under concrete. If you use a water feature, it is a good idea to make sure it is a simple water feature.
  - Mickey asked if URS is on target with the proposed general framework of the park.
  - Captain May said the Community wants to see the park divided into two separate areas with the sitting wall in the middle of the park.
  - Mickey said the sitting wall will be around two feet high with a walkway across the top of the wall.
  - Clinton asked if the Community wants shade trees planted in the lower park area.
  - Stephen Lawson said trees are fine for the lower area, but the Community needs to give some thought to the best species of trees to plant.
  - Wanzina Jackson said the owners of the three vacant lots needed for the Penniman House want to sell the property for commercial prices even though the property is not commercial property.
  - Captain May said if the City is unsuccessful in acquiring the three lots needed for the Penniman House, the Community needs to come up with a backup plan that the City is ok with since the City ultimately has to maintain the property.
  - Pastor McClendon said he feels uncomfortable with the Penniman House not having a security system or a guard. He feels it is not a good idea that the security plan for the building and the artifacts to be for the Community to police everyone who comes and goes from the Penniman House.
  - Mickey O'Brien said a non-profit or conservancy is really needed to maintain the facility and do justice to the artifacts and legacies which will be stored there.
  - Tony Lowden said the Community is going to have to step up and be stakeholders. The Community needs to create a community board to protect the Penniman House.
  - Clinton Ford asked if the City has a general idea of when the City will know whether the three lots needed for the Penniman House can be acquired.
  - Julie Moore said the City needs to know if the Community is firm in its desire to have the Penniman House located on the three lots across Craft Street. If the Community is firm in its desire, the City can help facilitate a meeting between the Community and groups such as Historic Macon, College Hill, and Community Foundation. Julie said these groups can speak with the owners about selling faster than the City. Julie said the land acquisition process will be very slow if the City realizes it may have to ultimately use eminent domain proceedings to acquire the three parcels.

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#### Agenda Item 3: Vote on Final Jefferson Long Park Framework

##### Action Item(s)

- Clinton Ford announced the final vote on the Jefferson Long Park framework.
- Captain May made a motion to approve the framework where the park will be divided into two separate areas with a sitting wall in the middle. Yolanda Latimore seconded the motion.
- Clinton Ford passed around ballots to approve the final park framework.
- Finally, the Community members cast and signed their ballots, and Clinton Ford adjourned the meeting.