



City of Broken Arrow
Minutes
City Council Special Meeting

City Hall
220 S 1st Street
Broken Arrow OK
74012

Mayor Debra Wimpee
Vice Mayor Christi Gillespie
Council Member Johnnie Parks
Council Member Lisa Ford
Council Member Justin Green

Tuesday, August 15, 2023

Time 5:00 p.m.

Council Chambers

1. Call to Order

Mayor Debra Wimpee called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: 5 - Justin Green, Lisa Ford, Johnnie Parks, Christi Gillespie, Debra Wimpee

3. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

4. General Council Business

A. 23-1045 Consideration, discussion, and possible approval of the Aspen Landing Study, prepared by the OU Urban Design Studio (OU UDS)

Assistant City Manager of Operations Kenny Schwab indicated he would introduce this Item and City Manager Spurgeon would join the meeting after his live radio show. He stated this study was done through the Oklahoma University Urban Design Studio; the students who did this study would earn a master's degree. He noted this was the OU UDS students' vision of what could be done with Aspen Landing. He stated the goal was to obtain feedback from City Council regarding the Study and then Staff would consider next steps.

Mr. Farhad Daroga reported development and enhancement of the Arkansas River Corridor was identified as a goal in the 2019 NEXT Comprehensive Plan, as well as the Parks Master Plan. He indicated the City owned 234 acres of land at the south end of Aspen by the river in two sections. He noted most of this land was utilized by the Soccer Club and Baseball Club. He stated occasionally the City had other events in this location. He explained this Study was embarked upon to create other opportunities for the community. He reported a nine-person advisory panel was formed to assist in this study, along with staff from the Community Development Department. He indicated the study was conducted under the direction of Professor Shawn Schaefer starting in the Fall 2022 Semester and concluding in May 2023. He stated the Study was available online and would be updated as necessary. He introduced Professor Shawn Schaefer.

Urban Design Studio Director, Professor Shawn Schaefer, discussed the master's program for design at OU Tulsa and the benefits of this type of project for students earning this type of degree. He indicated he felt his students did an admirable job with this Study. He introduced the students who conducted the Study, Dylan Siers, Preslie Anderson, Tyler Duncan and Sonu Malla who is part of the team but unable to attend.

Mr. Dylan Siers began the Aspen Landing presentation noting Aspen Landing was located on the southern end of Aspen Avenue along the Arkansas River, intersected by streams which were incorporated into the design elements. He noted Aspen Landing was approximately 234 acres. He displayed and discussed the existing site plan. He discussed the stakeholders involved in the Study: Farhad Daroga, Jill Ferenc, Christi Gillespie, Lori Hill, Phil Hink, Travis Kelly, JoAnne Oxford, Barbara Wilson, and Amanda Yamaguchi. He noted the stakeholders indicated nature preservation and economic development were high priorities for this area. He discussed the stakeholders' goals for Aspen Landing: improve connectivity; keep businesses in Broken Arrow; attract visitors; and create connectivity within the park and outside the park. He displayed and discussed site photos including the entrances, fields, concessions, restrooms, pavilions, streams, school site, baseball fields, and the Arkansas River. He discussed the lack of connectivity, existing lighting on the fields, flooding, existing pipelines, the loop road, the streams, potential walking trails, enhancing nature, fishing accessibility, and beach potential.

Council Member Lisa Ford asked if she could kayak in the area.

Mr. Siers responded it would depend upon the day and the water level.

Ms. Preslie Anderson continued with the presentation. She indicated two community

engagement events were held and a visual preference survey was conducted; results revealed residents wished to see a zipline, walking trails, splash pads, water activities, observation deck, and an outdoor theater. She stated research and analysis of the Broken Arrow Comprehensive Plan, the Arkansas River Corridor Master Plan, BA Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and the GO Plan were conducted. She discussed the research and analysis of the connectivity, open space, and buildings in the area. She discussed the flood research conducted including a meeting with David Williams, Chief, Hydrology and Hydraulics Branch at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Tulsa District) on February 11, 2023. She noted a new dam was going in below Creek Turnpike but would not affect this location. She stated flooding originated from Keystone Dam but was predictable 18 to 24 hours in advance. She indicated the flood elevation was 595 feet mean sea level and all structures on site would be built at 600 feet msl or above. She reported existing infrastructure was considered, such as lighting and parking.

Mr. Tyler Duncan continued the presentation discussing the five recommended big moves: optimize the existing park and make improvements; connect to destinations with a multiuse trail system; conserve and enhance the natural environment; create a destination to attract visitors and retain business; and develop scenarios for Aspen Avenue and connecting the corridor up toward the creek. He displayed and discussed the existing site plan, proposed parking and road layouts including a roundabout, and a proposed food truck site.

Discussion ensued regarding the proposed food truck site, blocking off the road to make it entirely pedestrian, and parking available near the food truck site.

Mr. Duncan continued. He displayed and discussed the proposed rearrangement of soccer fields and a west soccer field expansion to make Aspen Landing a regional tournament hub. He noted the west soccer field expansion also included the creation of a new entrance to Aspen Landing from Olive. He displayed and discussed a proposed Aspen Landing trail system including a dog park, wetlands, and nature center. He discussed the potential nature center, pond area, and boardwalk over the wetlands. He displayed and discussed the site plan for the proposed boardwalk and pier which included areas for restaurants, carnival games, Ferris wheel, fishing pier, zip line, pool area, and tiki houses. He noted the pier would have covered areas as well. He displayed and discussed renderings of the pier and boardwalk, including the proposed zipline area and Ferris Wheel.

Ms. Anderson displayed and discussed renderings of the proposed floating tiki huts and floating pool area.

Mr. Siers displayed and discussed renderings of the proposed amphitheater and beer garden.

Mr. Duncan displayed and discussed renderings of the proposed dog park area including restaurant and retail space, such as bicycle rentals and repair. He discussed the potential development of a hotel in the area. He displayed and discussed a rendering of the widening of Aspen Avenue leading into the park including bike and walking trails. He displayed and discussed the proposed Aspen Landing overall site plan. He discussed the next steps which included a citizen feedback survey and preliminary cost estimates. He noted potential funding options included the Capital Improvements Plan (Bond Funding), park fees and leases, State and Federal Grants, and private philanthropy. He discussed the benefits of Aspen Landing: preserves and enhances current team sporting events; mitigates flood impacts and provides better maintenance facilities; encourages current park visitors to stay in Broken Arrow; attracts new visitors with a variety of activities; promotes development along Aspen Avenue and the Creek Turnpike; and provides Broken Arrow with an accessible, beautiful waterfront.

Mayor Wimpee asked why the OU UDS chose Aspen Landing as its project.

Mr. Schaefer stated Mr. Daroga served on the Studio's Professional Community Advisory Board during which potential projects and opportunities were discussed. He thanked Mr. Daroga, Ms. Yamaguchi, and City Staff. He stated this project was an excellent learning experience for his students and he hoped the study provided a useful product for the City.

Mayor Wimpee stated the Study was outstanding and would be amazing for Broken Arrow.

Council Member Ford stated she loved the ideas presented.

Mayor Wimpee asked if the Soccer Club and Baseball Club were receptive to these ideas.

Mr. Duncan responded in the affirmative. He stated the Clubs wished for two things: the new soccer fields and additional parking. He explained the new soccer fields were required to bring the area up to tournament standards. He explained parking was essential and the new road, field, and parking design would eliminate bottlenecks and create ample parking.

Council Member Ford stated creating a new western entrance would highly benefit the existing residents in the area who did not appreciate traffic through the neighborhoods to access the park from the west.

Council Member Justin Green agreed another entrance was necessary and the roads definitely needed reconfiguring as the existing loop road was inefficient. He stated he loved the ideas presented in the Study.

Council Member Johnnie Parks discussed the history of flooding in the area prior to the Keystone Dam which alleviated much of the flooding difficulties. He stated he loved the ideas presented in the Study.

Vice Mayor Gillespie commended and thanked the OU UDS. She stated she never told the OU UDS how much she loved roundabouts, and she was excited to see a roundabout included in the proposed site plan. She indicated she appreciated how the soccer fields were rearranged to bring all the smaller fields for children into one location. She stated she knew the Soccer Club would really appreciate the rearrangement of fields, as well as the creation of new soccer fields. She noted a sandcastle contest at Aspen Landing would be fun.

Mr. Daroga noted the Broken Arrow Soccer Club had 3,700 games annually which brought in an estimated 60,000 to 70,000 people annually. He stated Aspen Landing was an asset owned by the City which could be developed to highly benefit the City. He noted the Soccer Club was very interested in adding more soccer fields, which would be a challenge as it would require the acquisition of additional land. He noted there was a pipeline on the south and southwest side which would also be a challenge due to the erosive sandy soil. He stated there was a lot of potential in Aspen Landing. He thanked Professor Schaefer, Mr. Schwab, City Staff, and the Army Corps of Engineers.

City Manager Michael Spurgeon stated a citizen survey about Aspen Landing was recommended and this could be incorporated into the citizen survey regarding priorities within the community, specifically the next bond package. He reported between Tulsa County and Wagoner County, Broken Arrow’s assessment went up 9 percent which meant instead of being able to sell \$25.5 million dollars of the General Obligation Bond Package for this year, the package presented to City Council would be for \$36 million dollars. He stated that was \$9 million dollars off the current bond package. He indicated it was time to start preparing for the next bond package and at some point, the City needed to develop estimates for what the Aspen Landing project could cost and create project phases for development. He stated he believed this project could easily compete with Elam Park in terms of a community center. He noted he wished to keep the tax rate at 16.5 mils. He indicated relocation of the maintenance building at Aspen Landing would need to be included in the next bond package. He recommended City Council authorize Staff to include the questions about Aspen Landing in the survey and to move forward with acquisition of cost estimates.

Mayor Wimpee agreed it was important to have cost estimates before asking the citizenry to consider Aspen Landing.

City Manager Spurgeon agreed. He noted a ten year phased program for development of Aspen Landing would also be beneficial.

Mayor Wimpee stated the first phase should include food options (food trucks), a better entrance, acquisition of additional land, relocation of the maintenance building, etc.

Council Member Parks noted creation of a Master Plan would enable future City Councils to continue with the project. He agreed purchasing additional land should be a priority and that the project should be phased and built a little at a time.

City Manager Spurgeon agreed. He noted the foundational things needed to be completed first, such as the infrastructure improvements, land acquisition, etc. He noted reconfiguration of existing soccer fields and addition of new soccer fields were important. He stated he was excited about this project. He again recommended moving forward with the survey. He asked for a motion to accept the project, move forward with the survey, and begin looking for estimates.

MOTION: A motion was made by Christi Gillespie, seconded by Johnnie Parks.

Move to accept the project, move forward with the survey, and begin looking at estimates for the Master Plan

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Justin Green, Lisa Ford, Johnnie Parks, Christi Gillespie, Debra Wimpee

City Manager Spurgeon recommended formation of a citizen advisory committee including members of the Soccer and Baseball Clubs, as well as additional citizens who could help make determinations regarding Aspen Ridge development priorities.

5. Remarks and Inquiries by Governing Body Members

There were no remarks or inquiries by Governing Body Members.

6. Remarks and Updates by City Manager

There were no remarks or updates by City Manager.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:04 p.m.

MOTION: A motion was made by Johnnie Parks, seconded by Lisa Ford.

Move to adjourn

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Justin Green, Lisa Ford, Johnnie Parks, Christi Gillespie, Debra Wimpee

Mayor

City Clerk