

**RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD  
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY  
Meeting of Thursday, November 3, 2005**

**MINUTES**

**Board members present:** Andrew Roper, Chairperson, Coleman Hillman, Vice-Chairperson, Patrick Dugan, Robert Harper, Robert Richardson, Jody Payne and Lisa Wainger Rush.

**Board members absent:** Sam Brown and Dorothy Gass.

**Recreation, Parks and Community Services staff and others present:** Phil Rollins, Director, Recreation, Parks & Community Services (RP&CS), Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager, Kenny Sothoron, Sports Coordinator, David Guyther, Parks Manager and Kathy Bailey, Recorder. Robin Finnacom, President/CEO, Community Development Corporation, was present to provide an update on the Lexington Manor property.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Board meeting was called to order by Andrew Roper, Chairperson, at 5:35 p.m. in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Robert Richardson motioned, seconded by Jody Payne, to approve the minutes of September 1, 2005. Motion carried.**

**RECREATION DIVISION REPORT**

Mr. Rollins introduced Arthur Shepherd, Recreation Division Manager, who provided an overview Recreation Division programs and events.

- Program Guide and Leisure Program Registration – The Winter 2006 Program Guide will be inserted in the Enterprise newspaper on December 14, 2005 and registration also begins on that date.
- Youth Basketball Registration – Youth Basketball registration begins November 7-9 for 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade; December 1 for 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade; and December 3 for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.
- Fit for Life 8K Run/Walk – Despite the inclement weather, the 1<sup>st</sup> annual Fit for Life 8K Run/Walk was a success. Heavy rain cancelled the children's activities, but over 50 runners participated in this inaugural event designed to promote healthy lifestyle choices. Results can be found by visiting the Department's website at [www.co.saint-marys.md.us/recreate](http://www.co.saint-marys.md.us/recreate).

Mr. Shepherd introduced Tim Winegrad, Recreation Specialist, who recently began working with the Division. Tim will assist the Recreation Division Manager and Coordinators with administrative duties, projects, activities and special events.

**YOUTH SPORTS PARTICIPATION AND FACILITY REPORT**

Mr. Shepherd introduced Kenny Sothoron, Sports Coordinator, who presented the FY2005 Youth Sports Participation and Facility Report to the Board. The report provides annual statistics that are important when considering parkland acquisition, facility development and other facility needs. The report includes information on RP&CS sponsored leagues and volunteer youth sports leagues. Mr. Sothoron highlighted the following:

- Seasonal registered participants in soccer, lacrosse, baseball and basketball and summer sports camps.
- Participation in sports camps has been increasing for the past several years.
- Challenges have been noted in scheduling fields for practices and games; some days of the week are more

popular than others.

- Challenges were noted with regard to the limited number of gyms available for basketball practice. Currently, the Youth Basketball League players practice one night per week for one hour.
- Lacrosse programs are seeing increased participation and it has been a challenge to find enough practice fields for the players.

Bob Richardson commented that the 90' baseball field at St. Clement's Shores is actually being used as a 60' field.

Coleman Hillman asked if RP&CS had received any comments on the Nicolet Park basketball court. He's hearing that the kids don't like the double rim. Mr. Rollins stated that staff will check into that; the double rim was installed because it is sturdy and should withstand long term wear and tear.

The question was raised about whether baseball tournaments have a negative impact on the fields at Chancellor's Run. Mr. Shepherd stated that they generally do not have a negative impact.

## **PARKS DIVISION UPDATE**

Mr. Rollins introduced David Guyther, Parks Division Manager, who provided an update on several Parks Division projects.

- The Northern Soccer League is working with the Department to take two fields at Chaptico Park out of play before the fall season ends so staff can begin working on over seeding the fields for next spring.
- The canoe/kayak launch in Great Mills (former Mansfield property) is open for use. The Department plans to install a "step down" to the water similar to the one in Leonardtown at McIntosh Run.
- The bids to construct playgrounds at Chaptico Park, St. Clement's Shores and Seventh District Park are being reviewed by staff and a contract should be awarded in the near future. The playgrounds will be constructed in spring 2006.

## **STATUS OF LEXINGTON MANOR PROPERTY**

Robin Finnacom, President/CEO, Community Development Corporation, was present to provide the Board with a status report on the Lexington Manor property. She reported that the St. Mary's County Community Development Corporation, Inc. (CDC) recommends the redevelopment of 91 +/- contiguous acres of commercially zoned land located in the Town Center of Lexington Park. The principal portion of this property is the 84 acre Lexington Manor neighborhood owned by St. Mary's County Government. The remaining property includes the Three Oaks Center, the Three Notch Theatre, and a 1.29 acre vacant parcel adjacent to the Lexington Park Post Office, all also owned by St. Mary's County, and the Whitlow and Bay District Volunteer Fire Department properties, both privately owned.

Redevelopment of this acreage is necessary to permanently eliminate residential encroachment on the Naval Air Station, to revitalize Lexington Park, eliminate blight, and support the future office needs of the United States Navy and the defense contractor community.

The Lexington Manor neighborhood is part of a multi-year federal, state and locally funded initiative to relocate existing residents and demolish all but two of the 171 blighted duplex dwelling units on the site. Only 2 families of the original 110 families must still be relocated. Plans to demolish the duplex units are underway. The demolition project will likely require six to nine months to complete. The remaining two duplex dwelling units are part of the reuse plan of the 91 acre site.

The CDC was created by St. Mary's County Government to be an independent, non-profit partner in the redevelopment of economically depressed commercial and residential properties throughout St. Mary's County. The Board of Directors of the Corporation is composed of bankers, commercial and residential developers, and business owners.

The Development Corporation proposes to accept assignable options from St. Mary's County and from private property owners on 41 acres located on the northern end of this property to achieve redevelopment of the site. The Corporation will solicit developer interest with the expressed purpose of ultimately transferring all or a portion of the 41 acres to private ownership. The Corporation will also create a master plan for recreational use of the southern 50-acres of the 91

acre site. The southern 50 acres of this property was purchased with Program Open Space funding.

Current zoning laws and other legal requirements stemming from binding agreements on the future use of the land create both significant opportunities and challenges for the redevelopment of the 91 acre site. The Lexington Manor Northern Parcel, shown on Exhibit C as Section A, will accommodate commercial office and retail uses. The Lexington Manor Southern 50 acre parcel, shown on Exhibit C as Section B, will accommodate recreational uses. No residential uses will be allowed on either the northern or southern sections of the Lexington Manor property nor will residential uses be allowed on the County owned land that houses the Three Oak Center and the Three Notch Theater. Nor will residential uses be allowed on the 1.29 acre parcel near the post office or the Bay District or Whitlow properties sites. This project will result in permanently eliminating residential encroachment on the Patuxent River Naval Air on this acreage.

Ms. Finnacom stated that the Board would be informed and involved with the master planning for the redevelopment of Lexington Manor. She will present the redevelopment concept drawings on the entire project, including the 50 acre Southern Parcel, to the Board when they are developed.

## **PROJECT UPDATES**

Mr. Rollins provided a brief update on the following projects.

**Seventh District Park Improvement Project** – This project was funded in FY06 and includes a new playground, restroom building, basketball court and possibly expanded parking. Staff is working with a firm under an open end contract to do the site planning for the park improvements. A spring 2006 perc test is needed to finalize the location of the restroom building. The playground portion of the project is currently out to bid. Staff hopes that construction on this project will be underway next spring or early summer.

**Draft Myrtle Point Park Master Plan** – The BOCC adopted the draft Myrtle Point Park master plan on Tuesday, October 11<sup>th</sup>. Staff is working to finalize a Chesapeake Bay Gateways Site Nomination form for Myrtle Point Park. Staff plans to present the nomination form and request a letter of support from the BOCC in December. Projects that will be undertaken as part of implementation of the master plan include inclusion of the park in the State's water trails system, the structural evaluation and potential reuse of two tobacco barns, establishment of a canoe/kayak launch, development of a plan for forest restoration and controlling invasive plant species and begin working with DNR on a Wildlife Management Plan.

**Draft Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan** - The plan was endorsed by the Planning Commission on September 12, 2005. The BOCC will hold a public hearing on the draft document on Tuesday, November 8, 2005 at 11:15 a.m. in Room 14 of the Governmental Center. Board members are encouraged to attend. Once adopted, the LPPRP becomes part of the County's Comprehensive Plan.

**Charlotte Hall Property Master Planning** – Staff presented the information on County owned properties in the Charlotte Hall area to the BOCC on October 25<sup>th</sup> and the BOCC provided direction to staff to move forward with the Charlotte Hall property master plan. After examining the site conditions and limitations for each property, the BOCC concurred that the Northern Senior Center property is the most suitable site for developing senior housing, an indoor recreation/multi-generational center and a swimming pool. All of these are compatible with and complimentary to the existing Senior Center. The Board also supported exploring the feasibility of using property at the Convenience Center property and Fifth District Park to expand athletic and recreational facilities, particularly additional practice fields for soccer, football and lacrosse.

**Three Notch Trail** - Phase I construction is underway and staff expects that construction of Phase I will be completed by late fall. Phase I of the trail begins at Route 236 in New Market and proceeds approximately one mile north to the new

Northern County Senior Center in Charlotte Hall. Phase two of the trail will begin at the new Northern County Senior Center in Charlotte Hall and proceed north to the St. Mary's County line for a distance of approximately two miles. The design and engineering for Phase II is currently underway.

#### **OVERVIEW OF FY2007 RP&CS CAPITAL BUDGET PROCESS**

Mr. Rollins provided the Board with a handout of the current FY2006 Capital Budget. The FY2007 budget will be developed over the next several weeks and will be discussed again during the December Board meeting. Project recommendations may include: Leonard Hall Recreation Center improvements, Wicomico Shores Public Landing acquisition of land for parking, and Cecil and Elms Beach Park improvements. Long-range projects include Charlotte Hall Recreation Center, Myrtle Point Park development and Elms Beach Park expansion.

#### **PUNT, PASS AND KICK**

Bob Richardson informed the Board that the Punt, Pass and Kick sectional competition was held on October 30<sup>th</sup> in Calvert County; seven St. Mary's County youth participated in the event.

#### **SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board of St. Mary's County will be held on Thursday, December 1, 2005, at 5:30 p.m., in Room 14 of the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

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Kathy Bailey, Recorder

Minutes approved by the Recreation and Parks Board on December 1, 2005.