



Town of Chapel Hill
AMERICAN LEGION TASK FORCE
Tuesday, April 25, 2017, at 02:00 p.m.
Chapel Hill Public Library, Meeting Room C
100 Library Dr., Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Draft Minutes

Members: Rachel Schaevitz (Chair), Neal Bench (Vice-Chair), Mayor Pam Hemminger, Council Member Donna Bell, Council Member Nancy Oates, Michael Andrews, Dan Cefalo, Joan Guilkey, Pat Heinrich, Ryun Miller, Laurie Paolicelli, Scott Radway, Lew Brown (alternate), Wesley McMahon (alternate)

Staff Liaison: Corey Liles

1. Opening

Meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Rachel Schaevitz, Chair

a. Roll Call

Members Present: Rachel Schaevitz (Chair), Neal Bench (Vice-Chair), Mayor Pam Hemminger, Council Member Donna Bell, Council Member Nancy Oates, Michael Andrews, Dan Cefalo, Joan Guilkey, Pat Heinrich (by phone), Laurie Paolicelli, Scott Radway, Lew Brown (alternate), Wesley McMahon (alternate)

Members Absent: Ryun Miller

Town Staff Present: Corey Liles, Laura Selmer

Consultant Staff Present: Dan Jewell, Elizabeth Wilcox

b. Approval of Minutes for the April 25, 2017 Meeting

➤ Action Taken: Minutes Approved

c. Approval of Agenda

➤ Action Taken: Agenda Approved

2. Announcements

Vice-Chair Neal Bench requested that the Mayor restate her comments from the previous meeting about the American Legion property and the Council's direction for the task force. The Mayor mentioned the installment purchase structure of the property, the intent to work with Orange County for athletic fields on Millhouse Road, the availability of Cultural Arts Funds for arts education, the potential for partnerships with school, the opportunity for cross-sharing of

parking with the Europa Center, and the Town Council's intent to sell a portion of the land to grow the Town's tax base.

Council Member Nancy Oates shared that the Town Properties Task Force continues to evaluate Town assets and has identified a nearby parcel, approximately two acres, that could be considered for uses that meet community needs. The parcel was previously set aside with the intent to build a new fire station, but the site is no longer considered viable for such a use. The parcel is located near the edge of the cemetery near the Greenfield Place development.

3. Public Comment

Lisa Van Deman, Executive Director of Kidzu Children's Museum, along with Kidzu board members, stated their interest in being involved in the Legion property discussions. The museum, a registered non-profit, is interested in exploring opportunities for community partnerships. Kidzu has a strong commitment to enhancing educational opportunities for children, including underserved populations. Kidzu is looking to build 20,000 SF of indoor space with additional outdoor learning space which could be located on the Legion property. Kidzu representatives shared copies of their 2016 Annual Report with task force members.

4. Business

a. Task Force Scope of Work

Background: The goals, decision points, and deliverables of this group are defined in the task force charter. The Chair will provide an overview of the proposed work plan which will allow the task force to fulfill this charge in the available timeframe.

Action Item: Receive information.

- Action Taken: Task force members discussed the scope of work, generally expressing support for having the list of development principles as a key deliverable, and recognizing that the timeframe did not allow for a full evaluation of ideas submitted by stakeholder groups. No action was taken.

Chair Rachel Schaevitz provided an overview of the proposed work plan. The task force is expected to provide a report to Council on June 26th which will include guiding principles for Council to consider in evaluating future proposals for land use.

The Mayor and Council Members expressed support for the guiding principles as a focus of the report to Council. Council Member Bell asked the task force members to identify what can only be done on this property and not elsewhere in the Town. Ms. Bell reiterated the Council's intent to make a portion of the property available for commercial use and not dedicate the entire parcel for recreational use. Mayor Hemminger stated that the guiding principles should reflect the best opportunities for the land and the needs of the community as a whole. She also suggested the task force put forward some 'nuts and bolts' recommendations such as what should happen with the pond and where commercial development should go.

Council Member Oates explained that the short task force timeline allows Town staff to work on assignments related to the American Legion property during the summer months. Discussion followed regarding the potential for continuing the task force's work after the June 26th Council report if there is a need for additional investigation of community needs and possible land uses.

Scott Radway drew the group's attention to charrette concept sketches which show the way land characteristics of the property can start to drive site planning. Discussion continued about the restriction of the main stream in particular, and the pond which impacts the commercial development footprint in its current location.

Mr. Radway also mentioned the impacts on surrounding properties, particularly with spillover parking at times of peak visitor use. Group discussion concluded that room for adequate future parking should be a consideration, impacts on the surrounding neighborhood should be mitigated, and shared parking opportunities with other nearby properties should be explored.

Mike Andrews proposed additional channels for public input that would target diverse and/or isolated populations to ensure recommendations are inclusive and truly reflective of community needs and desires.

Task Force members also discussed providing more detail to Council on the intent of the guiding principles, along with findings gathered from public input.

b. Principles for Development

Background: At the April 25, 2017 meeting, task force members expressed an interest in establishing a set of development principles for the American Legion site. This list is intended to capture the qualities and characteristics that are important to any development project on this land. The Guiding Principles adopted by Council in June 2016 serve as a starting point. Task force members have submitted ideas for development principles in advance of the meeting.

Action Item: Establish a set of principles for development of the American Legion site.

➤ Action Taken: Using the working list of ideas sent in advance of the meeting as a starting point, task force members crafted a condensed list of 11 development principles. The task force will review this list to refine the wording of principles. No action was taken.

The Chair recognized various task force members who each identified one or two principles they felt were most important. The goal was to refine the working list to 5-10 principles; at the close of discussion there were 11. There was general agreement that a description needed to be developed for each principle to give proper explanation.

The condensed draft list of development principles is posted online [at this link](#).

c. Sample Facility Sizing

Background: Consultant staff were tasked with sizing out sample facilities at the same scale as the concept sketches. They will present a series of facility footprints which are sized based on local examples and/or industry standards. This will help create a visual association between elements of the concept sketches and real-world examples, while also verifying whether elements of the concept sketches are appropriately sized.

Action Item: Receive information.

- Action Taken: Dan Jewell and Elizabeth Wilcox demonstrated the impact and development footprints of sample facilities on the overall property using a printed base map and transparency overlays. No action was taken.

d. Parks, Greenways & Recreation Commission Interests

Background: The Parks, Greenways & Recreation Commission held a meeting on May 3, 2017 to discuss their interests regarding the American Legion Property. The resulting list of interests is an update to the memorandum submitted to Council on February 17, 2016, based on changing conditions and additional discussion over the past year.

Action Item: Receive information.

- Action Taken: Joan Guilkey and Wesley McMahon presented the Commission's recommendations on uses for the American Legion site, along with proposed characteristics of various facilities. No action was taken.

Ms. Guilkey and Mr. McMahon noted the Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan identified the Legion property as a potential community park site in 2013. Interests of the Parks, Greenways & Recreation Commission include preservation of green space, land uses that promote healthy and active lifestyles, thoughts around vehicle and walking access, consideration of neighbors, and minimizing parking impact.

The presentation is posted online [at this link](#).

e. Evaluating Ideas from Constituent Groups

Background: Several concepts for developing portions of the American Legion property have been submitted by local stakeholders. The task force will discuss the strategy for the Town to formally receive and review these ideas, recognizing that this work will likely continue beyond the June 2017 timeframe.

- Action Taken: Further discussion of this topic was tabled for a future meeting due to time constraints.

f. Other Task Force Discussion

No other items discussed.

5. Public Comment

No additional public comments.

6. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 4:05pm

Next Meeting: June 6th

Meeting Materials

- [Draft Minutes of the April 25, 2017 Meeting](#)
- [Working List of Principles for Development](#)
- [Revised Concept Sketches with Base Map](#)
- [Surrounding Development Map](#)
- [Town Properties Map](#) (also showing Millhouse Rd Park)
- [Updated Stakeholder Group Submissions 5.05.2017](#)

Opportunity Statement: The Town purchased the 36-acre American Legion Post 6 property in March of 2017. A consultant engaged by the Town will be leading a public engagement process to produce conceptual options for future use of the property that reflect the community's interests. The Task Force is a body representative of the community that can offer feedback on the design work done by the consultant and assist with finalizing the report for Council consideration. The Task Force can also advise on next steps in the overall planning process. This contribution is needed to help the Town achieve Council Goals and determine the most fitting and appropriate uses of the American Legion Property.

Goal: The American Legion Task Force will participate in the public engagement process and work with the project consultant to develop future land use recommendations for the American Legion property, along with next steps in the planning process, that uphold the Council's Guiding Principles for development of the property.

Resources:

- Project Web Page: <http://www.townofchapelhill.org/americanlegion>
- Board Web Page: <http://www.townofchapelhill.org/town-hall/government/boards-commissions>
(Scroll to American Legion Task Force)

Unless otherwise noted, please contact [Corey Liles](#) in the Office of Planning & Sustainability for more information.