



Chavis Park COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

Public Leadership Group Meeting Summary

Meeting #13 on February 25, 2014

John Chavis Community Center

Materials from the meeting are available for download here:

<http://chavisconversation.skeo.com/public-leadership-group/>. A project binder with hardcopies of all documents is located at the John Chavis Community Center; please check with the front desk.

Major Outcomes & Decisions

1. The Public Leadership Group reached consensus on the Looking Ahead Chapter of the revised Master Plan and selected the following priorities to include in this section:

- #1 New facilities (Community Center, Aquatics Center, Original Carousel Building)
- #2 Sports facilities (track, field, courts)
- #3 Play, creek and open space (Play Corridors, Creek Management)
- #4 Event space (Heritage Plaza, Central Plaza)
- #5 Improved circulation and access (trails, bridge, wheeled train, new vehicular entrance)

2. The Public Leadership Group reached consensus on the Final Revised Master Plan.

Overview

The goals of Meeting #13 were to discuss and vote on Master Plan priorities, review the Looking Ahead Chapter, make a consensus decision on the Draft Final Master Plan and to prepare for the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board meeting on March 20.

Vernice Miller-Travis began the meeting by welcoming the group and recapping the January meeting. She lifted up the PLG and all the work they've accomplished over the past year and a half. Emily Ander then reviewed several housekeeping items with the group. The group reviewed Meeting Summary #12. After a discussion and suggested revisions Meeting Summary #12 was approved with one member not supporting inclusion of the revisions. Revisions include the following:

- On page 2, under Public Leadership Group Check-in, add 'community resident' in front of youth input.
- On page 4, move the final bullet under Public Forum Reflections, 'There has been cohesion within the group over time.' before the Questions and Responses.
- On page 5, highlight and separate out the discussion on artificial turf. Leave it under Sports and Fitness but make it a heading like Track with bullet points falling below it.
- On page 6 add the statement, 'One PLG member said, 'Not only did staff not provide due diligence in providing information on the track miniature train, wording was added to some items to sway the decision-making of the PLG for certain options that were to be selected.'

These changes will be incorporated into Meeting Summary #12 and documented in Meeting Summary #13. Since this is the final PLG meeting, Meeting Summary #13 will be emailed



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and mailed to the PLG for their individual review and approval so that it can be incorporated within the Appendix of the Revised Master Plan.

Emily let the PLG know that the RHDC's consultant, Mary Ruffin Hanbury, has completed her evaluation of the historic significance of John Chavis Memorial Park and will present her research and recommendation for the Study List Application on Tuesday, April 8 at 6:00PM at the John Chavis Community Center. Interested PLG members are encouraged to attend. She then updated the group on the Department's System Plan by letting them know that there are a series of public meetings during March for citizens to share their comments on the Implementation portion of the plan, which includes a list of specific park projects that are recommended for funding. David Shouse shared an update on the results of several meetings and discussions to explore vacating the conservation easement and creek management along the portion of Little Rock Creek that extends through John Chavis Memorial Park.

Vernice asked the group if they had any issues to share and discuss with the PLG. A few members brought forward issues that were then discussed by the group. Some of these discussions flowed into the first agenda item, Master Plan Priorities. After much discussion the PLG members were asked to each complete the Priorities Worksheet. The results were then tallied, shared, and discussed by the group as a whole. In the meantime, Dick Bailey explained the process involved in implementing the master plan in phases over time. He emphasized the work that the PLG has accomplished to date and that building on their momentum, the PRCR Department has budgeted funding to move into schematic design once the plan is adopted by City Council. Vernice touched on the issue of relevant community youth participation in the process and emphasized the importance of including their input during the schematic design phase.

Alisa Hefner then provided a broad explanation of the cost estimate contained in the Looking Ahead Chapter and opened the floor to questions and discussion on the final chapter of the Master Plan. Vernice then turned the group to the Final Master Plan letting them know that the revisions determined by the group in January have been incorporated. Additional comments and concerns are not expected but this is the final opportunity to raise any items. A consensus decision was reached by the PLG on the Master Plan Priorities, the Looking Ahead Chapter and the Final Revised Master Plan.

Finally the group was directed to the draft PowerPoint Presentation to the PRGAB contained within their meeting packet and they were asked to confirm speaking roles for the presentation. Cecilia, Rob, and Gretchen will present with Jackee acting as back-up. Lonnette was asked to be involved in the preparation for the presentation but will not be able to participate in the actual presentation scheduled for March 20, 2014 because she has another commitment on that date. Vernice shared that she will be in attendance at the PRGAB presentation and able to play a support role if that is thought to be helpful.

The meeting closed with Councilor Weeks popping a bottle of sparkling cider, to thank the PLG for their tremendous effort and closing comments were made by Councilor Weeks and Diane Sauer, followed by hugs and kind words among PLG members and the Project Team, and group photos were taken.



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Housekeeping Items

Creek Management Update

Emily announced that David Shouse has accepted a new position as the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department's Natural Resources Administrator.

David provided an update on the Little Rock Creek conservation easement and management of the creek. The City met with staff from NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the City of Greensboro to discuss easement terms and creek management strategies. Based on that information a creek management strategy was developed and test areas were implemented along the stream corridor, which David briefly reviewed through a slide presentation. Additionally a large volunteer workday to remove invasive plant species and clean up trash has been organized for March 1, 2014. The PLG is welcome to join in the effort, which begins at 9:00AM.

Vivian Lee will spread the word about the workday with others. She shared that she is pleased with what is being done. Joseph Ellerbee asked if a management plan would be created to maintain the clearing. A management plan will be created and potentially the work will become part of a regular maintenance contract for John Chavis Memorial Park.

The opportunity remains to pursue vacating the easement. If the PLG wants staff to move forward with that it must consider the cost to repay the State, a location for a new project, the amount of time it would take, and the fact that the Neuse River Basin Buffer Rules would remain in place even if the easement were vacated. Joseph asked how much will it cost. Staff responded that it would cost approximately \$1,000,000 based on the rate of \$600 per linear foot. A PLG member asked if the State said they'd accept rescinding the easement. Staff replied no, that has to be approved by the City Attorney, the City Council, NCDENR, and ultimately the Council of State.

Another member stated that the PLG's goal in the Master Plan related to the creek was to clean up the vegetation within the stream corridor in order to see the creek. Since that is happening the PLG determined that there is no reason to vacate the easement and that they would prefer the money to go towards implementing the master plan not on the creek conservation easement. Vivian still has concerns, which David will address with her after the meeting.

Project Schedule

PRGAB Meeting – PLG to present Revised Master Plan

Thursday, March 20
6:00 PM, City Council Chambers

RHDC Presentation – Study List Application

Tuesday, April 8
6:00-7:00 PM, John Chavis Center

PRGAB Meeting – Discussion and Recommendation to City Council

Thursday, April 17
6:00 PM, City Council Chambers

City Council Meeting – PLG to present Revised Master Plan

Tuesday, May 6
1:00PM, City Council Chambers

PLG Celebration

June 2014



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Public Leadership Group Check-in

- Joseph Ellerbee would like for Lonnette Williams to be a primary speaker at the March 20 PRGAB Meeting. Ms. Williams said she will not be present for the meeting because she has made another commitment at that time.
- Lonnette Williams welcomed the citizens in the audience and applauded them for their efforts to get this planning effort started. She thanked them for their commitment and asked them to continue advocating for John Chavis Memorial Park.
- Lonnette attended the Downtown Raleigh Alliance's annual meeting and awards. It was a great event and there were lots of big ideas. The big ideas that were most often tweeted to DRA regarded the renovation of Moore Square and bringing a grocery store within the vicinity of downtown. She said there were none for Chavis Park and would like to see more public advocacy for John Chavis Memorial Park.
- Lonnette brought copies of an article about Moore Square that provides an example of what happens with a master plan after it is developed and adopted. She shared a copy with each PLG member.
- Virginia Tally thanked Councilor Weeks for his presence and urged him to make funding for implementation of the Master Plan an important issue with the City Council. She shared that the PLG cannot go back on its word to the public and that PLG members must also advocate to City Council.
- Jackee Howell brought up the importance of healthy food and lifestyles as reflected in the PLG's Vision Statement and discussions regarding the Master Plan. Her neighbors asked her to share that there is a new group in Raleigh called *Grocers on Wheels*, which is a mobile food stand that is bringing fresh food to Raleigh and for the PLG to advocate for *Grocers on Wheels* to use JCMP as a location for *Grocer on Wheels* to sell food. This is one way to provide fresh food in SE Raleigh after the closing of the two Kroger grocery stores. Currently *Grocers on Wheels* are at Glenwood Towers on Fridays and MLK Gardens on Saturdays.
- Vivian suggested that the PLG should advocate to the Visitor's Bureau to get John Chavis Memorial Park listed in the Visitor's Guide that can be picked up around town. She suggested efforts should be made to promote JCMP and put the park on the map as a downtown destination. This could also be recommended to DRA's Downtown Experience Planning Committee, which Lonnette Williams serves on. JE Williams wondered if there was anything in the Visitor's Guide about the Tuskegee Airmen. Currently there is not.
- Joseph asked to revisit the topic of artificial turf and include it as a separate line item within the cost estimate in the Looking Ahead Section.
- Gretchen stated that we've been talking about the replica plane and train on track since the beginning of the process but artificial turf was just presented in November with more detailed information presented in January. Why are we focusing on it and other similar items if these might not be the PLG's priorities? Why is the PLG voting on priorities if what we vote on is not what is going to be implemented? Diane Sauer shared that the PLG's priorities will guide staff and the consultant team as the Master Plan is analyzed during Schematic Design and a first phase of implementation is recommended.
- Cecilia Zuvic clarified that artificial turf is only an option at this point; it is not going to be imposed on the PLG. She suggested that the PLG not focus on the money and not give up on the big 'wow' factors. She also encouraged the PLG to stop comparing Chavis to Pullen. Chavis needs to have its own shine. Look at these priorities, our priorities, as the long term vision.



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Master Plan Priorities

The Priorities Worksheet with two priority ranking exercises was shared by email with the PLG on February 11. The purpose of the worksheet is for PLG members to rank their priorities for both exercises based on what the PLG believes are the most important elements to implement. This information will be used by the Project Team to inform Schematic Design and each phase of development of the Master Plan over time.

- Lonnette asked what an enhanced track means. She was directed to page 33 of the Master Plan which states, '*Expand field to accommodate a range of field activities and event space, including lighting and sound for sporting events. Continue to support local schools and universities that use the field for practices. Explore the full range of field surfaces, including artificial turf for the field, balancing cost, durability and environmental impact*' and '*Retain a track surrounding the field as a highly-used community amenity. Enhance the track and avoid user conflicts between track and field*' and '*Incorporate shaded seating and benches around track*'.
- Lonnette pointed out that the text within the Concept Plan development section needs to be reworked related to the Heritage Plaza. The old carousel building is not the trailhead for the South Park Heritage Walk Plan, Top Greene is. Amend language on page 28 to clarify this.
- The PLG discussed whether to include artificial turf as a separate priority under the Sports and Fitness category. Joseph stated that the track and field had a very minimal budget until the artificial turf was proposed by PRCR staff, which pushed the budget over \$1M. Some PLG members felt that due to that cost alone that this item should be a separate line item especially since the idea was brought forward by PRCR staff not the community. The PLG decided not to include it as the item was not a high enough priority for the majority of the group.
- Individually PLG members ranked the Master Plan elements in priority order followed by ranking the categories of priorities in order using the Priorities Worksheet. PLG members were reminded to prioritize based upon the stakeholder groups they represent at the table.
- It was noted that the wheeled train is a separate line item from the Amusements section.

Consensus Decision on Master Plan Priorities

One hundred percent (**100%**) or 11 of the 11 PLG members present to supported the tallied priorities with a **1**. No one voted a 2 or below.

Prioritization within Categories

New facilities:

- #1. New Community Center
- #2. Adaptive rehabilitation of Original Carousel Building
- #3. New Aquatics Center

Sports facilities:

- #1. Enhanced Track and Field (with lighting and spectator seating)
- #2. New Courts (Adult and youth sized tennis and multi-purpose)



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Improved circulation and access:

- #1. Central Trail (from War Mother's Memorial to MLK) and Plaza
- #2. New Vehicular Park Entrance (moving from MLK to Chavis Way) and Entry Plaza
- #3. Wheeled Train
- #4. New Cape Avenue Bridge over Little Rock Creek
- #5. Tunnel Improvements under MLK

Event space

- #1. Central Plaza (*paving, landscaping, lighting, sound, power, furnishings*)
- #2. Heritage Plaza
 - Cultural Heritage Interpretative Plan
 - Plaza (*new paving, new/restored stone walls, furnishings, signage, landscaping, heritage signage, interpretive exhibits and art*)

Play and open space:

- #1. Eastern Play Corridor
 - Play corridor (*New hybrid play equipment/areas, paving, rubber surfacing, lighting, seating, picnic tables, shade structures, other furnishings, landscaping, restored stone terracing, concessions and restrooms*)
 - Climbing structure, amusement ride, interactive water feature/sprayground, outdoor performance space, stone step amphitheatre)
- #2. Replica Plane
- #3. Western Corridor and Trail
 - Western trail (*new and enhanced trails, furnishings, lighting*)
 - Landscaping, signage, paving, furnishings, lighting
 - Upgrade picnic shelters 1 and 2
 - New picnic shelter
 - Fitness zones and pocket play zones, linear skate spots
- #4. Creek Management Plan and Implementation
 - Management Plan
 - Creek Overlooks (decks, landscaping and signage)
 - Creek Stewardship Zones (vegetation thinning, replanting with natives, interpretative signage and stepping stone crossing)

Prioritization by Category Overall

- #1. **New facilities** (Community Center, Aquatics Center, Original Carousel Building)
- #2. **Sports facilities** (track, field, courts)
- #3. **Play, creek and open space** (Play Corridors, Creek Management)
- #4. **Event space** (Heritage Plaza, Central Plaza)
- #5. **Improved circulation and access** (trails, bridge, wheeled train, new vehicular Entrance)

Vivian asked how the site can be accessible if *Improved Circulation and Access* is prioritized as #5. The City shared that all improvements made at John Chavis Memorial Park have to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act code. Accessibility, connectivity, site furnishings, basic amenities and event facilities will be incorporated within each phase of development.

Review Looking Ahead Chapter

Implementation

Dick Bailey spoke about the implementation process after the master plan is adopted. City Council, not staff or the Public Leadership Group, is the final decision maker. Staff has written a Request for Qualifications to hire a consultant team to move forward the next step of the process.

Lonnette asked if there was the possibility for doing a design competition for JCMP. Dick explained that the City chose that method for the design of Moore Square because the public square is a resource to the entire Raleigh community. The design competition was used to generate ideas before engaging the Moore Square Master Plan Public Leadership Group.

Vivian asked how the Pullen Park Master Plan was done. Dick explained that it was similar to the process that the Chavis Conversation PLG went through, though there was not as much public involvement. A citizen committee was selected; the group evaluated the park, created concepts and prioritized amenities. Due to the regional focus of Pullen Park citizen committee members and involvement was greater than just the surrounding neighborhood. All of the updates to Pullen Park that were included in the Master Plan have not yet been funded or implemented.

Youth Involvement

Lonnette and Virginia continue to emphasize the importance of youth involvement, specifically community neighborhood youth. A commitment was made by the Project Team to conduct targeted outreach and involve community neighborhood youth in the schematic design phase.

Cost Estimate

- Lonnette feels that the cost range for the original carousel house is too low and the range for the enhanced field is too high. She asked that the replica plane move under Cultural Heritage with specific text in parenthesis regarding the Tuskegee Airmen. Amusement should be plural and the cost estimate should be increased to reflect multiple rides.
- Joseph requested that spectator seating for the tennis courts be added to the descriptive text for the tennis courts.
- Lonnette asked where the track train is listed within the cost estimate. She was told that it is housed under Amusements.

Consensus Decision on the Looking Ahead and Cost Estimate Section

Ten of the eleven members present voted a **1** to support the Looking Ahead Section. One of the eleven members present voted a **2** to support the Looking Ahead Section. No one voted a 3 or below.

Consensus Decision on Draft Final Master Plan

In January, the PLG reviewed and voted to incorporate revisions in response to public comments received on the Draft Master Plan. These changes were integrated and a Final Draft Master Plan was shared with the PLG on February 4th for review. The Project Team

isn't expecting additional comments but if you noticed anything or would like to raise any additional comments this is the time to do so. No discussion was needed so the PLG proceeded to decision making. One hundred percent (**100%**) of PLG members voted a **1** to support the changes as discussed at the meeting. No one voted a 2 or below.

Prepare for Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board Meeting

Richard Bostic provided a brief overview of what the PLG should expect at the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board meeting when they present on March 20. The PRGAB is a 15 member board. The PLG will make its presentation then the floor will be open to public comment. Public comments are limited to two (2) minutes. If multiple people speak on the same subject the chair will ask if anyone else in the audience has similar comments and if so to stand so that the PRGAB can see how many citizens have similar thoughts/concerns.

There was not time to review the draft PowerPoint presentation as a group but PLG members were encouraged to review it on their own and let Emily know if anything is missing or if they have other ideas that should be emphasized.

All PLG members were encouraged to attend the PRGAB Meeting on March 20, to arrive early, and to sit together to show their support for the Revised Master Plan. At the PLG's last meeting Cecilia, Gretchen, Rob volunteered to present with Lonnette and Jackee as back up. Emily will convene this group within the next two weeks to prepare for the presentation.

Next Steps

Vernice and Alisa ended the meeting by letting the group know that this is the last meeting that they will be facilitating. They thanked the group for allowing them to be a part of this incredible journey and shared what an honor it has been to work with the PLG on this significant project.

Councilor Weeks thanked the PLG for its hard work. Diane Sauer thanked the PLG, Skeo and the staff for their hard work. Councilor Weeks popped a bottle of sparkling cider, and toasted the group. The PLG showed their gratitude towards one another and group photos were taken to mark the end of long and rewarding planning process.

Meeting Evaluation Feedback

- Receiving the meeting materials in advance of the meeting helped the PLG prepare for the meeting.
- The group appreciated the priorities activity and the opportunity to place emphasis on areas of the master plan important to their stakeholder groups.
- The PLG is excited that the master plan is being presented to the PRGAB in March.
- There is comfort, though less so, among the group about what happens after their work is completed.
- PLG Members were overall positive about their final work session and pleased that there was forward movement. Specific comments about what was appreciated about the meeting include:
 - dialoguing and agreeing,
 - that it was the last meeting,
 - it was exciting and opened a lot of doors and answered many questions,



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- it was very comprehensive and time was allotted to clarify any questions,
- it was productive with very much accomplished,
- all questions and concerns were addressed with proper insight and knowledge.
- The only negative comment PLG Members shared about the meeting was how long it lasted due to time management.
- Regarding the overall planning process the following statements were made.
 - What an experience. Looking forward to the next chapter.
 - Great PLG members and leaders

Attendance

PLG Members Present: Jacqueline Howell, Vivian Lee, F. Lonnelle Williams, Joseph Ellerbee, Richard Bostic, Gretchen Carter-Hinton, Cecilia Zuvic, Evonne Dailey, Virginia Stanley Tally, Jonathun Muldrow, James E. Williams

PLG Members Absent: Angela Jackson-Mann, Margo White, Lorenzo Jackson, Rhonda Muhammad, Rob Wylie

Withdrawn PLG Members: Bishop Victor Glover, Geraldine Williams, Jaquan Bennett, Bennie A. Mack, Jr., Hallie Mittleman, Seddrick Hill

Staff & Guests: Vernice Miller-Travis, Alisa Hefner, Sarah Little, David Shouse, Denise Saunders, Ivan Dickey, Diane Sauer, Ken Hisler, Emily Ander, Matthew Keough, Councilor Eugene Weeks, Jo Howell

Citizens: Robert E. Sanders, Pheby-Helen Jones, Margie J. Jones, Carol Love, J.N. Sorrell, Lemuel G. Sherman, Lesley Thomas, Gloria G. Murray, Harry E. Payne, Mary Brooks, Grey Clay Jr., Charles Jervais



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APPENDIX

Athletes at Chavis Park

The following Raleigh residents are athletes who achieved in various sports to be included in the section on page 10 of the Chavis Master Plan. These residents played at Chavis Park also played at Chavis Park.

- A. During high school the following won State Championships in tennis or track and field:

1. Eleanor Nunn (tennis)
2. Gilda Adcock (tennis)
3. Alicia Adcock (tennis)
4. Paul Jervay (tennis)
5. Gerald Latta (tennis)
6. Jimmy Penny (tennis)
7. McArthur Penny (tennis)
8. Doris Morgan (tennis)
9. Gilda Latta (tennis)
10. JD Lewis (tennis)
11. James Cofield (tennis)
12. Juan Cofield (tennis)
13. Charles Worth (tennis)
14. Larry N. Harris (tennis)
15. Edwin Worth (tennis)
16. Clarence (CJ) Hayes (tennis)
17. Willie Dean "Pat" White (tennis)
18. Calvin Hayes (tennis)
19. Valentine Hamlin (tennis)
20. Brenda Ferrell (tennis)
21. Lawrence Clemens (tennis)
22. Bruce Lightner (tennis)
23. Thomas "Butch" Hilliard (tennis)
24. John Earl Smith (tennis)
25. Charles Copeland (track)
26. William "Tag" Montague (Shaw University Head Cross Country Coach/Head Track and Field Coach)

- B. Athletes who became professional football players

1. Sheriff John Baker (NFL)
2. Chuck Hinton (NFL)
3. Charlie Young (NFL)
4. Ronald McNeil (NFL)



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- 5. Willie Burton (CFL)
- 6. William 'Bucky' Brooks (NFL)
- C. Athletes who became professional basketball players
 - 1. Lee Ommie Davis (ABA)
 - 2. James Snow (ABA)
 - 3. Cozell McQueen (NBA)
 - 4. James Michael Lamont "Twiggy" Sanders (The Harlem Globetrotters)
 - 5. LeVelle Moton (Israel, NCCU basketball head coach)
- D. Athletes who became professional baseball players
 - 1. Rober Height (New York Yankees)
 - 2. William Hartsfield. (Baltimore Orioles)