

Monroe Park Advisory Council Meeting

11 May 2005

Meeting Notes

Ms. Pat Daniels, presiding.

In Attendance: Alice Massie, David Clinger, James Hill, Janice Nuckolls, Brian Ohlinger, The Honorable William "Bill" Pantele, John Peters and Todd Woodson.

Guests: Elinor Kuhn, Florence Lunger, and Kitty Winkler of the Friends of Monroe Park, Richard Stutts, Lt. Miracle of the RPD and Ellen Canova.

The focus of this meeting was to discuss the roadway removal (which ones to remove, how to address, and when to address).

Brian Ohlinger also brought "VCU 2020 Plan" of the Monroe Park Campus to share with the Advisory Council. Mr. Ohlinger also reported that the irrigation project is moving forward. A meeting to discuss this project with DPW and Park and Recreation representatives was held and an initial RFP has been released.

Mr. Peters raised the issue that he felt it was a little premature for us to develop a roadway removal plan, as we had no definitive idea about the flow of foot traffic. He was concerned that we are removing roadways when we have no data as to the impact of the expansion of the Monroe Park campus east of Belvidere Street. He also expressed that there is no compelling reason for the roadway removal as we have no real base that we can currently develop that would be logical in the long-term future.

Brian Ohlinger stated that we do have some indicators as to what the population on the campus may be. There will be 3000 students, most of which will be in evening classes.

Alice Massie raised the issue that as part of the overall plan, regardless of what roadways are removed, the park needs to be more open and comfortable. It needed to be "a place to play".

James Hill stated that he felt everyone was taking a logical approach but that any plan that was developed for the removal of roadways should include a hierarchy and rationale for what is proposed for removal.

Mr. Stutts agreed with this approach and stated that any plan needed to keep a balance between the need for a park and the need for a pathway.

Alice Massie raised the issue that we might want to consider, as part of the "Roadway to Pathway" plan, putting a fence on the perimeter surrounding the park. Lt. Miracle said that, from a police perspective, this would be a good idea.

Mr. Pantele made two important points. First, there have been some questions about the Advisory Council and its continuance. It is his opinion that the Advisory Council would continue in perpetuity. As such, everyone on the existing Council needs to think of it as being a long-term entity. Secondly, in relation to the roadways, it was his thinking that roads pre-dominate the park currently. What we should be seeking is a preservation of some roadways but opening the space in the park to make it more "park-like". As with many other persons on the Council, he wanted to see the park heavily used but that any plan that was developed had to be a matter of balance.

Mr. Hill said that we should take a phased approach to the removal of the roadways and what we are going to do long-term wise.

As part of the discussion, Ms. Daniels offered to inquire of the UDC about the existing plan to see if it had been "approved".

Richard Stutts offered to check with UVA School of Architecture to inquire about doing some "free " work in updating the Master Plan for the park to include current thinking on Roadway removal.

After other discussion, a vote was asked for concerning the development of a "Roadways to Pathways" plan and was adopted unanimously by the Advisory Council.

As a note to all: Lt. Adrienne McLemore introduced herself as the new RPD representative for Monroe Park as Lt. Miracle is being transferred to Special Operations (subsequently, I have been informed that Lt. Nolan has been assigned by RPD as our park liaison to the police department). Lt. Nolan will be in attendance at Wednesday's meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the **Monroe Park Advisory Council will be 4:00 p.m., June 8, at Grace and Holy Trinity Church - Library Room.**

See meeting notice on next page.

MEETING NOTICE
MONROE PARK ADVISORY COUNCIL

Wednesday, June 8, 2005 at 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Location:

Grace and Holy Trinity Church
8 North Laurel Street
(Library Room)