



Drafted by Bethany Heim, Associate Planner, Department of Parks and Recreation

### Meeting Introduction

- The Chair referenced the information sheets that staff provided on the Virginia Arts Districts and Field/Multi-purpose Activity Centers, also available on the 4MRV website
  - Request to check links in the Arts District document, as one link was not working
  - Reminder that Tom Prewitt had provided supplemental information about Arts Districts in the region.
- The Chair provided an overview of today's meeting, to address four Park Master Plan Alternatives; the goal is to narrow down to 3 options to review at a future Working Group Meeting.
- The Chair indicated the next two Working Group meetings will address the Area Plan. Once 3 options are created for both the Park Master Plan and the Area Plan, then these options will be reviewed by other Citizen Advisory Commissions. There will also be a bulk mailing sent to businesses and residents in the Nauck, Shrlington, and Douglas Park neighborhoods, to advertise a community open house, anticipated to be scheduled in the Spring.

**Dog Park and Public Comment.** The chair stated there will be no vote today to close the dog park, and people can stay until the end to speak during public comment. The Working Group is reviewing four options, one of which keeps the dog park in its current location.

**First Principles.** The working group discussed the First Principles drafted by Working Group members, Carrie Johnson and Edie Wilson, who indicated that the First Principles handout included initial comments from the Sports Commission. The goal of the principles is to spur thinking, find areas of agreement, and to help identify when the process is going off track. This is a citizen effort and comments are welcome from all Working Group members, staff, and consultants.

**Listserv.** The County posted a response on the 4MRV website (see Feb. 7 materials) to an inquiry from the working group on the use of a listserv. Working group members were encouraged to review the response, which explains prohibitions on online discussions and virtual meetings; the letter also includes links to sections of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and other relevant information.

**January 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting Summary.** In response to a comment that some working group members felt their comments were not captured accurately in the January 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting Summary, staff clarified that staff do not take meeting minutes, but rather, meeting summaries intended as a general reminder of the discussion. Future meeting summaries will not include Working Group member names and will be more general.

**Upcoming 4MRV Outreach.** DPR Staff reminded the working group of the following outreach:

- Jennie Dean Playground open house and discussion, hosted by County staff, February 18 (Saturday), Shirlington Branch Library. The public can show up anytime between 10:00am and noon.
- Nauck Feel the Heritage Festival, County staff will have a tent to discuss 4MRV Park Master Plan, February 25.
- Shirlington Dog Park Discussion, hosted by staff, March 18 (Saturday). **UPDATE:** This meeting has been postponed and a new meeting date will be posted.

**Park Master Plan Alternatives.** DPR Staff provided an overview of the four Park Master Plan Alternatives.

- The approach was to address the park uses that take up the most space, which are the athletic fields and the dog park.
- The park uses that are smaller in scale, such as the playground and courts, will then be addressed in the next round of alternatives.
- There is no intention of removing the dog park, DPR is committed to having a dog park on this site and the four alternatives show options for leaving it in place and moving to a different location. DPR is exploring moving the dog park to address the environmental and stormwater needs of the Four Mile Run, which would include re-naturalizing the banks and integrating it into the park. Any renovation to the existing dog park triggers water quality and stormwater mitigation per the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act and the County's responsibilities as stewards of Four Mile Run.
- Any time the County amends public property close to water, the project must comply with FEMA and Chesapeake Bay requirements. The project should also adhere to the County Board adopted plans that address natural areas and environmental quality. As part of the County's broader stream restoration efforts, we have County wide goals to address water health, vegetation, and shore up the steam banks.

Park Master Planning Consultant Brian Finerfrock (Water Resources Engineer, RK&K), pointed out the 100-year floodplain, riparian zone, regulatory floodway, and the regulatory implications they generate on the park design.

Park Master Planning Consultant Jim Klein provided an overview of the Park Master Plan timeline and Alternatives:

- Alternative #1: The dog park is moved away from Four Mile Run into Jennie Dean, along South Four Mile Run Drive. The ballfields are kept in the same general area. No buildings are shown within the Park Master Plan area.
- Alternative #2: The dog park is moved into Jennie Dean Park. The ballfields are moved closer to Nelson and South Four Mile Run Drive. A multi-use building with underground parking is shown between Nelson and Oakland.
- Alternative #3: The dog park stays in the same general location but stops at Oxford Street and wraps into the land purchased by the County. The ballfields are moved closer to South Four Mile Run Drive. A multi-use building with underground parking is shown between Nelson and Oakland.

- Alternative #4: The dog park stays in the same location with little to no changes. The ballfields stay in their current location. Along South Four Mile Run Drive there are two areas that show multi-use buildings.

Working group member comments on the Park Master Plan Alternatives are summarized as follows:

- Soccer is missing from this park.
- Keep the dog park in its current location and, if anything, expand it.
- Keep the dog park's unique linear shape.
- The dog park is an economic driver that attract people from all over the region. They then shop at Shirlington and contribute to the local economy.
- Don't move dog park to Jennie Dean Park, this will use up space in an already constrained area.
- A Working Group member presented some E. coli statistics and stated that the dog park is not the problem; that the dog park is not the reason for the bank erosion and rather the erosion is due to the invasive work the County performed and the foot traffic adjacent to the dog park fence. He stated that the County have not taken steps to address these sources of erosion.
- Do all the options require the County to acquire property? Jim Klein replied that alternative #4 does not require further acquisition; the other 3 options do require land acquisition, but this could be accomplished over time and the park design could be phased.
- Extend Shirlington across Four Mile Run.
- The designs do not show an Arts District within the Park Master Plan boundary, west of South Nelson Street.
- Do not want buildings east of S. Nelson Street.
- Do not want ball fields along S. Four Mile Run Drive.
- Our kids don't have access to a football field. Football field is needed.
- Many people in our community do not have a backyard, adequate parking, and no access to metro. We are not asking for much, but want fairness in considering impacts.
- Nauck is not Mexico, we don't need a wall.
- Community wants open and unprogrammed spaces.
- Don't put activities that produce noise or light next to South Four Mile Run Drive. The noise gets amplified and travels up like an amphitheater.
- Serpentine the 'river walk' into industrial area until hit other end of dog park and continue to Shirlington Road.
- Want to more information on co-locating with bus parking.
- Troubled by coming and going of facilities without referencing to phasing and how much resources the County has or anticipates needing to build such facilities.
- What is in the CIP for this area? Staff responded that the only money identified in the current 10-year CIP horizon with respect to the park, is to renovate what is in place at Jennie Dean.
- Don't want indoor recreation to compromise outdoor space.
- The dog park is a place for the community to come together and keeps dogs out of the rest of the park.
- The dog park is very diverse. It attracts every age, ability, ethnic group.
- Want more public access to Four Mile Run without fences.
- Why is there not more space given to football and basketball courts?

- Still not a lot of unprogrammed space. Need to do better job providing open space for multi-family housing with no backyards. Great parks drive economic value.
- Can Anita (consultant, Partners for Economic Solutions), articulate the true costs/economic analysis of doing these things (MAC and Arts District)? Staff indicated the detailed analysis will be performed once the options are narrowed down some more.
- Keep existing 3700 building for arts.
- The County is not doing programming at Drew Community Center. Programming is going to the private groups.
- The consultants need to be more creative in shoring up the banks of Four Mile Run and preserve the dog park.

**Public comments:**

- Disheartening the alternatives show things that fall outside the Working Group vote. No buildings east of S. Nelson. Agree that the dog park should stay in its current location.
- It is a flaw to wipe away and start brand new. People realize we have assets and we must take advantage of them. The existing buildings within the Park Master Plan area should be repurpose, if possible.
- Business within the Park Master Plan includes a recording studio. Sad to see these businesses gone and should engage the business owners more comprehensively. Have not been involved or notified of this effort.
- Please show more information on park uses and include area and dimensions.
- Fields and facilities scheduler and liaison to field: The Jennie Dean youth diamond field is important to the program. It is 1 of 3 that can be used by older youth and is a convertible field. It is also 1 of 5 lighted diamond fields, hard to get new lights anywhere in the County; don't expect to get more anytime soon. The field gets over 40 hours of programming each week. The only time we don't use that field is when kids are at school or during rain-outs. We don't keep track of children's race or ethnicity. Teams are based on where they come from in the county or are school based. Baseball is no less diverse than the County as a whole. Jennie Dean has a rich history as it was the only place African Americans could play baseball in the County.
- If we get rid of all the auto businesses, where will we go to have our vehicles repaired? The county is becoming a desert to get anything that is essential.
- Thank you for adding Floodplain to maps. Keep in mind that mitigation is required and will add to cost of the overall project.
- Please keep dog park where it is. Healthy for me and my dog to get out and walk. Moved here because of dog park. Foster sense of community. Beautiful. Not broke, don't fix it.
- One of the few or only dog parks that is handicap accessible because of the parking and the paved path.
- This dog park is special. I bypass other dog parks to go to Shirlington because of its unique layout and sense of community. I don't like James Hunter dog park; it is a disappointment.
- Need to address the truck parking and traffic along South Four Mile Run Drive.
- Attended the Civic Federation meeting today and watched an important video about the RPA. Stormwater mitigation must be built into the concepts and costs. Love the dog park and it will need mitigation. Need more unprogrammed space. The increased density is approved by Arlington County and needs to be thoughtfully managed/designed.

- Disappointing the process is still focused on the park rather than the entire study area. That creates confusion.
- AED is hosting a meeting titled How the Arts Live in Arlington, tomorrow (Feb 8<sup>th</sup>) from 7 – 9:00 PM at the AED offices. Everyone is welcome to attend. Artspace is a non-profit that constructs and builds artist spaces.
- Property owner located on S. Oakland Street spoke about the cost of land acquisition. Suggested a cost benefit analysis.
- County should look at options that includes current businesses.
- Need to keep playground space.
- Move here because of the dog park. This is a niche environment with the dogs and arts. I stay here because we have these things and the dog park.