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City of Sebastopol
Planning Commission Staff Report

Meeting Date: September 22, 2020
Agenda Item: 8A
To: Planning Commission
From: Kate Haug, Planning Commissioner
Subject: Ives Park Walking Tour

Background:

At the September 8, 2020, Planning Commissioner Haug suggested an alternative method to proceed with the planned Ives Park walking tour and assessment that would progress the discussion and be compliant with Covid-19 restrictions on larger group meetings. Since the Commission cannot host a meeting at the stie due to these restrictions. Below are two items developed by Commission Haug, who has volunteered to assist in this item: 1) instructions and resources for the walking tour, and 2) her initial thoughts and suggestions on items to consider.

Commissioners are requested to tour the Park and send questions and comments by October 14 so Commissioner comments and questions can be compiled. A follow-up discussion will be scheduled for the October 27, 2020 Commission meeting.

Walking Tour:
Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for taking the time to review the Ives' Park Master Plan and the documents from the prior walk through. Rebecca Mansour has forwarded the minutes to you.

Please complete the walk and email your questions and ideas by October 14, 2020 to Rebecca Mansour, rmansour@cityofsebastopol.org

Here is a link to the 2013 Master Plan document. https://ci.sebastopol.ca.us/SebastopolSite/media/Documents/Ives_Park/ives_park_master_plan_final_full.pdf?ext=.pdf

It can be found on our Parks Planning Page under downloadable docs as well: https://ci.sebastopol.ca.us/City-Government/Departments-Services/Planning/Parks-Planning

Personally, I found that I was able to understand the Master Plan more comprehensively by printing out the following pages:

Aerial Photograph - Page 51
Existing Conditions - Page 55
Plan Map - Page 71
Zone Diagram - Page 75
Budget by Zone - Page 95

If you would like these documents printed and mailed to you, please contact Rebecca Mansour prior to October 1, 2020.

In your walk through, please use the Master Plan numbers as reference points. If we use the same map as our guide, it will be much easier to discuss items.

Potential considerations:

As it seems that the City will not have the funds for a complete park renovation (at least in the next few years), you are encourage you to look at improvements which might be done on a modest budget, and if they make sense to do in the larger context (i.e. if something will be replaced, what should be done in the interim).

For instance:

- If we can't move and build new bathrooms, could we update the surfaces in the bathroom? Could we upgrade the doors to let in more light so the bathrooms would be more pleasant?
- Would new garbage cans create more visual consistency?
- Could/should we paint the Ives Pool complex to match the Art Building to create more visual unity? (the Art Center is a County building)
- If we can't fully incorporate the area around Jewel and Willow, is there a way we could create a safe crosswalk?
- Can we use plantings in the public parking lot across the street to integrate the parking lot with the park so it is more cohesive and creates a more inviting entrance to the park?
- How do you feel about the entrances to the park? How is the park connecting to the neighborhood?

On a personal level, I would hope to generate a list of improvements that could be fulfilled with Measure M funds, which I'm assuming will be between $60-80K per year. Perhaps by making small improvements over the next 5 years, we could slowly upgrade the user experience of the park. That would be my personal goal.

The budget in the Master Plan gives a fairly cost breakdown. This information is over 7 years old so you can imagine that prices have increased.

From our meeting with Melissa, it seems that if we do have the energy to start a non-profit, it will take time to build fundraising capacity. Even with their long history and significant donor outreach, they are raising $800K per year. Melissa indicated that 25% of that went to administrative costs, indicating that $600K went toward grants. If our foundation ever reached that level, it would take at least 8 years to raise $5 million for the full renovation. Given our current circumstance of a pandemic and recession, it seems local and state budgets will be impacted and that philanthropy efforts could be directed toward other pandemic related causes.

For our discussion, I would like you to generate a list of modest, Measure M improvements so that we can create a list of Measure M priorities.

The Master Plan is now 7 years old. It might also be good to reflect and prioritize pieces of the plan that seem most relevant now.

I think it would be helpful if Commissioners list what they think are the five primary uses/needs of the park and how we can support them through Measure M improvements. Perhaps, after we generate a use list, we could send out a community survey to see how the community uses or would like to use the park and how we can support usage/need through improvement.

Obviously, please integrate any other ideas and/or questions that we can bring to the table during our discussion.

Thank you again for your time and work in our community.

Best,
Kate