

May 2008 Minutes

Virginia Highlands Ball Park Lighting

Kurt Lewis and Robert Capper of Arlington County Department of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources, Jim Kawchak and Tee Sombatpium of Earthtech, and Mark Gionet of Lewis Scully Gionet, Inc provided information on the new lights for the ball fields at Virginia Highlands Park. The existing lighting is aging and must be replaced. The new lights are better technology and more energy efficient than the existing lights . They are computer controlled via a satellite communications link and have less light spillage into the sky. Installation will occur during the November to April timeframe. Funds for the lights will come from the County's maintenance capital fund.

An attendee raised the issue of pad locks on the fields. This will be addressed at the June meeting.

Virginia Highlands Proposed Volley Ball Courts

Gentlemen listed above also provided information on two new lighted, sand volley ball courts to be built at Virginia Highlands Park. One of these will replace an existing Virginia Highlands court. The other is a relocation and replacement for a Crystal Park court. Estimated cost for these two courts is around \$100000.

Attendees expressed numerous concerns, including:

- Why did the County fail to consult the community about the courts?
- Why did the County decide to spend funds on the courts rather than fix the problems at Nina Park, as the community requested?
- Why was the County apparently easily accommodating a commercial enterprise for the benefit of those who may not even live in the area?
- Why hasn't the County responded to long standing requests for use of the same area of the park for the increasing young child population—the need for a spray park, etc?
- How would new courts be maintained, given the existing court is not used because it is poorly maintained?
- Why is the little remaining green space in Virginia Highlands being taken for the courts?

Mr. Capper said he would take the concerns back to his management.

Neighborhood Grants

Van Newstrom said FY09 funds will be used for Nina Park to provide new swings, new sand, and a new "sand feature." The bridge will go away and there will be no water fountain because installation would disturb existing tree roots. The new equipment should be ready for play in April 09.

Ms. Newstrom is proposing park enhancement grants, limited to \$12000 each, for:

- plastic fencing around the tot lot at Eads Park
- a water fountain at Eads Park
- a water fountain at Nelly Custis Park
- a play canopy at Nelly Custis, to be installed by the community in order to keep the request below the funding ceiling.

She will send a letter of intent to the County and will meet with the County in mid-June. The final applications are due July 30, so she needs letters of support from members of the area before then. A presentation to the County will occur in late October.

Halloween Bash—Boo Ha Ha

Ms. Newstrom described plans for a Halloween Bash next October 31, from 1530 to 2030. She has reserved the Community Center and two soccer fields at Virginia Highlands Park. The plan is to have an awesome party with bands, DJ, face painters, costume prizes, a pot luck, and a field full of blow-up toys—like a moon bounce. The estimated cost is \$1650. Members approved a resolution for the AHCA to provide up to \$500 for deposits on the equipment.

Volunteers are needed. Contact Van Newstrom at 703.683.5911.

Public Art

Cheryl Mendosa contacted County Board member Mary Hines via e-mail. Ms. Hines favorably responded to the idea of the County buying trash cans to be painted by students. Ms. Mendosa is also exploring having students artistically paint the walls of the old fire station.

President's Comments

There is about \$4800 in the AHCA bank account.

The County is factoring in AHCA's comments in its review of the Metropolitan One (Gramery) sign request.

The Wakefield Scholarship contest must be adjusted to obtain school support. Mr. Cameron should have a sense of what the School Board will accept in about a week.

We are making progress with the missing sidewalk links. Get in touch with Mr. Cameron if there is anything you want to push.

Other Business

Members approved a motion stating there was no objection to a new deck on the back of Jim Hohman's house at 21st and Ives.

Ted Saks reported the Crystal City Task Force has a new plan with, in general, lower building heights. See <http://tinyurl.com/442ofj>.

About 40 people attended the meeting. The April minutes were approved.