



4MRV Working Group Meeting
July 18, 2018
7 – 9:30 PM

General Updates

- Staff announced that the County Board completed two acquisitions within the Study Area. One site is located on Shirlington Road and is where ART buses are to be stored. The other property is a warehouse next to the Weenie Beenie on South Four Mile Run Drive and is within the Park Master Plan boundary.
- Staff took a moment to acknowledge Carrie Johnson, a Working Group member, who passed away recently.

Jennie Dean Park Master Plan

Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) staff member Marco Rivero presented a review of the Park Master Plan (PMP), with associated Design Guidelines (incorporated as part of the PMP) and the upcoming schedule.

Staff reviewed the following:

- Contents and structure of the draft PMP;
- Various recommendations within the PMP;
- Differences between parks-wide and unique design elements within the PMP design guidelines;
- Notable updates to the Design Guidelines (since the Working Group last reviewed them in February 2018);
- Detailing that the final concept plans for Jennie Dean Park and Shirlington Park were adopted by the County Board as part of the 4MRV Policy Framework (May 2018);
- Phasing and implementation considerations;
- Next steps/actions pending before County Board consideration and adoption of the 4MRV PMP; and
- Post-approval next steps for this PMP area (final design and community engagement associated with Jennie Dean Park), as well as projected construction start for Jennie Dean Park (4th Quarter, Calendar Year 2019).

The following questions and comments were made by the Working Group members:

- A Working Group member asked how long will Phase 1 take? Staff responded that final design and construction will take approximately 1.5 to 2 years.
- A Working Group member asked if sections of the park will remain open and useable during construction? Staff stated that it is too early to determine if this is possible since the final design has not been developed and the construction process must be coordinated with the future construction contractor.

- A Working Group member questioned the 75-foot setback from the right-of-way to the softball field fence. DPR staff stated that there is approximately 75-foot distance from the corner of the softball field fence post to the curb edge of South Four Mile Run Drive. See attached Fence Exhibit (on page 6) for a visual explanation.
- A Working Group member questioned why the Park Master Plan and Design Guidelines will be presented to 3 County Commissions (Parks and Recreation Commission, Urban Forestry Commission, and the Sports Commission) and not presented to the Nauck Civic Association. The member stated that all 3 commission have representation on the 4MRV Working Group, just like Nauck, but are also getting a staff presentation. Staff stated that as part of any Park Master Plan process the Park and Recreation Commission, Urban Forestry Commission, and Sports Commission all review the plans and typically provide letter to the County Board addressing comments, questions, concerns and positions regarding these plans.
- A Working Group member is concerned about new language in the Park Master Plan that states “. . . buildings obstruct views of the dog park . . .” and there is a concern that this language that may be interpreted as wanting to remove the buildings. Also, there are references to the diamond fields being heavily used, but after reviewing the FOIA fields data, they think this is not an accurate statement.
- A Working Group member was concerned that the language addressing the other County owned parcels not being incorporated in the Park Master Plan throws the County Board under the bus and is an excuse for not being creative enough with the design.
- A Working Group member asked how DPR is tracking what people are saying about the plan. DPR staff stated that a comment matrix is being developed.
- A Working Group member pointed out that encroachment onto the Shirlington Dog Park is mentioned in the Park Master Plan and is one of many recommendations. They think the encroachment should be highlighted as a directive and not a suggestion. Staff acknowledged this comment and will be making the necessary changes on a subsequent draft.
- A Working Group member pointed out that on Page 20 the plan highlights current parking areas, but the number of parking spaces should be included. Also, a Working Group member thinks there will be a net loss of total parking spaces and people using Jennie Dean Park will park in the Shirlington Dog Park parking lot.
- A Working Group member voiced concern about parking and basing parking needs on current need and not future need. The member thinks the improvements will attract more people to visit the park.
- A Working Group member would like the property connecting the dog park to Walter Reed (behind AAAA Storage) to be added to the Park Master Plan or the Area Plan as a potential future acquisition. The Working Group Chair and staff stated that since this is outside the Park Master Plan boundary, it would have to be addressed in the Area Plan. Staff will discuss this further and follow up.
- A Working Group member thought that (on page 56) there were places where they could not figure out if the photos are examples or if we should choose between the two

images. DPR staff responded that the photos show potential future conditions and during final design, the process will gauge preferences and narrow down the final appearance.

- A Working Group member thought (on page 62) the photo shows a bridge that is highly lighted, and this will disrupt wildlife.
- A Working Group member thinks the riparian soft path is too wide at 5-6 feet and thinks it should be 3-4 feet wide. Also, they would like staff to check the trail/path widths to be sure they are consistent throughout the document.
- A Working Group member likes the Shirlington Road improvements, the Walter Reed improvements, and the trail under the bridge. However, they stated that the pergola/colonnade does not align with the industrial character and is contrary to the open space principal for Four Mile Run Drive.
- A Working Group member remembers seeing images at the last meeting showing industrial character, but these photos are not in the document. They also commented that they want the front of the park to be open and having the colonnade is a barrier and does not align with the industrial character.
- A Working Group member thinks that (on page 52) there is a photo that does not look industrial and looks more French Provincial.
- A Working Group member commented that (on page 54) there is a photo of a bridge that has the rusted metal and they encouraged staff to get rid of the rusting metal finish. Children cannot distinguish between real rust and that aesthetic.

Four Mile Run Area Plan

Staff member Richard Tucker made a brief presentation introducing the draft Four Mile Run Area Plan. The following questions and comments were made by Working Group members:

- The proposed September 19th meeting date is Yom Kippur and should be changed. *(Staff agrees.)*
- There is approximately one month (July 26 – August 20) for Working Group members to submit questions and comments.
- Why are the park master plan and the area plan going to the County Board separately when we are planning the entire area together?
- 4.15 – The wayfinding and signage recommendations/examples should be consistent between the two plans.
- 5.3 – Are there any allocations for funding improvements called for in the area plan in the CIP?
- Staff should provide more information about the bike trail bridging over or going under the road. Which alternative is cheaper? How would the trail going under the road be designed and where would it go?
- It is premature to say that the underpass option is the solution. The Working Group has not talked about this. An overpass does not necessarily need a long rise and descent – it can also be done with a switchback or curlicue. Any solution needs to be carefully evaluated to ensure that more conflicts between users are not created. The Transportation Commission and the Bicycle Advisory Commission need to weigh in on this. There are also RPA issues. The text in the plan should indicate that all options need further study.
- Both the overpass and underpass solutions should be shown in the plan.

- The Transportation Commission would like an alternatives analysis. Based on the commission's experience, an overpass is likely the less feasible option.
- The Working Group would like to hear the study results on the bike path alternatives. The underpass was something that had been presented at the community forum early in the process.
- Implementation item 2.3 - Will anything really change? Ideas are fine, but there are not many examples. There should be a statement for how these improvements will be accomplished. There should be action items.
- It is good that the area plan is coming back to the Working Group before the County Board meeting. Staff is proposing that the park plan be reviewed by three commissions and not the civic association. This is problematic. The plans went to about 10 groups on the first round of reviews.
- Every commission has a public comment period and all commissions are comprised of members of the public.
- Thank you for incorporating environment and sustainability in the plan and for including the detailed information in the appendix on Four Mile Run. There is some really useful information here that is not in the park master plan.
- When will the County acquire the privately-owned parcels in the park master plan area? Can there be a land swap? If no attention is focused on this in the plan, it will not happen.
- Page 3.25 and 3.26 road diet - How finalized is the road diet? The images show a bus stop in front of my building. This would not work for us. How conceptual is this?
- 5.1 zoning analysis – Flexibility and incentives will not harm businesses, but the second paragraph should be revised. Do not try to limit the affordability of or devalue private property.
- (Page 4.9) The images in the plan do not exhibit an industrial feel here with the planters and trees. This is gentrification.
- 5.1. incentives - Incentives "should" be explored, not "could" be explored. There needs to be an arrow between the words "community" and "staff." The community should have input on the zoning. There needs to be parking changes and these should be integrated into 5.1. Can the County continue acquiring land outside the park master plan area?
- Parking areas should be shown in both the area and park master plans. Parking enforcement can be initiated now. We should emphasize existing parking and show how it will look in the future.
- 5.2 – The plan shows that the arts study would be led by the Arts Commission, but the report shows it being led by a working group. That is not what the County Board approved.
- It is helpful that the same County staff at Arlington Economic Development (AED) are working on both economic development and the arts. There was a good presentation to the Working Group on this. We support the arts here, but we need to be mindful of what we could lose (tenants, jobs, etc.).
- 5.1 - The language indicating that housing is prohibited may be unintentional.
- We want a mix of arts, business and community representatives for the arts study.
- The comments submitted to staff on the plan should be shown in their entirety. It is not useful for staff to interpret the comments. We want to see all the comments, even if a certain comment is repeated 12 times.

Public Comment

Jennie Dean History - The Nauck Civic Association does not think that the historical information in the Park Master Plan accurately represents the African American history of this area. Arlington has a history of discriminatory policies. We want proper recognition. My neighbors are not going to go on the website because they are older or they feel that they have not been listened to for so long. Why are you unwilling to have a meeting with the civic association to listen to its comments? You are planning to meet with commissions to discuss the wildlife and the trees and the dogs, but you are unwilling to meet with us. We need another forum to give input aside from the webpage.

Fence Exhibit

