



**GREENSBORO PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 5:00 pm**

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT**

Vice Chair Jeff Smith, Anthony Izzard, Susan Henshall, Blake Odum, Scott Neely, ChesKesha Cunningham-Dockery, Marsha Glazman, Emily Linden

**STAFF PRESENT**

Nasha McCray, Kobe Riley, Charles Jackson, Haley Wilson, Jennifer Hance, Kristen Herndon, Mel Melton, Trey Godette

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Mike Kirkman, City of Greensboro Zoning Administrator

**WELCOME**

The regular meeting of the Greensboro Parks and Recreation Commission was held virtually. Commission Vice Chair Jeff Smith called the meeting to order at 5:04 pm.

Nasha McCray, Director, welcomed the Commission and attendees.

**CONSENT ITEMS**

Approval of Minutes from the October Commission Meeting- Commissioner Odum made a motion to approve the October 2021 meeting minutes and Commissioner Linden seconded. Motion unanimously approved.

**RECOGNITIONS**

- A. North Carolina Recreation and Park Association (NCRPA) Award Recognitions- Nasha McCray, Director, and Charles Jackson, Community and Recreation Services Division Manager, provided an update on the awards that Greensboro Parks and Recreation Department received at the annual North Carolina Recreation and Park Association Conference Award Ceremony on October 27, 2021.

Greensboro Parks and Recreation was presented with the NCRPA Arts & Humanities Award for “GSO: Greensboro Online,” which is a collaboration between the Department, the Greensboro Public Library and History Museum, and Creative Greensboro to create a virtual space where users can access a wide-range of innovative online events and activities 24 hours a day. The Department was also presented the NCRPA Innovation Award for the Adult Recess program, which is geared specifically towards adults 21+ and

builds on the idea of returning to the innocence of childhood. Since 2019, the program is held annually and has had over 1,600 adults in attendance since its inception.

Three individual recipients from current and former City of Greensboro employees/representatives were also awarded: NCRPA Distinguished Legislator Award was presented to City of Greensboro Councilperson Sharon Hightower; Ken Free Sr. was inducted into the NCRPA Hall of fame; and Kristen Herndon, Facilities Coordinator, received the Young Professional Award.

### **STAFF REPORTS**

- A. Grant Policy Review- Kobe Riley, Deputy Director, provided an overview of the Department's grant application and administration process, highlighting procedural differences in how matching and non-matching grants are administered. It is the policy of the City of Greensboro and the Parks and Recreation Department to actively and aggressively seek grants for funding purposes. The Parks and Recreation Department seeks supplemental grant funding consistent with the core values and service priorities of the City. The grant procedure for the Parks and Recreation Department includes six major processes which consist of: Search, Due Diligence, Application, Award, Budget Amendment, and Grant Management. All types of grants will be managed in accordance with this procedure. A list of awarded grants from calendar year 2020-2021 was shared with Commission.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Proposed Land Development Ordinance (LDO) Text Amendment to Allow Vehicular Access in Dedicated Drainageway and Open Space- Nasha McCray, Director, and Mike Kirkman, Zoning Administrator, requested the Parks and Recreation Commission provide a recommendation to the City of Greensboro Planning and Zoning Commission for a proposed LDO Text Amendment to allow vehicle access in dedicated Drainageway and Open Space areas.

Director McCray provided a general overview and background of the City's Drainageway and Open Space process and ordinance. The City requires certain dedications of drainageway and open space as part of new development and where applicable, the Parks and Recreation Commission plays an important role in recommending the acceptance of drainageway and open space parcels. The dedications typically occur with the subdivision of land into smaller lots as a means to manage the flow of water along the site and ensure open space for public benefit. Currently, the only improvements allowed in dedicated drainageway and open spaces are greenways, bikeways and other recreational amenities that don't materially alter the nature of the open space or significantly impact water flow. The City has been requested to create an

option to allow vehicular connections through dedicated drainageway and open space to adjacent property.

Mr. Kirkman stated that provisions related to the use of dedicated drainageways and open space are outlined in Section 30-12-8.1 of the Greensboro Land Development Ordinance (which is Chapter 30 of the Greensboro City Code of Ordinances). Dedicated drainageway and open spaces are often located adjacent or in close proximity to public streets to allow easy access for public care and maintenance of these spaces, as well as, easier access to the public for associated recreational amenities. Subsection C of this section of the Land Development Ordinance, further notes the configuration of dedicated drainageway and open spaces and how these spaces can be used. The proposed ordinance change adds language to Items 7 and 8 in this subsection to allow vehicular access to adjacent properties across drainageway and open spaces under a narrow set of parameters.

Kirkman stated that specifically, any vehicular access to adjacent properties must meet the following three determinations by City staff:

1. The vehicular access to adjacent property must be necessary to enhance public safety to and from the adjacent property and there is no other practicable method to achieve the same level of access
2. The vehicular access does not change the function of the drainageway for benefit as open space and recreational space
3. The vehicular access does not create adverse drainage impacts to other properties or increase downstream flooding through design or with mitigation measures.

City staff stated that the above provisions provided the appropriate amount of protections for these spaces dedicated to the City, specifically for public benefit, while creating the opportunity for enhanced development opportunities where it makes sense to do so.

The Greensboro Parks and Recreation Commission considered the proposed LDO text amendment. Discussion included environmental impacts, potential impacts to other drainageway and open space properties, impact to adjacent properties or subdivisions, connectivity, public safety, public benefit to development of property using this option, and precedence. Additional concerns and comments raised included:

- Based on staff research, no other major NC jurisdiction allows for vehicular access in dedicated drainageway and open spaces. Raleigh is the closest, but their requirements are to relocate drainageway and open space elsewhere on the site. So this not considered a “best practice” at this point
- There are concerns that this provision will force connections between existing neighborhoods where none exists now and none is desired
- Allowing this option would change expectations for adjacent property owners who may have invested based on no or very limited activity in these spaces
- There is no easy mechanism to reverse this action once the access is established and may impact future recreational opportunities in the space
- The provision ultimately seems to provide benefits to individual property owners at the expense of the public and in these dedicated public spaces.

Commissioner Neeley made a motion to approve the recommendation and Commissioner Henshall seconded. Motion resulted in split vote (4-4). The motion failed.

The comments received and Commission recommendations made will be incorporated into the formal staff report provided to the Planning and Zoning Commission for their scheduled public hearing on November 15, 2021. The Planning and Zoning Commission will then make a formal recommendation on this request, which will go to City Council for an additional public hearing and final action; tentatively scheduled for December 21, 2021.

B. Parks and Recreation Commission Chair and Vice Chair Nominations - The Nominating Committee (Commissioner Emily Linden and Commissioner Sue Henshall) convened prior to the November 2021 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to discuss Commissioners that have indicated an interest in serving as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Parks and Recreation Commission. The Committee provided recommendations for nominations for acceptance, consideration, and approval by the Commission. Commissioner Linden proposed herself as Chair and Commissioner Henshall as Vice Chair.

Commissioner Odum made a motion to approve and Commissioner Cunningham-Dockery seconded. All Commissioners voted in favor. Appointments will be effective at the conclusion of the meeting and will serve for one (1) year.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Nasha McCray, Director, gave a comprehensive update on upcoming programs and events, including an Adaptive Sports Expo, Santa's Workshop, Turkey Toss Cornhole Tournament, and more.

### **COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS**

Neely: Enjoyed the Pumpkin Smash event at Lake Brandt and meeting staff member Kristen Herndon on Saturday. Congrats to Linden and Henshall on their new roles.

Henshall: Appreciated the discussions amongst Commissioners about the LDO text amendment agenda item and is looking forward to serving as Vice Chair.

Cunningham-Dockery: Congratulated Linden and Henshall on their new roles as Chair and Vice Chair. Excited for them and for the Commission going into 2022.

Odum: Is looking forward for the Commission under Linden and Henshalls' leadership. Feel free to let him know if there is anything he can do to help.

Glazman: no comment

Linden: Is so appreciative for the chance to be the Chair of the Parks and Recreation Commission and to hopefully have more chances of seeing people in person.

Smith: Appreciated the discourse on the LDO text amendment agenda item since that was a difficult agenda item to navigate. Thanked Linden and Henshall for taking on their new roles.

Izzard: Congratulations to the new Chair and Vice Chair. Warnersville will have their Harvest Fest giveaway event on November 20<sup>th</sup> from 10 am-12 pm. Looks forward to working with Charles Jackson on Caldcleugh improvements.

With no further business, Commission Vice Chair Smith adjourned the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Haley Wilson, Executive Assistant  
Greensboro Parks and Recreation Department