

Minutes of Wimberley Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting
June 3, 2001

1. The Parks & Recreation Committee met at 5:00 p.m. at City Hall. Present were: Council Member Martha Knies, Committee chair Kris Cusack, and members Randy Anderson, Kathleen Cline, Dell Hood, Thad Nance, and Gary Pigg.
2. Council member Knies opened the meeting by welcoming the approximately 25 members of the public present, including a team from the Geography and Planning Department of Southwest Texas State University who are working on an environmental site plan for the Cypress Creek park the city is proposing to buy.
3. The meeting was opened for public comment on the draft master plan for parks and recreation. Kris described the process leading to creation of the plan: the committee's decision to take an inventory of existing recreation facilities in Wimberley, followed by a decision to draft a master plan so the city can compete for grants from Texas Parks & Wildlife and other donors to help acquire and develop parks and recreation facilities. She summarized the goals and objectives of the plan, explaining that these are a five-year projection of what the committee believes the city should try to accomplish. She said the plan is a draft and the committee wants to have public comment and input into it. Several members of the audience said they were not informed there was a master plan and that they did not have enough time to study it; they asked if there would be more meetings for comment. Martha and Kris said there would be more opportunities for public meetings; Council member Matt Manis, from the audience, said the city's web site should be available soon and that the plan will be on it.
4. The first several speakers were owners of property on Mill Race Lane across Cypress Creek from the proposed city park, all of whom identified problems with a public park on that property. Scott Weaver said he spoke as a representative of 11 property owners all of whom will be affected if the city makes the site a park. He asked if the city would consider making the site a gated, controlled-access nature preserve available only to guided tour groups, and "create something that works for all of us." Other members of the group raised issues of liability for injury or death on both public and private property; degradation and destruction of the environment; problems with people trespassing from the park onto their private property and their loss of privacy and reduced security for their homes; destruction of infrastructure in the park by floods which may carry city-owned property onto their private land; the increase in trash that will come from public use of the land; and problems with teenagers drinking alcohol. They all said they already have problems with trespassers who ignore private property and no trespassing signs and who leave trash everywhere and destroy their private property, and that making the site a public park will increase the number of trespassers. They also stressed their concern to preserve the unspoiled, undeveloped nature of the site and for the loss of biological diversity that public use will cause. They asked how the city will provide liability against injury and accidental deaths on public property; one person asked if the city would sign "hold harmless agreements" with them. Although Martha asked the audience to focus on the Master Plan and comment on it, only a few speakers did so, acknowledging the committee's work and expressing thanks for the effort; there were a few questions asking for clarification of terms and the process for approving the plan.

5. Dr. Richard Earl of SWT was introduced and briefly described his role as supervisor of the site evaluation being done by two SWT graduate students, Liz LaRue and cartographer Ray Umsheid. Liz distributed a handout summarizing comments of consultants from Texas Parks and Wildlife, the Texas Forest Service, and the Hays County Extension Agent who visited the park at the city's request. She pointed out that all these visitors agree the park should be kept as undeveloped as possible and that all human impacts should be diverted away from sensitive areas and concentrated in only a few designated places. She reviewed their specific recommendations, and Ray explained the map he developed identifying areas of the proposed park and where it is proposed to put trails, picnic tables, a children's play area, a site for water access, etc.

6. During these presentations audience members asked about water access and how the city proposed to keep people from going into the creek wherever they wanted or walking from an access point to anywhere else; liability from water accidents; trash in the water; what type of materials would be used for picnic tables; toilet facilities; how the city proposed to control damage to vegetation and prevent people from crossing the creek to their property. In response Liz described her work as providing an evaluation of the impacts on the natural environment of whatever the city proposes for the park; it is not her role to recommend any action, only to evaluate what the results will be.

7. The committee was asked why it is rushing to buy the property. Martha answered that the property has been on the market for some time, and the city decided to take advantage of the chance to apply for Parks & Wildlife grant money to pay half the cost. She said there is no guarantee the city will get a grant and be able to buy the land, and that anyone else could buy it before the city does. She repeated the committee will hold more public events and that it sincerely seeks public comments and suggestions.

8. The public forum ended at 6:55 p.m. Martha then told the committee that the city has decided to hire a grant writer to do the application to TPW; she is Judy Langford, from Austin, and she will be at City Hall on Tuesday, June 5, at 10 a.m. All committee members and the SWT team are invited to be there to discuss the park site with her. Liz said she will be on the site for a closer assessment of the creek and potential water issues on Tuesday afternoon and invited the property owners to accompany her.

9. The next meeting of the committee was set for Sunday, June 10, at 5:00 p.m. The committee adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Recorded by Dell Hood

Parks & Recreation
Public Hearing on
Master Park Plan

The Village of Wimberley
Regular Agenda Citizen Sign-In Sheet
Meeting Date: June 3, 2001

Name	Address	Phone	Agenda Item	Issue
N. Scott Weaver	214 Mill Race Ln	842-2036	Park	Alternative
MELBY GILW	310 Mill Race Ln	842-2107	Park	
Temple Ray	108 Mill Race Ln	8421513	Park	
Teresa Harris	210 Mill Race LN	847-0070	Park	
Bill Johnson	Wimberley	2745		
Ashley Gibson	220 Mill Race LN	842-2107	PARK	
Judy Thompson	340 South River	847 1025		
John Thompson	340 South River	1025		
Ray Unscheid		323 5530		
Richard Earl	SWT Geography	245-3207	Cypress Creek Park	
Liz LaRue	SWT geography graduate student	⁸³⁰ 825 6174	Cypress Creek Site Assessment	
Elizabeth Dibrell				
MA Johnson	602 Sabino Ranch	7 2745		
JAN EDWARDS	551 Mill Race LN.	842-2065		
Jan Edwards	551 Mill Race Lane	842-2065		