

Council Agenda Report

Agenda Item No. 11

Date 08-08-2016

Date: August 8, 2016
Prepared by: Brent Jett, PE, Civil Engineer
Submitted by: Oden C. Wheeler Jr., Director DPW

SUBJECT: FY 2018 Program Open Space Community Parks and Playgrounds (CP&P)
Program Grant from Maryland Department of Natural Resources in the amount of \$1,800,000.00

Recommendation that Council:

- A. Receive a staff report on an application for the FY 2017 DNR CP&P Grant;
- B. Hold a public hearing, take public comment, and close the public hearing;
- C. Authorize submission of the grant application.

Discussion:

Previously the City of Cambridge, in conjunction with Dorchester County and the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, acquired the property known the Cannery Park. The site is located between Cedar and Washington Streets, directly behind the Phillips Packing House property on Dorchester Avenue. It is the City's long held vision to convert this space into a public park area once the stream restoration project has been completed in the fall of 2017.

Program Open Space is entertaining requests for funding of Community Parks and Playgrounds. These funds will become available in fiscal year 2018, approximately the same time as the completion of the stream restoration, which involves:

- Invasive species clearing on the entire property,
- Stream bed reclamation and improvements for the previously tidal portions of Cambridge Creek located on site,
- Planting native species to ensure stabilization of the improvements, and
- Participation by the Dorchester Career and Technology Center students to grow the plants and learn about the nutrient removal efforts involved in the project.

The City has received funding from the CP&P previously on several occasions such as playground installation and new trail at Great Marsh Park, Cosby Avenue park, and Meadow Avenue Park. The funding during this grant cycle would be utilized to develop a new community park and green space at this property in the municipal core of Cambridge. Maryland DNR is devoted to Nature Play Spaces, and strongly supports projects that fit the overall vision of Cannery Park, with interactive play spaces with green areas and natural surrounds. With the proximity to the stream restoration and its elements of natural and green space, Cannery Park meets the intentions of the grant program very well.

Description:

It is anticipated that the funds, if received, would be utilized to finalize the master plan for the Park as well as design and install the infrastructure upgrades needed to convert the current space to a public facility. This would include improvements.

The City is requesting \$1,800,000 in grant funds with no cash match from Cambridge. With these funds, the City will be able to:

- A. Hire a consultant through the standard qualifications based RFP process to provide a final master plan with site layout, construction drawings (where needed), planting plans, cost estimates, and recommendations for the retired equipment, smoke stack, and abandoned building on-site. In addition, planting plans would be incorporated into the consultant's deliverables. Once the plans are completed, a bid package would be prepared for the installation of these improvements.
- B. Install the walking paths throughout the property as well as the bridge spanning the newly improved stream restoration project areas for access from the County Pool. (DNR will not pay for that under the current grant.)
- C. Install the infrastructure improvements to the park from off-site. These include the low-impact parking lot at the head of the property located off the Washington Street entrance, improve the entry to the park from Washington Street, water and sewer to the site for use in bathroom facilities as well as any irrigation needed, and electrical service to the site for lighting, irrigation, facilities, etc.
- D. Purchase the property located on Cedar St., between the Super Soda and abandoned rail right of way, which is currently for sale. Improvements to this property will be accomplished with this phase, including construction of the parking lot, informational kiosks, entryway to the park across the tidal stream restoration efforts, possible bike rental area, as well as a Cedar St. driveway.
- E. Hire a consultant through the standard qualifications based RFP process to provide final design construction documents and complete construction of the skate plaza to be located in the new park. The plaza would be constructed to double as a public venue for events and could be used passively for just seating during normal times when no events are scheduled or when not being utilized as a skating area. Simply, it will not be an exclusive skate-only space, but will provide multiple functions for the space and plaza.
- F. Provide any auxiliary items deemed to be an integral part of Cannery Park as identified during the public input sessions. These items could include a dog park area, bird watching areas, informational and interactive signage throughout the park, work-out stops along the walking trail, and/or lights located throughout the park.

Additional funding sources would be identified for any items that are not funded under this grant cycle for CP&P. Additionally, the FY2019 CP&P funding round has been identified as a prime

potential source for funding any remaining portions of the park not accomplished through these funds.

Fiscal Impact:

The cost of maintenance and security have not been calculated for this future park. Creation of a Friends of the Park group to assist with maintenance costs has been discussed. But such a group cannot be expected to cover the full costs of maintenance. Revenues from group reservation of the park is a possible revenue source, particularly as it might be used as an outside area for the indoor group venue inside the proposed Phillips building redevelopment. However, Council should keep in mind that the cost of maintenance and security will be a future new budget expense.

Approved by: Sandra Tripp-Jones, City Manager

