

CITY OF WILDWOOD
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

MEETING OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
WILDWOOD CITY HALL (HOSTED)
16860 MAIN STREET
WILDWOOD, MISSOURI 63040
August 25, 2022

I. Welcome and Roll Call

Meeting: Thursday, August 25, 2022, hosted at Wildwood City Hall, in City Council Chambers, and via Zoom, at 6:30 p.m.

Attending: Commissioners Hensic, Hammond, Rowton and Hrubes (arrived at 6:40 p.m.), Secretary Bachert, Vice-Chair Scott, Alternate Quarternik (arrived at 6:34 p.m.), Commission Liaison Broyles, Council Liaisons Rambaud and Nyhan, and Chair Stevens

Absent: Alternates Adams

Staff: Planner Robyn Keefe and Director Joe Vujnich

II. Opening Remarks

Chair Stevens noted the presence of a couple students from the Student Route 66 Taskforce and the consultants from SWT Design.

III. Approval of the Historic Preservation Commission's Minutes from its July 29, 2022 Meeting

Minutes were approved by general consent.

IV. Public Comment

Joe Sansone made his comment via the Zoom platform. He noted he and his wife were interested in the park project and would like to see the focus of the park's design decisions, and the area surrounding it, be on family.

V. Old Business

A. Ready for Action – Five (5) Items

1. Route 66 Roadside Park Project - Pin-Up Review (**Wards – All**)

Planner Keefe introduced SWT Design, and then Scott Runde presented on the engagement process to-date, introducing two (2) initial concepts developed for the park, including a Grover Market Plaza Concept and Wildwood Route 66 Timeline Walk Concept. The Grover Market Plaza Concept focuses on a main plaza space, with access to Manchester Road, and one (1) side featuring a comfort station including an extended pavilion, and the other side featuring a lawn terrace with the photo op element. The pavement leading down to the parking

lot could be utilized for interpretation. He noted the comfort station with extended pavilion could feature additional displays.

The second concept prepared was the Wildwood Route 66 Timeline Walk. This concept features a central path that crosses the site in an arc, roughly parallel to Manchester Road, which would interpret the history of Route 66 in Wildwood. A serpentine wall serving as seating and retaining wall winds around the site, forming two main spaces. The main central space functions as both a play space and photo op. He noted the front western area could be used as play space, interpretive plaza, patio seating, or flexible programming space. On the east side of the site, there would be a smaller comfort station incorporating a theme, such as the food market concept discussed in earlier meetings. He stated bicycle equipment and infrastructure was incorporated into both designs and buffering was provided between the parking lot and residences in the rear. When the estimated cost was presented for both initial concepts, it appeared the project would cost approximately \$1,350,000 to \$1,500,000, depending on the concept chosen, with the Wildwood Route 66 Timeline Walk having the higher estimate.

Commissioner Hrubes asked about the shade provided by the second concept. Mr. Runde responded that there was less shade provided in the second concept than the first because of the absence of structure dedicated to providing it. He noted the flexible space could be an area where a canopy structure could be incorporated. It was discussed a splash pad could also be incorporated into that location.

Commissioner Rowton asked how many people would be accommodated for a picnic. Mr. Runde responded with a 9-10 estimate for formal seating and noted the serpentine wall would provide additional areas.

Alternate Quarternik noted the comfort station/food market would be seasonal. Vice Chair Scott noted the design of the comfort station would be tricky to accomplish the historic feel, while still being functional.

Mr. Runde stated that the design team had primarily thought to theme the building as such, with its actual use being restrooms and an area for brochures and other interpretive content.

Chair Stevens asked about the Ozark Stone, and if it was still possible to incorporate it into the concept. Mr. Runde noted it could be incorporated into the wall, the building, and even into the sidewalk.

Commissioner Hammond asked if there was any thought on how the photo op element would look. Mr. Runde noted the Student Design Competition would be collecting feedback into that design. Commissioner Hammond noted that the splash pad would be a neat feature to incorporate, given there was no such facilities anywhere else in Wildwood. Finally, he commented that more shade would need to be considered around the tables. Mr. Runde noted fixed umbrellas could be incorporated into the tables.

When discussing cost estimates, Mr. Runde noted he was seeking direction into whether or not the project would be phased and/or whether programming features should be adjusted. Commissioner Rowton asked about the adjacent lot. Mr. Runde noted the retaining wall between the two properties would be kept, and landscaping installed as a buffer.

Commissioner Rowton noted the amount of work and facilities was similar to Anniversary Park. Director Vujnich noted that the cost of that park was less than a million dollars, but that pricing had since risen. Mr. Runde noted the theming and design of the park, as well as the pavilion on "Concept A," were driving the cost estimate.

Director Vujnich noted, as background, the City Council recently completed the Five (5) Year Strategic Plan, and this park was programmed as part of this discussion, despite a focus on maintaining existing parks vs. building new ones. He also stated the Village Green project had a cost estimate of fifteen (15) million dollars, and this had been projected prior to recent inflation pressures and supply chain shortages. The Village Green project was being phased. He said the best that could be offered going into budget discussions was to look into some phasing. Director Vujnich noted it would most likely be phased over 2-3 years. He said the key is to have the infrastructure and utilities installed first. He stated the Commission and Taskforce didn't need to look at removing things immediately. Commissioner Rowton asked about State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) funding, and Planner Keefe noted that construction was not an allowable activity under those funds. Director Vujnich noted they could potentially fund engineering plans, etc. Planner Keefe noted she would look into it.

Mr. Runde requested the Commission provide direction into the next step, where one concept would be selected to be further developed. Commissioner Hammond noted he preferred "Concept B," but he thought the sidewalk should be a road with stripes. He stated he liked the signage, which had been discussed in the past.

Lauren Dean, Student Route 66 Taskforce representative from Lafayette High School, noted she wanted to make sure that Route 66 recognition remained a key focus of the park project. Ms. Dean stated that within "Concept B" she really loved the idea of a fruit stand, if it was actually going to be such, that teenagers would like that a lot, but if the idea was to use it as a comfort space, she felt a gas station theme or Route 66 garage would be better. With "Option A," she noted Mr. Runde had mentioned the play space would be more natural, but Lauren was concerned that there wasn't enough of a Route 66 vibe in the design.

Nolan Myers, Student Route 66 Taskforce representative from LaSalle Springs Middle School, noted he felt this park should be more about attracting people to Route 66 than developing play spaces in Wildwood. He noted he felt there were already plenty of those spaces in the City. He stated he felt "Concept B" was the best approach.

Lily Ge, Co-Chair of the Student Route 66 Taskforce from Eureka High School, noted that her fellow Taskforce Members had noted their goal for the project was to focus on the Wildwood story of Route 66. She noted that she agreed with Commissioner Hammond about "Concept B" and incorporating a splash pad. She finally noted that a gas station instead of a food market stand would be a good addition. She stated one member had the idea of incorporating an electric vehicle charging station into the park modeled after a Route 66 gas pump.

Commissioner Hammond asked about Wildwood's approach to electric car charging stations. Director Vujnich noted Council Liaison Rambaud had identified that opportunity a few years back. Dr. Rambaud noted he had done the research for their incorporation into Town Center. He noted it hadn't gone anywhere since. He said he would try to pursue their addition now using the park angle as well.

Janet Sansone, on Zoom, commented that she liked combining the fruit stand concept with "A," though she agreed it would be hard to staff it. She noted there was originally a fruit stand across the street back in the 1950s.

Planner Keefe commented that a healthy food vending machine could be incorporated into the fruit stand concept.

Council Liaison Nyhan noted her concern that she wouldn't want the fruit stand to take away from the Wildwood Farmer's Market.

Vice Chair Scott noted that everyone seemed to be leaning towards "Concept B," but there were a lot of specific design elements that needed to be considered. He felt that deciding on an overall concept was a good step forward to getting into these more detailed discussions.

Commissioner Rowton asked Planner Keefe to present photos he had sent to her via email. The first photo was a "mile post," noting that it would have all of Wildwood's historic communities and points of interest. The second photo was a logo in the parking lot. The last photo was a Route 66 themed weathervane that could go atop one of the structures.

Mr. Runde noted the purple space feature would not be large enough for swings or pedestrian traffic. Dr. Rambaud asked if there was opportunity to sit with the concepts presented and make additional comments before deciding on a direction. He noted shade was a concern on "Concept B" and that he'd be advocating for more mature trees to be initially planted there. He also noted it was important to cater to the cyclists.

Carol Jones, Wildwood resident, at 2700 Grover Crossing Way (directly to the rear of the park), noted that in the rendering for "Concept B," she liked the landscape buffering between her house and the parking lot. She also stated she did not prefer the splash pad idea, as it would change the whole vibe of the space. She also agreed that she would like more time to consider the new drawings. She asked the Commission to think about the impact to her neighborhood, as the project moved forward.

Commissioner Rowton asked if Ms. Jones could be happy with the park. Ms. Jones noted she had originally been alarmed by the idea, but she appreciated being included in the design process and had felt like her ideas were welcomed by the team. She would like to see this space be family-oriented and a relatively quiet space.

Vice Chair Scott noted the park should be more of a passive park. He noted the cars might be turned around the other direction, so the headlights faced north. He commented the lot next door would present more of a concern.

Commissioner Hammond motioned to move forward with "Concept B: Wildwood Route 66 Timeline Walk," with opportunity for more input into the specific design elements. Vice Chair Scott seconded the motion.

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. Student Route 66 Taskforce Updates (**Wards – All**)

Planner Keefe presented updates from the last Student Route 66 Taskforce meeting, including a proposed Wildwood Route 66 Selfie Video project to help engage students participating in the Student Design Competition in the history of the corridor. She noted she was requesting sign-ups from Commissioners to participate to make the project multi-generational. This video is in preparation for the Student Design Competition, which will launch September 9, 2022, and engage the broader school community in developing ideas for the photo op element on the park site.

Nolan Myers presented, as the elected Student Route 66 Taskforce Liaison to the Historic Preservation Commission, by stating he felt very honored to be working with the Commission on their projects.

3. Addition of a Youth Liaison to the Commission (**Wards – All**)

Director Vujnich noted this topic was being discussed with the Mayor, City Administrator, and City Attorney and would come back for Commission review at a later date.

4. Discussion of Essen Log Cabin Locations (**Wards – All**)

Director Vujnich presented on the Essen Log Cabin locations, noting three (3) of them were being considered by the Commission, now in context with the larger site.

Location 1) Community Park

Director Vujnich noted the site being considered at Community Park was the "Great Meadow." He noted there was an access already constructed and there was an existing bench, parking area and two (2) other pavilions close-by.

Location 2) Glencoe City Park

Director Vujnich noted the first location identified for the cabin at the park was at the confluence of walkways from the parking area and playground. He noted that area had existing trees and a picnic area. He identified a second potential location, near the Glencoe Historic Community Marker, at the edge of the parking lot.

Location 3) Future Village Green

He noted this site for the cabin would be located close to the City Hall parking lot, using many of the existing facilities there.

Director Vujnich noted the table included within the Department Memorandum would allow Commissioners to score locations based on identified desirable characteristics from previous discussions.

Commissioner Rowton asked about park usage data. Director Vujnich noted Al Foster Memorial Trail receives the greatest usage. Community Park was also well-utilized, with Village Green difficult to comment, given it was yet to be built.

Vice Chair Scott noted he preferred Community Park, but that Village Green would also be a good location. He thought the two potential sites identified at Glencoe City Park were too close to the parking lot and walkway. He asked if the site identified at Community Park would be subject to flooding. Director Vujnich confirmed it was not in a floodplain area.

In response to inquiry from Commissioner Rowton, Director Vujnich noted funding had been set aside for the Village Green Project and Essen Log Cabin reconstruction in 2023. The Route 66 Roadside Park project did not yet have a budget associated with it.

Council Liaison Nyhan noted that she preferred the Village Green location, given its accessibility to the public during events and the security of the location.

Director Vujnich summarized discussion as ranking the locations as:

1. Village Green

2. Community Park
3. Glencoe City Park (distant third)

Commissioner Hammond motioned to pick Village Green and Community Park as the top two (2) locations. Commissioner Rowton seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

5. Update on 2022 Work Program (**Wards – All**)

Planner Keefe noted the grant cycle was now open for the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Historic Preservation Fund grant. She noted the Department was still moving forward with Route 66 revitalization planning as the subject of the grant application.

- B. Not Ready for Action – Two (2) Items
 1. Update on Kohn Park Sign (**Ward One**)
 2. Historic Route 66 Revitalization Initiative Work Program Update (**Wards – All**)

VI. New Business

A. Ready for Action – One (1) Item

1. Planning for Celebrate Wildwood Event (**Wards - All**)

Planner Keefe presented possible options for participation in the Celebrate Wildwood Event, noting there was a lot to display this year.

Vice Chair Scott noted it would be nice to have a bigger tent and be adjacent to the historical society. Alternate Quarternik noted it would be nice to wear Route 66 t-shirts and potentially even sell them.

- B. Not Ready for Action – Two (2) Items
 1. Discussion Regarding the Age Threshold Used to Determine Qualification as Historic (**Wards – All**)
 2. Overview of Maintenance Bids for Old Pond School (**Ward One**)

VII. Review of Proposed Zoning/Plats/Site Development Plans/Demolition Requests – One (1) Item

- A. *Discussion and Direction* on a **Demolition Request** for a group of buildings and structures located at 18456 Woodland Meadows Drive (Locator Number 25X520021). Demolition is proposed for one (1) existing single-family dwelling and all associated accessory structures upon the property. The date of construction of the primary residential dwelling of historic significance is indicated as 1910, according to St. Louis County Department of Revenue – Assessor’s Office Records, and circa 1875, according to the Wildwood Historic Building Survey. This age threshold does require the HPC to consider this request, and act, given at least one (1) of these structures is in excess of 75 years of age. (**Ward One**)

Planner Keefe gave a presentation, showing photographs of the historic structure, recapping the site visit with Mr. Whalen, and noting findings from his architect. It was noted the Department had the findings independently reviewed. Director Vujnich then presented, stating the Code language that details the authority of the Historic Preservation Commission to review these requests and issue comment, noting that the Historic Preservation Commission did not have the authority to disallow the demolition, given the voluntary nature of these regulations in this regard.

Vice Chair Scott requested clarification, and Director Vujnich noted the Commission could issue a recommendation for incentives, a building's addition to the historic register, or components of a building that could be salvaged, but it could not recommend against demolition. Vice Chair Scott noted he did not see another architect's report in the packet. Director Vujnich clarified that the Department had an independent architect review the information that had been submitted, but did not request a formal investigation or report. Mainly, the Department was seeking someone qualified as an architect to review the information that had been submitted, since no one in the Department necessarily could provide such. Vice Chair Scott noted he would like to go back to the site with both architects to reinvestigate the historic structure. He commented he felt the structure could be saved, though admittedly it would be very expensive. He said without this additional review, he would vote "no."

Director Vujnich noted that, if the Commission authorized the demolition, it could also add conditions for salvageable elements of the historic structure to be reincorporated into elements of the subdivision, donated to the City, etc. Alternate Quarternik noted she felt that restoring the residence didn't look to be financially feasible, no matter what might be preferred.

Vice Chair Scott noted there would be people who would want to live in a historic home. He felt it would be a premium house, if properly restored. He noted he felt the house could be made livable again. Alternate Quarternik noted the type of people who would buy a house in the proposed subdivision wouldn't spend the same amount on the historic home.

Vice Chair Scott commented he felt that someone buying a historic property should take care of what is there, knowing the house's significance to the community. He commented he felt the home had been neglected, causing many of the issues in existence today.

Commissioner Rowton motioned that Mr. Whalen present the financial analysis, and the Commission take a vote. He noted he felt the issue had been discussed enough. Commissioner Hammond seconded the motion. Motion carried, five (5) to one (1).

Chair Stevens granted permission for Mr. Whalen to present after the Commission had taken a vote. Mr. Whalen noted that the restoration and reclamation costs for the structure would far outweigh any market value. He noted he would be happy to donate any salvageable components to any worthy cause or City project.

Commissioner Hammond motioned to reconsider the original motion. Secretary Bachert seconded the motion to reconsider. Motion carried (Vice Chair Scott left the dais for the vote).

Commissioner Rowton amended the motion to authorize the demolition, with the condition that all salvageable historic elements of the home be donated and reused. Secretary Bachert seconded the motion. Motion carried (Vice Chair Scott left the dais for the vote).

VIII. Other Matters for Consideration – One (1) Item

- A.** *Update on opportunity to tour Historic Glencoe* with Ms. Ava Morgan Gilbert and her daughter, on Monday, September 12, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. Ms. Gilbert was born in Glencoe in 1937. Her father was the pastor of the church in the area and an avid trout fisherman. Her great grandparents and grandparents also lived in Glencoe. She now lives in Illinois and is curious to revisit Glencoe and see if any of the buildings she remembers from childhood are still in existence today. **(Ward Six)**

Planner Keefe confirmed the tour, noting the enthusiasm from Ava Gilbert and her daughter.

IX. Upcoming Meeting Date – September 22, 2022 (Thursday)

Director Vujnich noted the Department would appreciate if an alternative time could be proposed, given the usual date and time was the week of Celebrate Wildwood.

X. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

Vice Chair Scott made a motion, seconded by Secretary Bachert, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.