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Project: Zionsville New Park

Ratio Project No. 03050.000

Date/Time: October 29, 2003 at 7:00 pm

Purpose: Presentation of preliminary ideas and gathering of feedback

Held at: Zionsville Town Hall

Participants: Zionsville Parks Board, interested members of the community, John Jackson and Dave Rausch of RATIO

1. John Jackson began the meeting by introducing himself and David Rausch (as Principal in Charge of the Project) and stating the goals of the meeting, which were to:
 - a. Present what RATIO has done to date
 - b. Present initial thoughts
 - c. Receive feedback on proposed ideas
 - d. Conclude with a clear understanding of which concept is preferred
2. John reviewed the program, goals, objectives and priorities that were provided to RATIO at the start of the project. These are attached.
3. John reviewed several site analysis drawings that have informed RATIO's approach to the layout of the park. The site analysis touched upon Views, Drainage, Soils, Utilities, Circulation, Adjacent Land Uses and Vegetation.
4. John presented the three concepts RATIO has developed to date. Some distinguishing characteristics of the plans are:
 - a. Concept 1
 - i. Parking near Whitestown Road
 - ii. No baseball fields
 - iii. South central majority of the park devoted to open playfields that can accommodate rugby, football, lacrosse, and flag football
 - b. Concept 2
 - i. 4 baseball fields
 - ii. 2 football/rugby/lacrosse fields
 - iii. parking near Whitestown Road
 - c. Concept 3
 - i. Parking rotated to east occur between the woods and the playfields
 - ii. Large circular space and path defines open playfield area

All of the plans also included a skatepark (eastern side of the park), basketball courts, trails, enhanced woodland, off-road bicycle trail, fitness trail, a sledding hill on the west edge, and a splash park, playground and space for an ice skating rink adjacent to the farm.

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5. Dave reviewed the issues associated with the farmstead. Some of the highlights of this presentation included:

- a. RATIO believes it is important to keep the buildings whether they ultimately serve the park or exist as an attraction on their own.
- b. The collection and configuration of buildings makes them more valuable than they are as individual structures...the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

- c. As barns were not historically built to completely seal out the wind and rain, adapting them to other uses that may require high levels of interior climate control can be challenging, though not at all impossible.
 - d. The structures are generally in good shape with the exception of one barn that is listing to the east.
 - e. While RATIO sees value in developing the structures as an attraction unto themselves (i.e. a working farm concept), they also see many interesting opportunities to engage the buildings with active program functions like the splash park and playground.
6. RATIO opened the meeting up to questions. While not all of the questions were documented, we have done our best to summarize some of the lengthier and more significant discussions:
- a. **Sledding Hill** – George Tikjian noted that while all of the schemes included a Sledding Hill, he did not place it high on the list of priorities. He asked RATIO to discuss in more detail its inclusion. RATIO sees the Hill as beneficial and important for several reasons. It serves as a significant buffer between the park and residences on 950 East. It contains the west edge of the park visually, and it provides topographic relief in an otherwise relatively flat landscape that will provide interest and excitement. RATIO feels the idea of climbing to the top of the hill and viewing the activities in the park should be an important consideration.
 - b. **Farmstead** – Marianne Doyle expressed concern about the farm buildings being adapted to new uses like shelter pavilions/restrooms/concessions/storage. Speaking on behalf of the Maplelawn Committee, she felt strongly that such an approach would not be an appropriate use of the structures. The Maplelawn Committee wants the farmstead to be preserved as a living history museum of sorts (RATIO's term, not Marianne's) that portrays the activities and lifestyle of a farm. RATIO will develop the preferred scheme to show how the design will be affected by treating the farmstead as a separate venue.
 - c. **Baseball** – George expressed concern that only one scheme showed baseball fields. Art Small (also on the Little League Board of Directors) felt that while four fields would be nice to have, he recognized that they take up more room within the park than it seems reasonable. Art did not feel that it would be worth providing only one or two fields, and concluded that he felt it is ok not to have baseball in the park.
 - d. **Program, general** – one of the attendees expressed concern that the park try to be too many things, and championed the idea of trying to lean more toward one type of use within the park. For example, he felt that it could be confusing to have some baseball fields at the new park and others at Lions Park. He felt that it would be better if football, rugby, lacrosse and other open field sports that share similar footprints and requirements could be concentrated at the new park.
 - e. **Cost** - one attendee asked if there was a cost difference between the three concepts. RATIO responded that their work to date had been concentrated on development of the concepts only, and wanted to get community feedback on the ideas before assigning costs to the project. That said, the program for each concept was essentially the same and it was likely that the costs would be about the same. One exception noted was that baseball fields are more costly than open fields to build, so Concept 3 may be somewhat more expensive than the other two.
 - f. **Security/Rescue** - a resident on 950 east asked whether a police car would be able to drive anywhere in the park. The three concepts had not been designed to allow vehicular access to all areas of the park. There followed some discussion about whether emergency vehicles could get onto the fields if needed. Some felt that if an ambulance had to get onto a field, they would just drive over the turf to get there. George felt this needed further study and

asked RATIO to consider including a crushed stone path running east to west from the parking lot to the farmstead in Concept 3 as a way to address this concern.

- g. **Ice Skating** – John Jackson explained to several board members that there are systems being used to create pads of ice in parks and plazas now that do not depend on freezing weather to operate and keep the ice frozen. The systems are composed of a chiller that sends food-grade glycol (non-toxic) through tubes or mats. Water is sprayed over the tubes, creating a 2” thick layer of ice in a couple of days. Many communities have leased the setup, equipment and management of these facilities to companies that specialize in it. A typical arrangement would be for the management company to charge a flat fee for a 6-8 week installation, and then take a cut of the proceeds from fees up to a mutually agreeable amount. Once this amount is exceeded, the community takes the remaining proceeds. Admission is generally around 4-6 dollars per person. Corporate sponsorships have made this a very attractive and feasible option for other communities seeking to activate parks and plaza in the wintertime.
 - h. **Vehicular access** – there was a substantial amount of discussion about traffic, and in particular, Zionsville Middle School’s desire to explore an outlet through the park to alleviate congestion problems on Ford Road and within their parking lot. Those in attendance were not in favor of providing vehicular access through the park for this purpose. One attendee suggested that modifications be made to Ford Road (stacking lanes and passing blisters) rather than introduce so many cars to the park.
7. **Straw Pole Vote** - George Tikijian suggested a straw pole vote for the various concepts toward the end of the meeting. Concept 3 was the clear favorite among the group. Several people noted that the large circular path was attractive and seemed to be an interesting way to organize the playfields.
8. RATIO will develop Concept 3 further for the November 12 regular parks board meeting. One of the developments will include an exploration of what happens when the farmstead is set up as an independent operation instead of a supporting facility to the overall park.

Any additions or corrections to these Minutes should be submitted in writing to Ratio Architects, Inc., within ten (10) days of receipt. Otherwise, these Minutes stand as correct.

Respectfully submitted,



John D. Jackson, ASLA
Associate Principal

cc: Al Smith – Zionsville Parks and Recreation Department
Zionsville Parks Board
Dave Rausch, Brian Bishop - RATIO Architects, Inc. / CF 03050.000 III

Attachment: Program, Goals and Objectives