



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
Current Planning

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Preliminary Findings for Special Review #906 Approval
May 6, 2013

TITLE: Mehaffey Park

LOCATION: Generally located north of West 22nd Street, south of West 29th Street, 1/4 mile west of N. Wilson Avenue and east of Cascade Avenue.

APPLICANT: City of Loveland Parks and Recreation, Janet Meisel- Burns

STAFF CONTACT: Kerri Burchett, Current Planning
Melissa Morin, Water/Wastewater
Kevin Gingery, Stormwater
Kathleen Porter, Power
Sean Kellar, Engineering
Carie Dann, Fire
Tom Hawkinson, Building

APPLICATION TYPE: Special Review #906

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Current Planning Manager approve a Type 2 Zoning Permit for the Mehaffey Park Special Review #906, subject to the conditions listed in this report dated May 6, 2013.

I. ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Vicinity Map
- 2. Special Review/Site Development Plan

II. SITE DATA

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|-------------------------|--|
| Legal Description | Amended Plat of Parcels 1 and 2, Mehaffey Park First Addition; Tract B, Vanguard-Famleco First Addition and a portion of Tract C, Vanguard-Famleco Second Addition |
| Existing Zoning..... | PP Public Parks District |
| Acres | 69.8 acres |
| Existing Use: | Vacant |
| Proposed Use..... | Community Park |

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The special review application is to develop and construct a new 69.8 acre community park, called Mehaffey Park. The property is located south of West 29th Street, east of Cascade Avenue, north of West 22nd Street and approximately ¼ mile west of Wilson Avenue. The City of Loveland has been planning for the development of Mehaffey Park since the land was purchased in 1998. The park has always been envisioned as a community park to serve the west side of Loveland, as described in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2001). The original land purchased for the park was 60 acres and fronted on W. 22nd Street only. With the development of the neighboring subdivisions, the City acquired additional street frontage off of future Rio Blanco Avenue in the Meadowbrook Ridge Subdivision. In the summer of 2012, the City purchased an additional 9.36 acres north and west of the park to provide access for the Hunters Run neighborhood and vehicle access off of 29th Street. One of the major focuses of this park is a municipal arboretum. This is a directive from the Mehaffey family when the property was purchased. This is also a unique park site as it was a dryland wheat farm for over 80 years and has over 60 feet of elevation change which dictates many of the design features.

Through the 18 months of planning for the park, the design team and staff met to discuss and evaluate how best to meet the existing and future needs of the City’s park system and also to assess the function and relationship of this park within the existing and proposed neighborhoods. The City’s desire from the start has been to find a balance of compatible uses and functions for the park while still meeting the neighborhood’s desires for a small park feel and maintaining open space and wildlife areas. Community parks are typically busy with traffic, people and activities so achieving this balance took skillful design. Community parks by definition accommodate larger functions such as group picnic shelters, sports facilities and typically host larger community events. After completing the needs assessment, Parks and Recreation staff and the design team felt that this park could be designed to manage some if not all the larger community needs while still making the park feel safe and accessible for the adjacent neighbors. The City also needed to ensure that the existing recreation trail connection was maintained to link the north and south neighborhoods together.

The City approached the design of this park knowing staff needs and desires, special interest group needs and desires and then approached the neighborhood in the December 2011. The design team prepared a site analysis, context map and 3 concept plans for the community to evaluate. Staff also opened a webpage for the project www.cityofloveland.org/mehaffey to keep the public informed and to share important information regarding the design, annexation and planning process. Staff also asked the public to complete a survey and solicited comments on the design for 30 days. We received over 150 comments on the initial designs of the park. In January 2012, staff presented a Preferred Master Plan which combined aspects of all 3 concepts and resulted in most of the active areas moving north in the park, including the dog park, skate park and tennis complex. Passive areas now wrap the entire perimeter of the park and parking is centralized and divided between the north access (29th Street) and the 22nd Street access.

After the purchase of the new property, Parks and Recreation staff directed the design team to merge the preferred plan with the new parcel and in the summer of 2012, a new Master Plan was prepared. The new Master Plan was adopted by the Loveland Parks and Recreation Commission in September 2012. The Master Plan places most activities centralized in the park including all parking, both restrooms, and the group picnic shelters. The south parking lot accommodates 120 cars and is entirely buffered by the regional detention pond and the multipurpose athletic fields. In addition the south drainage swale and berm provides a buffer to the Quail Run and Meadowbrook neighborhoods. The south parking serves the group picnic shelters, the multipurpose fields and the adventure play area. A restroom and maintenance complex is located at the north end of this parking lot. The southern area of the park sits on the lowest plateau and is screened by tree plantings, hills that wrap around the north and west sides of the park and is heavily planted with the fruit orchards. The City has designed the entire park to serve as the arboretum and plans to include as many diverse plant species that will tolerate a foothills climate with a focus on native and drought (Xeric) tolerant landscaping.

The City determined that a skate park and tennis complex was needed for the west side of the community and placed both of these activities on the north and west sides of the park, as far from residential development as possible. The park also includes a small dog park and another athletic field in the north to meet drop-in use for the neighborhoods. A small restroom and attached shelter is located by the north parking lot for park uses in the north. A new disc golf course is planned for the north and eastern edge of the park and will be maintained in a short grass prairie mix. The City recreation trail connects from 22nd Street to 29th Street along the east property boundary and provides direct access for all neighbors to walk, ride or skate to the park. One of the key components of the park is the adventure playground which is located behind a 4' to 16 foot tall berm on the east side of the park. The enclosure of the play area will buffer noise from the adjacent neighbors. The play area will take advantage of the grade change and incorporate slides and climbers and access from a bridge connecting the playground berm to the rest of the upper plateau.

Although the park is 69 acres, only 64 are being developed at this time. Approximately 5 acres on the northern edge, adjacent to the future 29th Street extension, is planned for future park and recreation expansion. The Parks and Recreation Department has no specifics or ideas at this time for the remaining 5 acres. The park detention pond is located in the lowest part of the park and serves as a focal point for the group picnic shelters, grass picnic lawn and is also a regional detention pond. The pond has been designed to incorporate the surrounding future developments detention and also store irrigation water for the park.

The landscape for this park is dramatically different from all other community parks. Only 32-35 acres of irrigated turf is proposed. The concept for the design celebrates our dryland heritage and embraces drought tolerant landscaping of the prairie and foothills ecosystem. All non-irrigated areas will be seeded in short or long grass prairie grasses, forbes and perennials. Many of the non-irrigated areas will have supplemental watering for establishment. Any tree or shrubs planted in these areas will be watered with a drip irrigation system. All athletic fields will be irrigated and seeded or sodded depending on use and function when we open the park. Since the park is also an arboretum there is a focus on native, drought tolerant and heritage trees. Several fruit orchards are proposed to accentuate the grade changes and provide color and interest in the spring and fall. It is believed that portions of the park may at one time have been used as the Cherokee Trail when settlers were crossing the prairie. This history is celebrated and incorporated throughout the park - in the orchards, play area, tensile structures and the art within the park.

IV. KEY ISSUES

City staff believes that all key issues have been addressed in the development proposal and through the recommended conditions of approval. At the neighborhood meeting, surrounding property owners asked questions concerning programming of park activities, lighting, security, irrigation, information on the ponds, shelters, construction timing, and trail pavement options. Parks and Recreation staff addressed questions and comments received from the neighbors at the meeting (see Section VI.B, below).

V. BACKGROUND

The City's Parks and Recreation Department purchased the property proposed for annexation in 1997 for the purpose of developing a community park. The property was annexed into the City and zoned PP Public Parks District in November of 2012. A pedestrian trail was constructed in 2003 when the City completed the underpass at US Highway 34. The trail will be modified or relocated during the construction of Mehaffey Park. A pedestrian connection will remain in the park as part of the City's Recreation Trail.

The City purchased 9.36 acres of property within the Meadowbrook Ridge PUD in 2012 to expand the area for the proposed community park and gain access from West 29th Street. The property was rezoned in November of 2012 to the PP Public Park District.

VI. STAFF, APPLICANT, AND NEIGHBORHOOD INTERACTION

- A. Notification:** An affidavit was received from Janet Meisel-Burns with the City's Parks and Recreation Department certifying that written notice was mailed to all property owners within 1,000 feet of the property on April 10, 2013 and notices were posted in a prominent location on the perimeter of the site at least 15 days prior to the neighborhood meeting.
- B. Neighborhood Response:** The neighborhood meeting was held on April 25th at 5:30 p.m. in the Senior Center at the Chilson Recreation Center. Prior to the meeting, at 4:30 p.m., the Parks and Recreation Department hosted an open house for the public to informally review the park design and

ask questions. 50 residents attended the open house and/or special review neighborhood meeting, along with City staff. The following questions were voiced at the meeting. The response provided by the Parks and Recreation Department is shown in italics.

- Pickleball. What is this new sport?
Pickleball is a hybrid sport between tennis and paddleball.
- Construction Timing: How long will the project take?
The construction timing is estimated at 12 months. The City would like to begin construction in August.
- Ponds: How deep will the ponds be and will there be any aeration to prevent mosquitos?
There will probably not be a fountain or any aeration. The City will monitor mosquito hot spots and treat them accordingly. The ponds will be a maximum of 8 feet in depth but the actual water depth will vary based on the Loudon Ditch. There will be no fishing, ice skating or swimming in the ponds.
- Irrigation. Where is the irrigation for the park coming from?
Irrigation is from the Loudon Ditch.
- Security: How will security be handled, particularly under the bridge? Has LED lighting been pursued?
There is a possibility that cameras will be installed around the bridge. Lighting will be placed under the bridge as well. The Parks Department looked into LED lighting however it was too costly.
- Parking Lots: How many total spaces are proposed?
Approximately 240 spaces are proposed; 120 spaces in each parking lot.
- Trail Pavement. Will there be a soft surface trail?
There will be a soft surface trail component along the main trail.

C. Project Schedule

1. Special Review #906 was filed with the Current Planning Department on March 29, 2013.
2. A neighborhood meeting was held on April 25, 2013 at 5:30 p.m. in the Senior Center at the Chilson Recreation Center.
3. The staff preliminary findings and determination was made on May 6, 2013.
4. The public review period for the staff preliminary findings and determinations is from May 6, 2013 to May 15, 2013.

5. The appeal period for the Type 2 Zoning Permit for Special Review #904 is from May 16, 2013 to May 28, 2013.
6. The Type 2 Zoning Permit for the Modification to Special Review #904 will be issued on May 29, 2013 providing no appeal is filed.

VII. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

City staff believes that all of the required findings, as indicated below, have been met.

Finding 1. That the proposed special review use meets the purposes set forth in Section 18.04.010 of the Loveland Municipal Code as indicated below:

Section 18.04.010: The zoning regulations and districts, as herein set forth, which have been made in accordance with a comprehensive zoning study, are designed to lessen congestion in the streets; to secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers; to promote health and general welfare; to provide adequate light and air; to prevent overcrowding of land; to avoid undue concentration of population; and to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewage, schools, parks and other public requirements.

Current Planning: Staff believes that this finding can be met based on the following fact:

- The community park will not have detrimental impacts on the items listed in Section 18.04.100 of the Municipal Code, as described above, including congestion in the streets, safety from fire, panic and other dangers, adequate light and air, and overcrowding of land or undue concentration of population.
- Analysis from City utility and transportation reviewers have indicated that the development of the park will comply with the City's Adequate Community Facilities ordinance and that no negative impacts to the City's transportation or utility provisions are anticipated (see Finding 5, below).

Finding 2. That the effects of the proposed special review use on the surrounding neighborhood and the public in general will be ameliorated.

Current Planning: Staff believes that this finding can be met based on the following facts:

- The Parks and Recreation staff has been working with the surrounding neighborhoods and special interest groups on the design and programming of the park since December of 2011. A webpage was created for the project to keep the public informed and to share important information regarding the design and planning processes. Staff also asked the public to complete a survey and solicited comments on the design. The neighborhood has been involved in the design of the park through the extensive neighborhood outreach that was conducted.

- At the formal neighborhood meeting, there were no objections voiced from the neighborhood regarding the development of the park. Questions were raised and answered by staff focusing on the specific details of the park programming and development (see Section VI.B, above).
- The design of the park has incorporated many features requested by the neighborhood to mitigate concerns with the development of the park. This includes visually blocking the view of the playground through the use of berms, reducing lighting, placing the tennis courts at the northwest corner of the site and designating the park as practice fields only.

Finding 3. That in assessing the potential effects of the proposed special review use, at a minimum, the following matters have been considered:

3a. Type, size, amount, and placement of landscaping;

Current Planning: Staff believes that this finding is not applicable based on the special review request based on the following fact:

- Significant landscaping is being incorporated into the park, including an arboretum and perimeter bufferyards. The landscaping has been designed to include many diverse plant species that will tolerate a foothills climate with a focus on native and drought (Xeric) tolerant landscaping.
- Large buffers are provided on all 4 sides of the park through the use of topography, drainage channels and the Loudon ditch.

3b. Height, size, placement, and number of signs;

Current Planning: Staff believes that this finding can be met based on the following fact:

- Signage is only planned at the south entrance of the park at this time. The monument sign will identify the park name and address and be lighted from the ground. The signage proposed is in keeping with the theme of the park and incorporates a design feature resembling a covered wagon. The sign will comply with the signage criteria in the Municipal Code.

3c. Use, location, number, height, size, architectural design, materials, and colors of buildings;

Current Planning: Staff believes that this finding can be met based on the following fact:

- The architecture of the shelters and structures are simple and small in scale and proportion. All of the permanent structures have metal pitched roofs and vary in size with the large shelters accommodating up to 50 seated guests. The largest restroom, is 1,628 square feet and has an attached maintenance garage to house utility vehicles for the park. The structures have stone veneer to blend with the stacked stone retaining walls in the park. The pump house is the closest structure to any neighborhood but is still over 100 feet west of the nearest property line. The building is 440 SF and has a metal pitched roof, split faced CMU block and will be screened by shrubs and vines so it will disappear in the landscape. There

are several smaller tensile fabric shelters that will be in use only in the summer at the tennis complex, skate park and in the orchards or play area.

3d. Configuration and placement of vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation;

Current Planning: Staff believes that this finding can be met based on the following facts:

- The park will be accessed off of West 29th Street and West 22nd Street. Both access points to the park have been designed in compliance with the Larimer County Urban Area Street Standards.
- Pedestrian access and circulation has been accomplished through a variety of trail networks connecting different areas of the park. The primary trail will be lite and will connect to the City's trail network off-site.
- A condition of approval has been incorporated into the project requiring the design and construction of future pedestrian connections to the undeveloped land east of the park.

3e. Amount and configuration of parking;

Current Planning: Staff believes that this finding can be met based on the following fact:

- Parking is equally divided with 120 parking spaces in the north and south parking lots. The parking spaces will comply with the dimensional requirements in the Municipal Code.

3f. Amount, placement, and intensity of lighting;

Current Planning: Staff believes that this finding can be met based on the following facts:

- Lighting is provided for both parking lots and the main pedestrian system from each parking lot. The poles will be 16 feet in height and will be a standard shoebox fixtures with cutoffs.
- Supplemental lighting is planned in the play area, under the bridge and at all structures and shelters. Lights are planned for the tennis/pickelball complex, basketball court and the skate park. Lighting at the sports areas will be on timers and solar sensors and can be controlled by staff as needed. All sports lights have cut-off shields and are designed with the latest in technology and to the highest quality standards.

3g. Hours of operation;

Current Planning: Staff believes that this finding can be met based on the following fact:

- Park hours are governed by the municipal code; operations are from 6 AM to 10:30 PM. Site security is planned for after hours and security cameras may be installed at the shelters, restrooms and play area.

3h. Emissions of noise, dust, fumes, glare, and other pollutants.

Current Planning: Staff believes that this finding can be met based on the following fact:

- There are no permanent emissions, dust, fumes, glare or other pollutants associated with Mehaffey Park. There will be increased noise from traffic on both 22nd and 29th Street but all parking and core areas of the park are heavily screened or buffered from the adjacent neighbors.

Finding 4. Except as may be varied in accordance with this special review permit, the special review site plan conforms to the restrictions and regulations set forth in the Loveland Municipal Code for the zoning district in which the special review use is located.

Current Planning: Staff believes that this finding can be met based on the following facts:

- The special review site plan conforms to the Loveland Municipal Code for the PP Public Park zone district. In the PP zone district, community and regional parks along with recreational facilities located within 500 feet of a residentially zoned or occupied area are permitted as a use by special review.
- There are two specific development standards contained in PP zone district as outlined in Section 18.32 of the Municipal Code: height limitations and off-street parking areas. All buildings proposed in the special review will comply with the height limitations in Chapter 18.54 of the Municipal Code. There are no off-street parking requirements for a community park outlined in Chapter 18.42, however the parking stall dimensions will comply with the dimensional standards contained in this Chapter.

Finding 5. The special review site plan meets the requirements set forth in Section 16. 41 - Adequate Community Services - of the Loveland Municipal Code.

Fire Prevention: Staff believes that this finding can be met based on the following facts:

- The project will comply with the requirements in the ACF Ordinance for response distance requirements for Loveland Fire Rescue Authority jurisdiction. The first due Engine Company is at Station 2.
- The proposed development will not negatively impact fire protection for the subject development or surrounding properties.

Water/Wastewater: Staff believes that this finding can be met based on the following facts:

- This development is situated within the boundaries of, and accommodated by, the City's water and wastewater master plans. It is also located within the City's current service areas for Water and Wastewater.
- The proposed development will not negatively impact City water and wastewater facilities.
- The proposed public facilities and services are adequate and consistent with the City's utility planning and provides for efficient and cost-effective delivery of City water and wastewater service.

Stormwater: Staff believes that this finding can be met based on the following fact:

- The development will not negatively impact City storm drainage utilities and will comply with the Adequate Community Services ordinance outlined in the Loveland Municipal Code, Section 16.41.140.

Power: Staff believes that this finding can be met based on the following facts:

- There are underground electrical vaults and conduit along the west side of the proposed park area. 200 amp primary cable can be extended through the existing conduit to the existing vaults from either the vault located in the north west corner of the proposed park or from the south from a vault located on the south side of west 22nd St. and Rio Blanco Avenue at the expense of the developer.
- The electric facilities are adequate and available for extension to the projected use. The proposed development will not have a negative impact on the City's electric system and it meets the criteria for level of service as outlined in the ACF ordinance.

Transportation Engineering: Staff believes that this finding can be met based on the following facts:

- A Traffic Impact Study has been submitted with the Mehaffey Park project which demonstrates that the existing transportation system, can adequately serve the land uses proposed.
- Primary access to the site will be from a full-movement access to 29th Street and a full-movement access to 22nd Street.
- The applicant's traffic engineer, Matt Delich, P.E., has submitted a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) that indicates that the traffic associated with the proposed project will meet the City's standards.

In conclusion, the development of the subject property pursuant will not adversely impact any existing City infrastructure. A positive determination of adequacy for transportation facilities for the proposed project has been made.

VIII. CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

Current Planning

1. Future pedestrian access to Lot 1 of the Mehaffey Minor Land Division, as identified in the special review site plan, shall be designed and constructed by the City Parks and Recreation Department, unless designed and constructed by others, in conjunction with a development proposal for said Lot.
2. All corrections to the special review/site development plan and construction drawings, as identified in the Development Review Team Report dated April 19, 2013, shall be completed or resolved prior to approval of the final documents.

Transportation:

3. All public improvements shall comply with the Larimer County Urban Area Street Standards (LCUASS).
4. Prior to the issuance of any building permits within the property, unless otherwise approved pursuant to the provisions in Section 16.40 of the Loveland Municipal Code, the Developer shall construct the improvements to 29th Street and 22nd Street as shown in the City approved Public Improvement Construction Plans.