

04 June 2021

## MEETING MINUTES

**PROJECT NAME:** Newport News Southeast Resource Area Master Plan  
**QEA PROJECT #:** 42025320  
**MEETING:** Community Center Programming Meeting  
**MEETING DATE:** 06.01.2021  
**ATTENDEES:** Sheila McAllister, City of Newport News  
Tammy Jordan, Newport News Parks, Recreation & Tourism  
Megan Reed, Newport News Parks, Recreation & Tourism  
Chuck Wray, Quinn Evans  
Shannon Wray, Quinn Evans  
Allison Powell, Quinn Evans  
Allie Jarett, Quinn Evans

## PARKS & REC + NEWPORT NEWS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Parks & Rec manages NNPS ball fields (Middle School & Elementary School)
  - Parks & Rec maintains (mows, stripes) ES and MS fields
  - Parks & Rec permits and decides who uses ES and MS fields
  - Athletics for Parks & Rec programs use NNPS fields
- NNPS cross country teams use parks for meets and training
- NNPS swim teams swim in public pools
- Parks & Rec allows NNPS to hold meetings in their spaces
- Parks & Rec holds programs in schools and can charge tuition for them
- Parks & Rec has used all common area spaces at the schools (auditoriums, gyms, cafeterias, ball fields)
- Schools provide food for Parks & Rec programs located within school facilities through USDA

## OVERVIEW OF NEWPORT NEWS COMMUNITY CENTERS

- Five major community centers, plus one purpose center (Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center)
- Parks & Rec provides tuition-based programs during the school year, have some drop-in (free) and some pay programs over the summer
- Can't charge tuition to use a library space
- Parks & Rec tries not to have dedicated space for specific programs within community centers
  - Multi-purpose rooms are more flexible and desirable
- Public uses community centers for venue space
  - Rooms booked for baby and bridal showers, celebrations
- Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Building used for formal events and meetings
  - Parks & Rec would like to introduce and incorporate cultural arts into other centers and advertise for Downing-Gross
  - 276-seat theater in Downing-Gross, not large enough for dance recitals
- Midtown and Denbigh are nearby community centers to Doris Miller
  - Workout circuit at Denbigh, stations for equipment
  - Pavilion at Midtown used for activities, staging for swim meets
- Tennis courts at King Lincoln Park
- The earlier in the day that Parks & Rec programs can get on to fields and in spaces the better
- Resiliency
  - Community centers can act as cooling centers
  - Centers have a generator hook up if needed
  - Have used centers as staging areas during natural disasters, not a shelter (schools used as shelters)

## DORIS MILLER COMMUNITY CENTER

- True community center, heart of the community for informal activity
- Intentional and safe programming

04 June 2021

- Safe place for kids
  - Place for seniors to gather
- Community feedings
- Summer camps
- Something for everyone
- Don't currently have enough space for desired classes and activities
- Storage issue
- Drop-in program: Summer Playground Program
  - Children can come and go as they please, considered somewhat custodial care
  - Mon-Fri 9am-5pm during the summer
- Doris Miller is currently set up to where "littles and bigs" are not scheduled at the same time
  - Would like spaces to program multiple ages going on at the same time
  - Would like outdoor space for gathering and games
- Senior programming at Doris Miller
  - Mature Adults program
  - There are dedicated senior spaces for gathering, socializing, and games
  - The center provides snacks and coffee for seniors
  - Some transportation is provided to the center, a lot of seniors walk and use public transportation
  - Currently senior program rooms are on the second floor—would better located on the first floor
- Gymnasium at Doris Miller
  - Currently used for mostly basketball
  - Has been used for concerts, feedings, as a polling place, Bingo, dances, movies
  - There is spectator space on one side of the gym
- Computer lab
  - Seniors use it, youth programs use it for homework
  - Potential to convert computer labs to laptop stations that are mobile and can be lent out
- Indoor fitness equipment not needed, takes away from multi-purpose of space, not utilized a lot

#### THE POOL AT DORIS MILLER

- The pool opens when schools close and closes when schools open during the year
- Free to Newport News citizens
- Safe environment
- Families love the pool
- There is usually a wait to get into the pool
- Designated times are scheduled for different groups (families, adults) and they clear the deck after each group leaves
- The splash pad is very popular
- No concessions, vending machines are located inside Doris Miller
- Guard office and break room
- Parking not generally an issue, a lot of walk-ups
- Water fitness occurs in the morning before the pool is open to public, swim lessons too
- Doris Miller does water safety with the schools
- Playground adjacent to pool now, basic equipment
- Don't think Doris Miller needs traditional locker rooms
  - Currently have small locker rooms without showers, people can rinse off by pool area

#### VISION

- Community wellness theme
- A place for cooking classes, Parks & Rec does not currently have a teaching kitchen
- Doris Miller would benefit from a commercial kitchen to support community feedings
  - Two feedings for Thanksgiving, 200 people per feeding
- Vision for seniors
  - Seniors would like a community garden; they could care for it and teach kids gardening
  - Senior programming on first floor
  - Seniors would like a lot of natural light
- Space for parents to wait for kids while taking classes

04 June 2021

- Lots of multi-purpose rooms
- Another splash pad playground desired in addition to what they have now
- A multi-generational activity area
  - Pickle ball, grilling area, picnic tables, playground similar to Riverview Farm Park, music incorporated into playground equipment, experiential play (look at Fantasy Farm Playground)
- More places for basketball and volleyball
- City needs multi-purpose fields, well lit, rectangular, with good drainage
- Gym that could be used universally
  - Indoor sports (soccer, lacrosse, field hockey)
  - Dances, fairs
  - Go Green Expo
- Outdoor spaces with comfort features
  - Water fountains, places to get water and shade
  - Restrooms that are lockable, parks would have to answer about maintenance
- Outdoor learning spaces
  - Amphitheater
- Fireplace, symbol of community gathering
- Indoor/outdoor 3-season spaces, pavilions
- Large garage doors and high ceilings at a new community center for moving equipment

#### **SHARED SPACE OPPORTUNITIES**

- Programs could happen in Huntington Middle School if security issues addressed and schools allow it
- Kitchen at HMS could be used for community feedings if schools allow it
- There was a trial where students used Parks & Rec program space after hours with staff supervision
- Existing collaborations in place
  - Wickham Avenue Alliance program for teens (Shared programming across Doris Miller Community Center, Scott Center, Pearl Bailey Library, Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center)
- One building vs. campus model?
  - Like the campus philosophy, standalone yet in a partnership with surrounding buildings, safe zone
  - Community center partnership with libraries is easier than with schools due to security limitations
  - Shared space nice, independent own space important too
- Don't want to lose identity of each organization
  - Maintain the history of each organization
- Doris Miller and Scott Center charge for some programs, Library does not charge for any programs
- How to provide the same services, but in partnership?
  - How do they not compete with each other?

#### **END OF MEMORANDUM**

Prepared by Allie Jarett, QE

If there are any questions or comments regarding this Meeting Memorandum, please contact this office within ten (10) days or it will stand as correct.