

CITY OF YACHATS
SPECIAL PARKS AND COMMONS COMMISSION
SUMMARY MINUTES

November 14, 2024

The regular meeting of the Parks and Commons Commission was called to order Chair Meg Simans at 12:00 PM in the Civic Meeting Room of the Yachats Commons. Members present Co-Chair Dan Sterling, Ron Simans, Dean Shrock, and George Giroux. Absent: Michael Hempen

Audience: 12

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Parks and Commons Commission special meeting on November 14th; and introduced the Scharen Design Group. The meeting's purpose was to introduce the selected design company. There will be an upcoming community input session on December 12th and the formation of an advisory group to continue meeting with sharing design through the process. The advisory group would report back to the community at large.

Scharen Design team and landscape architects introduced themselves and their team to the community. They outlined their objectives for the meeting, which included identifying needs and constraints, understanding the community's expectations for the Master Plan, and assessing the applicability of previous studies. They also discussed the purpose of the Master Plan, which is to enhance the identity of the community and guide future developments. The design team explained the design process, which includes information gathering, detailed analysis, options development, draft master plan creation, cost estimation, and finalization with the City Council. The team emphasized the importance of community feedback throughout the process.

The meeting focused on planning and community development. The design team presented their objectives, including community identity enhancement, gathering feedback, and addressing needs like adaptability and sustainability. They also emphasized the role of previous studies and proposed processes involving analysis, option development, and eventual approval.

Key points discussed include:

1. **Community Center Plans** : Balancing its roles as an event and community space, integrating public art, and improving aesthetics and functionality.
2. **Infrastructure and Resilience** : Addressing challenges such as electrical upgrades, water storage, and generator placement, with consideration for sustainability and long-term usability.
3. **Open Space and Green Areas** : Proposals for multi-use spaces like an amphitheater, covered food truck zones, and enhanced farmers' market areas with potential solar energy integration.
4. **Community Feedback and Engagement** : Including public input through advisory groups and interactive sessions, ensuring the design reflects the town's character.

5. **Future Directions** : Exploration of educational signage, historical highlights, and aesthetic upgrades in open spaces to promote community use and attract visitors.

Enhancing the city's open space, including the possibility of adding music and educational signage; the space could be used to showcase the native species and history of the area and this could be a way to attract more visitors; the challenges of maintaining the space as a lawn due to mole holes and suggested that it could be used for events like the monthly big band concerts. It was also mentioned the possibility of working with the Ashland Food Co-Op on a master plan.

The city Manager indicated this ongoing project, emphasized that it would proceed regardless of whether they received a grant; and highlighted the importance of infrastructure, utilities, and resiliency, particularly water storage and generator placement; and the acquisition of a property for emergency equipment storage. The team agreed to continue their discussions and announce their representative in the next meeting.

Next steps

- Architect team to analyze previous studies and plans for the civic campus.
- Architect team to consider incorporating educational signage about wetlands and native species.
- Architect team to explore options for an amphitheater or bandstand in the green space.
- Architect team to consider ways to enhance the farmers market area.
- Architect team to investigate possibilities for flexible, multi-use spaces in the Commons building.
- City staff to provide information on resiliency program plans and potential electrical upgrades.
- Architect team to consider safety and security improvements, particularly for YYFAP spaces.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 p.m.
By Kimmie Jackson Recorder