

January 30, 2019

From: Dorothea Dix Park Master Plan Advisory Committee
To: Dorothea Dix Park Master Plan Executive Committee

Members of the Dorothea Dix Master Plan Executive Committee:

In August of 2016, the Raleigh City Council appointed the members of the Dorothea Dix Park Master Plan Advisory Committee (MPAC) in order to cultivate community input on the park, advise the selected consultants, and make a recommendation of a final plan to the Dorothea Dix Park Master Plan Executive Committee (MPEC).

The MPAC consists of residents from all areas of the city, broadly diverse in age, and representing a diversity of races, occupations, education levels, and civic engagement experiences. MPAC members attended community events, volunteered at Park events, and have encouraged public participation in the planning process. In addition, MPAC members worked directly with the six workgroups on the following themes: transportation, region, buildings, site, program and partners. The diversity of this committee generated a wide range of views, inputs, and suggestions for the park plan.

This diverse group of Raleigh citizens met regularly for more than two years to fulfill these goals, and on **January 23rd, 2019 the Dorothea Dix Master Plan Advisory Committee voted unanimously to endorse the Dorothea Dix Park Master Plan created by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA)** as presented that evening.

The work of this group has no doubt strengthened the Master Plan, and while there was unanimous consent to endorse the plan, for some members there remain a few outstanding concerns identified during the during the 14-day comment period on draft Master Plan that required additional study and discussion. Staff has sent these changes to MVVA to be incorporated into the Master Plan and MPAC has endorsed these changes.

MVVA and City staff have thoughtfully and carefully combined the input of more than 65,000 people into this plan, balancing expertise, best practices, and public sentiment, while ensuring that no particular opinions were over emphasized.

Of note to the MPEC are a few core areas to take time to consider and ensure careful inclusion in the plan:

- **Downtown connections:** A series of direct and thoughtful connections to Downtown Raleigh are needed, notably the the northeastern intersection into Downtown. Additional design moves concerning this corner, as well as all edges of the park, should be studied and strengthened as a stronger connection into Downtown Raleigh, working with stakeholder partners like the State of NC, NC State University, Governor Morehead School, and the abutting neighborhoods.
- **Building use:** The Master Plan proposes the concept of preserving 30 historic structures and the final decisions about the preservation, demolition and use of buildings will be determined in future phases. A robust and transparent community engagement process

and City Council approval will be required in each phase of work and should guide future plans.

- Parking: The final decisions about the location, type and amount of parking will surely evolve as amenities and facilities are developed as part of phasing implementation plans. A robust and transparent community engagement process and City Council approval will be required in each phase of work and should guide future plans.
- Private development: Through the public input process, we realized that this is the most complex and possibly controversial piece of the Master Plan for Dorothea Dix Park, and decisions about any potential private development in the park through public-private partnerships will be determined in future phases. Here again, a robust and transparent community engagement process and City Council approval will be required in each phase of work and should be used to guide future plans.
- Equity plan: Raleigh and the Triangle are rapidly changing, and a study is needed to address the impacts associated with the park on the city's most vulnerable residents. The development of an Equity Plan is important to put forward recommendations on equity, diversity, and inclusion principles and policies for future partnerships, activities, development, and planning of Dix Park.

Dix Park can be transformative in so many ways to so many walks of life. The opportunity to connect the city, bring disparate groups together, and build an oasis in our city that is both beautiful and functional stands before us. It is our sincere hope that the Master Plan Executive Committee will take in the concerns and note the overwhelming support for the Master Plan and subsequently recommend City Council adopt the full Master Plan and direct City staff to begin work necessary for plan implementation.

Thank you for entrusting us with this work.

On behalf of the Master Plan Advisory Committee,

Bill Padgett (chair)

Ashton Smith (vice-chair)

Jai Kumar (vice-chair)