



Legislation Text

File #: 24-0765, **Version:** 1

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the North Port Commission

FROM: A. Jerome Fletcher II, ICMA-CM, MPA, City Manager

TITLE: Discussion and Possible Direction Regarding Status of Action Items Related to Warm Mineral Springs Park Phase I Improvements and Phase II Future Development.

Recommended Action

Discussion regarding status of action items related to Warm Mineral Springs Park Phase I Improvements and Phase II Future Development.

Background Information

The following provides a chronological order of events regarding the status of action items related to Warm Mineral Springs Park Phase I Improvements and Phase II Future Development:

- March 5, 2024: During the City Commission Regular Meeting, staff presented information related to Warm Mineral Springs Park Phase I Improvements and Phase II Future Development. In addition to providing an overview of a planned refresh for the site, several options were shared related to potential next steps for Commission consideration. Subsequent to discussion and review of a post-storm building assessment report from Sweet Sparkman Architecture & Interiors, the following motions were made by Commission:
 - ✓ Motion #1: To direct the City Manager to work with staff to bring back additional information regarding the costs associated with Option 1 including the demolition of existing buildings, salvaging Cyclorama panels for future display; constructing a simple administrative building including flushable toilets and an outside shower; water and sewer to the immediate area and incremental cost to bring to Tamiami Trail; and parking improvements, and plan development costs.
 - ✓ Motion #2: To direct staff to include the Warm Mineral Springs Appraisal and CBRE Real Estate Appraisal documents to the agenda backup.
 - ✓ Motion #3: To direct the City Manager to continue discussion with various entities/focus groups and to bring back information on connecting Legacy Trail to Warm Mineral Springs.
 - ✓ Motion #4: A motion to amend was made by Commissioner Langdon, seconded by Commissioner McDowell, to add specifically the look, cost and funding responsibility.
- February, March and April 2024: The following actions have been taken by staff in relation to the planned site refresh and the aforementioned Commission directives:
 - ✓ Completed installation of privacy screening; added exterior skirting to temporary trailers; furnished staff offices; secured new patio umbrellas, flags, clock, and technology needs; repaired foot wash station; conducted outflow canal clean-up; trimmed palm trees and implemented landscaping improvements. Staff have also scheduled concrete repairs to the bridge, contracted necessary security upgrades and have an alternate internet solution on order. Also, ten of the eleven approved positions have been filled

with year-round regular employees.

- ✓ The CBRE Real Estate Proposal Analysis and Attachments A through I were added to the March 5, 2024, City Commission Regular Meeting Agenda under General Business Item 6.A. 24-0335.
- ✓ Draft Contract Amendment to Agreement No. 2017-40 with Kimley-Horn & Associates for Professional Design and Engineering Services for the construction of a new code compliant building is being prepared for City Attorney review. Design will incorporate references to the historic architecture as well as possible salvage and reuse of items of historical significance from the existing buildings.
- ✓ Request for Proposal (RFP) No. 2024-23 Warm Mineral Springs Park Admissions, Restrooms and Site Improvements Construction Manager at Risk (CMaR) was distributed, evaluated, and ranked. Staff is currently in negotiations with the top ranked firm.
- ✓ Staff received a preliminary cost estimate of roughly \$60,000 - \$75,000 for demolition of the three existing buildings at Warm Mineral Springs Park. This does not include underground infrastructure or any architectural salvage of materials from the buildings.
- ✓ Staff conducted periodic follow-up with Ardaman & Associates regarding the Warm Mineral Springs Park Geotechnical Investigation and Survey. Staff anticipates receiving the final report of findings prior to the May 28, 2024, City Commission Regular Meeting.
- ✓ Staff reached out to the City's insurance broker/risk consultant for an updated statement of loss related to the outstanding claim for damages for the three buildings and also requested clarification on the impact that the new Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood zone designation may have on coverage. The following provides the responses received:
 - The three buildings had a total insured value of \$1,160,600 on the date of loss.
 - The preliminary damage estimate for the three buildings is \$768,102, of which only a portion will be recoverable through insurance. Currently, the net actual cash value is \$320,036 after depreciation and deductible.
 - Given the current condition of the buildings, it will be highly improbable to secure coverage at the next renewal period (October 1, 2024).
 - If the buildings are restored historically without proper mitigation and hardening to current code, there is a high probability that the buildings will not be insurable.
- ✓ Discussions and communication regarding the future of Warm Mineral Springs Park took place with the following individuals and organizations:
 - **Trust for Public Lands:** Staff engaged in several meetings (February 20, 2024, and April 10, 2024) with Mr. Charles Hines, Florida Gulf Coast Trail Program Director, to discuss the status of Sarasota County's proposed connection from the Legacy Trail Extension in North Port to Warm Mineral Springs Park, along with a future trail and trailhead on the 60-acre parcel. Mr. Hines suggested potential funding sources from both private and non-profit partners, grant opportunities, and a potential partnership with Sarasota County.
 - **North Port Resident:** Ms. Jasmine Bowman reached out to City staff and Commissioners on March 6, 2024, offering to submit an application on behalf of the City to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Florida Forever Program, provided the City is willing to sell all land associated with Warm Mineral Springs Park.
 - **Venice Resident/Business Owner:** Staff met with Mr. Curt (Matt) Whittaker on March 21, 2024, to discuss the potential for a firm to invest in the redevelopment of the site and restoration of the buildings based on the successful revenue generation model currently in place. Challenges with

securing Property and Casualty Insurance were noted.

- **Gulf Coast Community Foundation:** Staff met with Mr. Jon Thaxton, Senior Vice President for Community Leadership, and other Gulf Coast Community Foundation representatives on March 25, 2024, to discuss a potential conservation easement on the 60-acre parcel through Sarasota County's Environmentally Sensitive Lands Protection Program. This would allow the City to maintain ownership of the property, preserve the natural habitat, set parameters for allowable uses, maintain public access, and provide funding to support the development of future amenities.
- **The Legis Group:** Staff met with Mr. Doug Holder, Consultant and Special Project Lobbyist, on April 3, 2024, to discuss what programs may be available within the Department of State to support the efforts at Warm Mineral Springs Park.
- **North Port Resident:** Ms. Pamela Tokarz reached out to City staff on April 4, 2024, with interest in organizing an effort to involve Congressman Greg Stuebe, Representative James Buchanan, and local environmental groups in developing options for Warm Mineral Springs Park, along with looking into various grants. Ms. Tokarz requested meeting space within City Hall to facilitate this effort.
- **Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation:** Staff met with Lori Muldowney, President, and other Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation representatives on April 12, 2024, to discuss preservation of the existing buildings. The group pledged their technical assistance to the City, discussed stabilizing and mothballing the historic buildings to prevent further deterioration, opportunity for partial funding through the Florida Department of State Historical Resources Special Category Grant (previously applied in 2019, 2020, 2021), and the possibility of using the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit as part of restoration funding. Based on this discussion, a formal preservation plan was submitted to the City and is attached for review.
- **Author/Historian:** Staff met with Rick Kilby on April 30, 2024, regarding his nomination of Warm Mineral Springs Park to the "11 to Save" Program through the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation. Mr. Kilby is also consulting with the Sarasota Alliance for Historic Preservation regarding future options for Warm Mineral Springs Park. Although there is not a substantial funding component to the "11 to Save" designation, inclusion in the program creates awareness and support statewide towards preservation of the existing buildings.
- **Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP):** With assistance from Hayden Dempsey, Greenberg Taurig lobbyist, staff met with Adam Blalock, Deputy Secretary for Ecosystems Restoration and other FDEP representatives on May 7, 2024, to discuss potential grant programs that could provide funding for Warm Mineral Springs Park restoration, specifically the Resilient Florida Grant Program which opens July 1, 2024.
- **Representative James Buchanan:** Staff met with Representative James Buchanan on May 10, 2024. Representative Buchanan suggested that subsequent to the completion of the Geotechnical Investigation and Survey, a City Commission Workshop could be conducted to discuss the Warm Mineral Springs Park to include the following topics:
 - Water quality and health of the spring.
 - Septic tank intrusions and future water and sewer line extensions.
 - Coordination with stakeholders including Sarasota County, state agencies and others.
 - Alternative funding sources including grants, state and federal funding, Public-Private Partnerships, etc.

- Construction of Legacy Trail trailhead and connectivity to Warm Mineral Springs.

Representative Buchanan said that he would attend this City Commission Workshop and also suggested inviting the Sarasota County Commissioners to participate.

Based on the actions already initiated by staff, following are the projected next steps in the process:

- July of 2024: Staff anticipates bringing forward a Contract Amendment to Agreement #2017-40 with Kimley-Horn & Associates for Professional Design and Engineering Services associated with a new code compliant building and related utility infrastructure.
- July of 2024: Staff anticipates bringing forward the Construction Manager at Risk (CMaR) for delivery of the project.
 - ✓ If the City Commission decides to move forward with demolishing the existing structures at the Warm Mineral Springs Park and rebuilding a new code compliant building, the City will request an alternative project from FEMA. This will allow any FEMA approved repair costs to be allocated for demolition and reconstruction instead of repairs.
- September of 2024: Staff anticipates presenting the 30% schematic plans and cost estimates for the new code compliant building and related utility infrastructure to the City Commission. Presentation will include the project estimate, including any identified bid alternates; the expected duration to complete construction documents, re-permitting, and bidding; and the anticipated date of the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) for construction phase services.

Strategic Plan

Quality of Life

Financial Impact

Not applicable.

Procurement

Not applicable.

Attachments:

1. 3-05-24 City Commission Regular Meeting Minutes
2. WMS Preservation Plan 2024

Prepared by: Sandy Pfundheller, Parks and Recreation Director

Department Director: Sandy Pfundheller, Parks and Recreation Director