

Anchorage Disc Golf Site Selection & Management Study

6th Advisory Group Meeting

December 4, 2012

Location:

USKH Main Office - 2515 A Street, Anchorage, AK 99503

Meeting Topic:

5:30pm – 7:30pm Finalization and Conclusion of Baseline Document

Attendees:

Tim Kosednar, Disc Golfer

Mark McCaffery, Anchorage Parks & Recreation

Jim Winchester, Parks & Rec Commission

Darrin Haycke, Volunteer

David Wigglesworth, Volunteer

Susan Miller, Neighbor and Disc Golfer

Dennis Gann, Neighbor and Disc Golfer

Members of USKH Inc., consultant (Terry Schoenthal, Brianne Keifer)

Summary:

This was the final meeting to wrap up the work accomplished over the past four months regarding disc golf in the community of Anchorage. The meeting was held at the USKH main office, December 5, 2012, at 5:30 pm. An agenda was prepared for the meeting and is included as attachment 1.

Goals of the evening included:

1. A discussion of the disc golf baseline report and more particularly how comments that were received from advisory group members were incorporated into the report.
2. A discussion of locations other than those previously addressed that could support 9-18 hole courses in Anchorage.
3. A discussion of where the process goes from here, which was conducted by Mark McCaffrey, Parks and Rec Planner.

1. Comments on Baseline Document:

- It was noted that negative comments related to the experience at Westchester Lagoon had largely been eliminated and that Westchester Lagoon would be evaluated in the same manner and by the same criteria as any other park. Mr. Wigglesworth noted that the “neighborhood voice has really been absent from the discussion and the advisory group, as a whole, is largely pro-disc golf. Mr. Wigglesworth noted that when the Parks and Recreation Commission voted to

- close the Westchester lagoon course it was not based just on environmental reasons. The basis of the course closure included environmental degradation, but also alcohol and drug use, litter, and other factors. David suggested that the actual language from the Parks and Rec Commission meeting should be included in the document. Susan Miller suggested that both the Commission Language and the official Parks and Rec reason for the closure should be included as an appendix. Mr. Wigglesworth also noted that language had been softened in the baseline document in a way that was not necessarily appropriate. As an example in the criteria section of the report, there is a sentence that reads, *"The presence and usage of a course in a neighborhood could be disturbing to adjacent neighbors."* David suggested that based on experience "could be" should be changed to "is". This is true for a number of other examples in the report.
- Darrin Huycke suggested that it is very important to include local community councils in the process and that there is no reference to that need in the report. Mark McCaffrey stated that coordination with community councils is integral to the process, but due to the importance he would be happy to add a reference regarding the need for coordination with Community Councils.
 - Some members of the advisory group expressed concern that the inclusion of specific parks for consideration in the document may be premature. Although the document does state that the parks in question were used as part of an exercise to test criteria, the group felt that should be stated in a stronger fashion within the report. David Wigglesworth noted that everyone should be aware that if the Westchester course is evaluated using the established criteria, it would probably not be identified as an acceptable location. Tim Kosednar agreed, noting that there are baskets at either end of the course that could work, but that the center of the course is really unmanageable if there are a lot of players using the course.
 - Susan Miller and others felt the positive changes regarding references to the West Chester course were appreciated
 - Although there was not a solid consensus within the group, the group was advised that there will likely be changes to the introduction and conclusion strengthening the language.
 - As a whole, the group agreed that the criteria and management recommendations would be useful in assessing the suitability of new disc golf sites.
 - Although the group agreed that establishment of an organization representing disc golfers would be beneficial, it should not necessarily be a pre-requisite for

establishment of a new course. The group felt that such a group would coalesce around a new course.

2. Discussion of Park Locations

- The group did not offer any new locations, but rather agreed that in previous exercises, the most likely alternatives (within the public park system) had been discussed.
- One suggestion is that should be several potential course locations and that courses could move to new locations (especially along the Chester Creek Greenbelt on different years.
- The Municipality should consider sites outside of the park system for potential candidate sites. The example of UAA was suggested in that such a course could also support student recreation.
- Find pocket parks to place a few disc baskets that can be used to practice.
- Include disc golf in future park master planning efforts.
- Possibly consider the area near Campbell Creek Science Center as a course location.

3. Steps to move forward

- The baseline report will be presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission for a resolution of support on December 13th and committee members would be welcome to attend.
- Existing Disc Golf Association could possibly house a user group if an agreement is required from Parks & Rec. Therefore, a “new” disc golf user group might not be necessary
- Parks & Rec submitted a 2013 Legislative request for funding for development of disc golf courses
- An official user group, Disc Golf Association, could:
 - o Meet with community councils
 - o Lobby legislators for park funds
 - o Address the negative issues that exist, i.e. drinking, litter
 - o Explore grant opportunities such as Anchorage Park Foundation Challenge Grants and the Rasmuson Foundation
 - o Mark McCaffrey noted that as the process moves forward into site selection and course development there will be opportunities for leadership and involvement from members of the disc golf community. Mark expressed a hope that members of the group would continue to remain active and to participate in that process.

The meeting Concluded at approximately 7:00 PM.