



PARKS AND RECREATION

www.chapelhillparks.org

PARKS AND RECREATION
Town of Chapel Hill
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TENNIS COURT STAKEHOLDER MEETING SUMMARY

Date: Thursday July 15, 2021
Time: 8:30 AM – 9:30 AM
Location: Zoom Meeting

Attendees:

Parks and Recreation Department

Phil Fleischmann, Parks and Recreation Director, Linda Smith, Parks and Recreation Assistant Director, Kevin Robinson, Park Maintenance Superintendent Marcia Purvis, Parks and Recreation Senior Planner, Nikiya Cherry, Recreation Manager, and Mike Troutman, Interim Athletics Supervisor

Manager's Office

Maurice Jones, Town Manager
Michael Simms, Intern, UNC School of Government

Parks, Greenways and Recreation Commission

Renuka Soll, Commission Chair
Wes McMahon, Commission Vice

Tennis Community

Jerry Edwards, Rick Vice, Diane Willis and Sue Balog

Purpose:

A meeting was held to enhance communications between the Tennis Community and the Town of Chapel Hill personnel regarding ongoing and proposed Tennis Court repairs, renovation, and development projects. The following is a brief summary that highlights items discussed and agreed upon.

Background:

- History and current state of public tennis in Chapel Hill (CH)
- Attendees are advocating for preserving and updating CH tennis facilities and supporting both our youth, our parks, and athletic programs and facilities.
 - Most of the attendees have played on Town courts 3-4 decades
 - Rick and Jerry have been playing at Ephesus Park since 1983
 - Tennis community consists of families, youth, students, and adults
 - Mostly all local to Chapel Hill
 - Middle schools and East Chapel Hill High (ECHH) Junior Varsity have used courts for team practices and matches (East Chapel Hill High has 7 women's state championships and 5 men's)
 - Empact has offered camps to over 200 youth this summer at Ephesus from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
 - Used to be tennis lessons at Ephesus Park from 5-8 p.m.
- Why has tennis on our public courts declined in recent years

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- Town's maintenance practices – has been to do nothing until the courts become unplayable and then remove the nets
- There has been a decrease in the number of courts
- CH courts are uninviting – no benches or chairs and too much noise from pickleball.
- Tennis user's voices are ignored

Short term goals:

Proposed by the tennis community

- Commit to preserving the existing tennis courts
 - Maintain and repair (even if temporarily) the existing courts
 - Fill in cracks and put the net back up at Ephesus Park
 - Provide new benches and backboards
 - Continue to keep courts and surrounding area clean
- Keep the 6 adult courts at Cedar Falls Park (Paint junior lines if needed)

Town's plans

- Cedar Falls Park Tennis Courts Project - Design and construction of new courts.
 - Summer 2021 -Continue project planning. Explore a plan which features the same court configuration as is at the site now to incorporate as an additional option during public engagement.
 - Fall 2021 - Continue public engagement process. Hold public meeting(s) to present court options, receive feedback and conduct public survey.
 - 2022 (TBD) - Construction renovation
- Hargraves Park Tennis Courts Project - Renovation of existing courts, installation of new LED lights.
 - Summer and Fall 2021 - Bundle design and construction with Cedar Falls Tennis Courts.
 - 2022 – Finish repairs
- Ephesus Park Tennis Courts –
 - Summer 2021
 - Repair cracks, add benches, replace backboard, tennis nets and
 - Award contract for geotechnical engineering includes soils testing, recommendations and cost for repairs to minimize tennis court surface cracks,
 - Fall 2021 – Make determination about scope of repair work based upon report and execute repairs. Request funding as needed

Long term goals:

Proposed by the tennis community

- Acquire town funding on continual basis for court maintenance and updates
- Schedule and execute routine maintenance and repair (Start with Cedar Falls Park and Ephesus Park)
- Improve appearance and appeal of all courts
- Improve interaction with open communication, fairness and transparent process

Town's response

- Wants to see a focus on tennis court playability and maintenance after years of lacking the resources to do so
- Lot of needs - infrastructure has more than \$100 million in needs identified in Town's Capital Improvement Program
- Manager and Council are working on a five-year budget to address funding issues

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- P&R will request a re-occurring line items for court maintenance in Town budget
- Would like to get to a place where courts are resurfaced every 3-5 years (industry standard)

Next Steps:

- Parks and Recreation and Tennis Community commit to open and honest communication between each other including additional meetings
 - Next Meeting August or September 2021 (suggested dates included in email message)
 - Meeting Purpose: Focus will be on identifying strategies to turn around the pattern of a lack of maintenance and declining tennis court inventory in the future. Updates on current projects will be provided.
 - Agenda topics to include:
 - How many tennis courts do Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools have in its inventory?
 - What is the arrangement for public use at school's courts?
 - Who is responsible for maintenance at the school's courts?
- Tennis Community is developing a website (ChapelHillTennis.org)
- Parks, Greenways, and Recreation Commission has and will continue to support and advocate for tennis needs (Renuka Soll, rsoll@gmail.com)
- Town's representatives:
 - Court Schedules, Programs and Routine Maintenance Needs – Kevin Robinson (krobinson@townofchapelhill.org) or Mike Troutman (mtroutman@townofchapelhill.org)
 - Repairs, Renovation and New Construction – for Cedar Falls, Marcia Purvis (mpurvis@townofchapelhill.org); or for Ephesus, Kevin Robinson