



HISTORIC
FRANKLIN
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ITEM #5
WRKS 04/09/13

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Mayor and Aldermen

FROM: Eric S. Stuckey, City Administrator *Eric*
Vernon Gerth, ACA Community & Economic Development
Lisa Clayton, Parks Director
Mindy Tate, Executive Director of Franklin Tomorrow & Friends of Franklin Parks
Dr. Monty McInturff, President of Friends of Franklin Parks

DATE: April 1, 2013

SUBJECT: Multi-purpose equestrian arena at the Park at Harlinsdale Farm

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to present to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BOMA) with a proposal from the Friends of Franklin Parks to develop a multi-purpose equestrian complex and event area located in the Park at Harlinsdale Farm.

Background

In 2012, Friends of Franklin Parks, LLC, and the City of Franklin signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to further the mission of Friends of Franklin Parks, which is to “cultivate stewardship within our community to preserve our cultural and natural resources, enhance the park experience and expand its legacy for future generations.” The group has met regularly and held a fundraiser, “Raise the Roofs,” in June 2012 which generated attention and support for the Park at Harlinsdale Farm. The City has approved expenditures for stabilizing the Historic Main Barn and the Hayes Home on the site as part of the requirements of the conservation easement with the Land Trust of Tennessee, which governs allowed uses on the 200-acre site, based on the Master Plan adopted by the City in 2005.

Citizens have said they would like to see the horse returned to Harlinsdale and Friends of Franklin Parks sees the construction of a multi-purpose equestrian arena on approximately five acres of the property behind the Main Barn as a means of accomplishing this goal as identified in the Master Plan. It is believed construction of a multi-purpose equestrian arena would increase citizen usage of the facility, bring additional tax dollars to the City of Franklin and Williamson County through associated tourism and event activity, offer educational opportunities, and provide a mechanism for returning the horse to the Park at Harlinsdale Farm.

Financial Impact

Friends of Franklin Parks proposed to raise the necessary funding for the multi-purpose equestrian arena, which would be a 300 X 150-foot enclosure of fencing and wire. Additionally, Friends of Franklin Parks would raise the necessary funding for restoration of the 24-stall visiting mare barn adjacent to the multi-purpose equestrian arena. Friends of Franklin Parks would also construct two ½-acre paddocks adjacent to the arena and create areas for parking and vendor support on the five-acre tract. The arena and paddock project and visiting mare barn would be enclosed with fencing in keeping with existing fencing on-site.

After the facility is constructed, Friends of Franklin Parks proposes to lease from the City of Franklin and operate the day-to-day administration of the facility for a five-year period with City of Franklin Parks Department staff providing on-site maintenance. Friends of Franklin Parks’ commitment would include; scheduling, event



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coordination, facility promotion and cash flow management. The goal is to build a sustainable operation that is in parallel with both the conservation easement and the Master Plan for the Park at Harlinsdale Farm.

Revenue generated through use of the facility by outside groups would be placed in an account managed by the FOFP treasury under the direction of the FOFP Board of Governors. The revenue from this facility will be used for the furtherance of Friends of Franklin Parks' projects and mission and for the continued growth and development of the Park at Harlinsdale Farm and other related properties.

The Parks Department recommends after reviewing the concept plan that two full-time employees maintain the maintenance operations of the site. Once a final plan is adopted, equipment, yearly maintenance cost of materials and labor would be submitted for full review. This recommendation would be based on a seven day operation and maintenance of the existing grounds for the Park at Harlinsdale Farm.

Liability

Friends of Franklin Parks would provide the necessary liability insurance with the City of Franklin named as an also insured. A full review of the proposed operations would be submitted to the Land Trust of Tennessee for further review.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Friends of Franklin Parks submit a more comprehensive plan with a detailed budget of the proposed construction. The existing master plan for the property and the conservation easement include polo and equestrian events for the property. This type of contracted operation would reestablish the presence of the horse at Harlinsdale Farm.