



Date: July 1, 2011

To: Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager
Through: Theodore L. Voorhees, Deputy City Manager
From: Rhonda B. Parker, Director, Parks and Recreation
Subject: Acceptance of Donation from Durham Central Park, Inc.

Executive Summary

Durham Central Park, Inc. (DCP) has offered to donate a shade structure facility to the City of Durham. This facility, named *The Leaf*, is being constructed in the eastern portion of Durham Central Park. The value of the facility, once completed, is estimated at \$30,000. The City has executed a development agreement with DCP for the construction process itself, and members of the Board of Directors of DCP and staff of Durham Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the City Attorney's office are currently negotiating a management and use agreement for this structure going forward. Both parties anticipate this agreement being completed by late summer.

Recommendation

The Administration recommends that the City Council accept the shade structure facility donation by Durham Central Park, Inc. in the amount of \$30,000.00.

Background

Each summer the NC State University (NCSU) School of Design offers a program for architecture students entitled "Design-Build Studio". This course offers the class of 12 students a challenge to design and construct a functional structure. This year the students accepted the challenge of design and constructing a structure that will be used to provide shade, increase seating, and provide a focal point for small presentations in Durham Central Park. The course is taught by Randall Lanou, CGP, President of BuildSense, Inc and Studio B Architecture and architects Erik Mehlman and Ellen Cassilly. Ellen Cassilly also serves on the Board of Directors for DCP.

DCP has been awarded a grant from the Duke Energy Foundation for \$12,000 and has committed an additional \$5,000 toward the project. Additional funding is being raised by the DCP Board through a variety of fundraisers including an Internet based fundraising campaign. The campaign is going well with \$8,250 pledged from the community (as of June 28) to support this project. The DCP Board has committed to fully fund the project including meeting any shortfall in fundraising efforts.

The project must be completed by late August in order to meet the schedule of the NCSU course. Thus this facility is under construction at the time of this memo; the students began work on July 5.

Issues/Analysis

DPR and DCP have a successful history of working together in the management and continuous improvement of Durham Central Park. The City of Durham benefits greatly from this partnership as evidenced by the Pavilion on the western side of the park, the downtown trail through the park, the Grace Garden, and the skateboard park on the eastern side. While each of the projects was managed primarily by one partner or the other, the end result has been the beautification and improvement of this unique park for the entire city.

The facility being donated will increase the usage of the eastern portion of the park by utilizing the hill as a natural amphitheatre. Small performances and movies can take place with the audience seated up the hill, and the facility is being constructed so that a screen can be hung from the facility for movies. However, DCP and DPR anticipate that the heaviest use of the structure will be day-in and day-out use by citizens as a seating and shade structure.

DCP volunteers and the students from NCSU presented design drawings and a model of the structure at Durham Central Park on Saturday, June 25, 2011 to receive public comment on the structure. The drawings and comments are attached. The construction documents have been reviewed by DPR and by project management staff from General Services as well; the location of the structure has been approved by Planning as an amendment to the existing site plan for the park's development.

Current plans do not include extending utilities to the facility. Electrical connections will be added at a future time and will make the space more amenable to small performances requiring electricity and lighting.

Alternatives

The City Council could choose not to accept this donation.

Financial Impact

The value of the donation is \$30,000. This donation will minimally impact the cost of the operations of Durham Central Park for a few months while the management and use agreement is finalized by DPR and DCP, since DPR will be responsible for its management at least until the agreement is executed and some permanent arrangement is in place.

Attachments:

- Modified site plan: site layout
- Renderings of the proposed shade structure
- Letter of donation from Durham Central Park, Inc.
- Public comments from June 25, 2011