



#150068B

Girls Place Proposal for Kiwanis Challenge Park RCAPW Committee

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PRCA Vision and Mission

- *To be seen as the keepers and hosts of the places where nature, recreation and culture meet, offering memorable experiences for all.*
- *To provide and maintain the natural, recreational and cultural facilities and programs that make Gainesville a great place to live, work and visit; and help to sustain the City economically, socially and environmentally.*



Proposed Field Inside Track



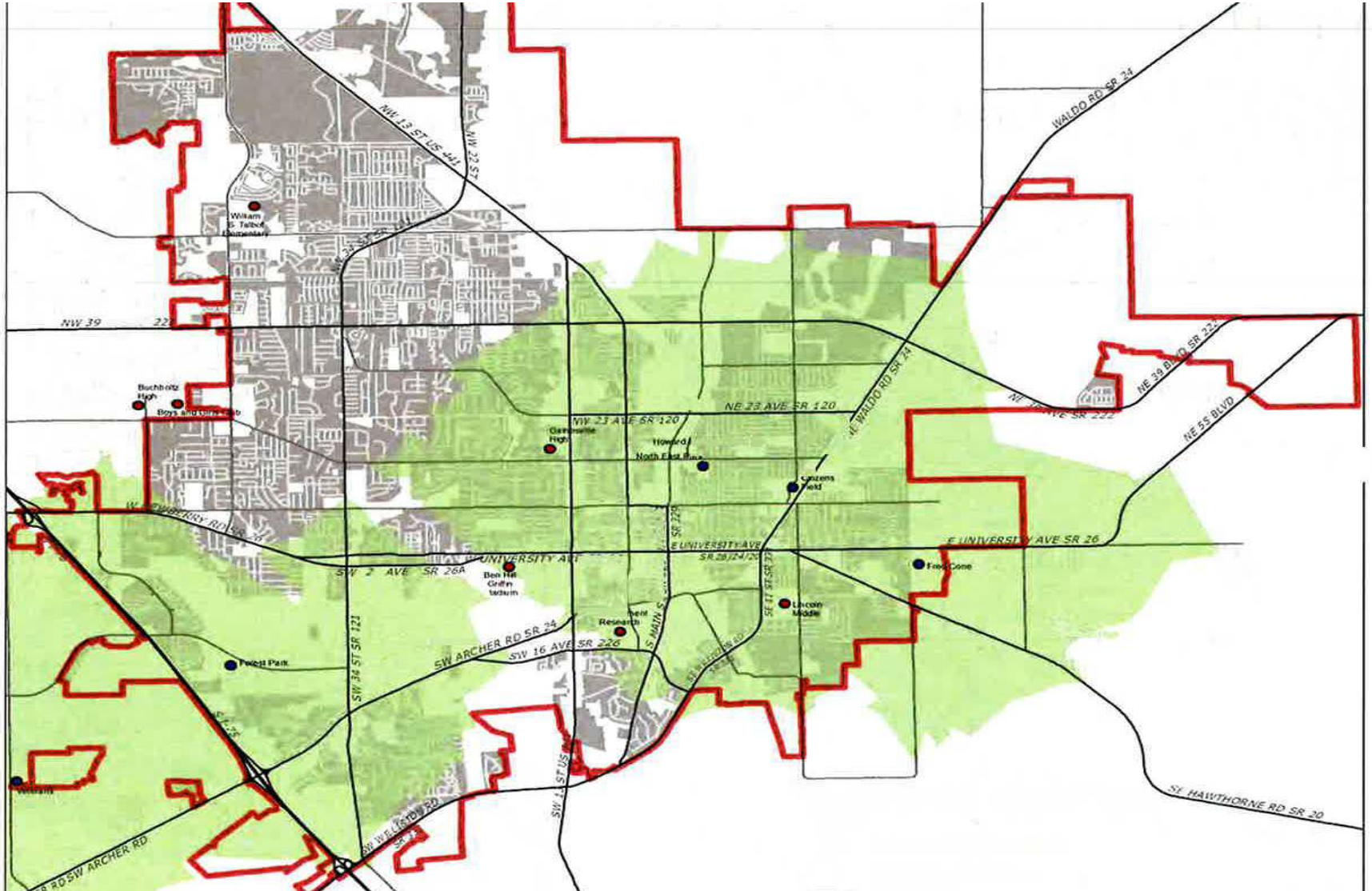
Girls Place Proposal

1. December 2014 Girls Place (GP) requested meeting to discuss a proposal for expansion.
2. January 2015, met onsite with PRCA staff to discuss concept of using land between GP and Greentree Park for a soccer/lacrosse field and relocate basketball court to east interior end of track.
3. PRCA staff discussed internally and instead recommended that the interior of the track be recommended similar to the Cone Park Track and Field model, thus preserving the natural area of the park.

Proposal Continued

4. The PRCA Master Plan documents the need for soccer/lacrosse fields especially in north Gainesville and specifically recommends furthering the partnership with GP to better activate the Kiwanis Challenge Park.
5. Current soccer/lacrosse locations in the City are: 2 developed fields at Fred Cone Park; 3 practice fields behind MLK Jr. Complex, 1 practice field at NE Park and 1 at Possum Creek Park.
6. GP sent letter to PRCA February, 2015, asking support to construct a soccer/lacrosse field inside the track with GP paying all construction costs.

Location of Existing Fields



Proposal continued

10. April 2015, Public Recreation and Park Board approved proposal.

11. August, 2015, the Recreation, Cultural Affairs and Public Works Committee approved concept of the proposal and requested a public meeting to get feedback from the neighborhood.

12. PRCA sent individual notices by mail to approximately 350 residents who live within 800' of the park on all sides (the distance required by Planning for Public Meeting notices is 400')

Proposal continued

13. October 21st, public meeting was held at Girls Place. Staff received one email in support of the proposal prior to the meeting. There were 24 in attendance and no opposition to the project.

14. October 24th, PRCA received a voice message from citizen expressing opposition to the proposal.

15. Staff met in November with the citizen at the park to explain proposal. Resulted in scheduling a second public meeting on December 8th

December Meeting

- In mid-November, approximately 650 meeting notices went to home owners living 800' to 1,600' from the park.
- Signs were placed throughout the park informing of the meeting and/or requesting comments and feedback before December 17th.

Some Questions Rec'd. Prior to the Meeting

1. What about the woodpeckers who are believed to nest in the trees inside the track?
 - Care would be taken to avoid disturbing nests during the nesting season from March through the fall.
2. What about the trees being proposed for removal?
 - 125 trees are inside the track. Majority are slash pines. 100 trees are regulated at 2 to 1 replacement. There are no heritage high quality trees inside the track. There are 25-30 Longleaf Pines and 4 Sand Live Oaks all below heritage width. There are 7 small Sand Live Oaks that could be transplanted in the park. Some trees at each end of the oval that could possibly remain.

Questions from Dec 8th

1. What kinds of trees would be planted for mitigation purposes and where would these be planted?
 - Mitigation trees would be high quality species, Live Oaks, Magnolias, Bald Cypress, White Ash, Winged Elm, Fl. Maple, etc. Some trees could be planted in the SE corner of the park at a dry stormwater pond. Others could be planted in another nearby dry stormwater pond. Public Works would need to approve.

Questions from Dec 8th

2. How long did it take for the pines to grow in the infield?

- City Arborist believes some of the trees are 25 to 30 years which means there were some small trees there when the track was built in the early 90's.

3. How long would it take for the mitigated trees to grow?

- The mitigated trees would take approx. 20 years to reach some of the oldest pines in the track would provide greater canopy than slash pines.

Questions from Dec. 8th

4. Why would the 200 mitigated trees not be planted in the park?
 - There are so many trees already in the park that there are only a few areas where trees can be planted.

Summary from Dec 8th

- 45 citizens attended
- 23 made comments
- There was great support overall for Girls Place and the services they provide to girls
- Those in opposition felt very strongly about losing the trees inside the track and how it would change the park, impact the environment, etc
- Those in support felt the loss of the trees would be mitigated and there were benefits in being able to see across the track and there are still hundreds of trees remaining in the park.

Staff Conclusions

- The need for a soccer/lacrosse field in north Gainesville exists. The only developed field(s) the City owns are located at Fred Cone Park in SE Gainesville.
- The proposal for Girls Place to pay for the construction of the field saves the City approximately \$140,000.
- All effort will be taken to leave as many trees at each end of the track to continue to provide some shade for walkers.

Ridgeview Property for Sale

- Recently the Ridgeview Baptist Church indicated their desire to sell the parcel adjacent to the SE corner of Greentree Park bordered by NW 19th St. and NW 36 Ave.
- City staff have confirmed this and appraised the property at \$154,000 for 1.88 acres.
- Funds are available in the Greenspace Acquisition and Community Improvement Fund.
- The property needs to be added to the land acquisition list by the City Commission.

Ridgeview Property



Recommendation

- The RCAPW Committee: 1) continue to support the concept of Girls Place paying for the construction of the soccer/lacrosse field 2) move the proposal forward to the City Commission for review 3) recommend adding the Ridgeview Church parcel to the land acquisition list and 4) recommend purchasing the property.

Questions/Discussion

Questions and Comments