

# **Allegheny County Council**

*County of Allegheny  
436 Grant Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
Phone (412) 350-6495  
Fax (412) 350-6499*



## **Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, April 12, 2006**

**4:00 PM**

**Conference Room I**

### **Committee on Parks**

*Joan Cleary, Chair; Jim Burn, Susan Caldwell, Matt Drozd, Mike Finnerty, and Jan Rea - Members*

**I. Call to Order**

**Summary:** *The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM*

**Invited Guests:**

**Jim Flynn, County Manager or Designee**

**Andy Baechle, Director, Parks**

**Summary:** *Invited Guests Present: Mr. Baechle and Derek Uber for Mr. Flynn*

*Recognized Attendees: Lindsey Totten, President of the Horticultural Society of Western PA; Terry Matuszak, Controller's Office*

*Council Staff Present: Stephanie Buka*

**II. Roll Call**

***Roll Call:*** Present: Michael Finnerty, and Joan Cleary

Absent: Jim Burn, Susan Caldwell, Matt Drozd, and Jan Rea

**III. Approval of Minutes**

**2523-06** Motion to approve the Minutes of the March 16, 2006 Parks Committee Meeting.

**Action:** **A motion was made by Finnerty, seconded by Cleary, that this matter be Passed. The motion carried unanimously.**

**IV. Agenda Items****Ordinance**

**2484-06** An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania authorizing the County to amend and restate a land lease agreement for a parcel of property located within Settlers Cabin Park with the Horticultural Society of Western Pennsylvania for the development, construction and operation of a Botanic Garden within Settler Cabin Park.

**Sponsors:** Chief Executive

**Summary:** *Mr. Baechle provided an overview of this Bill explaining that it allows the County to enter into an amended contract with the Horticultural Society of Western Pennsylvania to operate a Botanical Garden in Settlers Cabin Park. When the first contract was signed, reclaiming the abandoned mine lands of the site was not part of the plan. The new plan encompasses 452 acres, has stronger benchmarks, and will save the Horticultural Society of Western PA approximately \$3 million. Acid mine drainage clean up is part of this plan.*

*Councilman Finnerty asked what the timing of the contract would be and Mr. Baechle said that it must be built within 16 years with 1 year for permits, 5 years to reclaim the property and 5 years to build. Ms. Totten clarified the time frame by adding that once the new lease agreement is signed it will begin with that date and not revert back to the*

*100 year lease that was signed 8 years ago.*

*Councilman Finnerty asked for more information concerning the coal found on that land. Mr. Baechle said the County donated coal and timber rights to the Botanical Garden.*

*Mr. Baechle wanted to make sure everyone understood that this project is at absolutely no cost to the County. The County is giving 1/3 of our 3rd largest park to the Botanical Garden and all costs are the responsibility of the Horticultural Society of Western PA, with the understanding that they will have the necessary insurance.*

*Councilman Finnerty asked about road issues and Ms. Totten said that all coal that will be removed will be placed in trucks that would be required to travel on state roads and there is a requirement to post any and all bonds for state use. Finnerty said he would like to know that this is being taken care of, especially because the park is in his district. Mr. Baechle and Ms. Totten responded, stating that PennDOT will have the information and they will make sure Councilman Finnerty receives such.*

*Mr. Baechle added that the County retained the right to terminate the lease if the Horticultural Society does not meet the benchmarks, and the County has retained the right to deny naming rights. Mr. Baechle said the County will work with the Horticultural Society concerning future coal rights, and the County would ask that they pay us a reasonable royalty.*

**Action:**      **A motion was made by Finnerty, seconded by Cleary, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried unanimously.**

**V.      Adjournment**

**Summary:**      *Meeting adjourned at 4:15 PM*