

News Release

City of Danville, Virginia
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City Council views plans for riverfront park

City Council met Tuesday evening in a special work session to view a presentation on a conceptual plan for a proposed riverfront park to be located adjacent the White Mill on four acres of the former Dan River Mills property.

The park would include both wet and dry play areas, a gathering and stage area, river access points and parking. The park also could potentially include a whitewater component that would provide for rafting, whitewater kayaking and tubing. Whitewater facilities often play host to major events centered on slalom or freestyle competitions or to community celebrations such as river festivals.

The Parks and Recreation Department has been working with the Raleigh, N.C., office of DHM Designs to develop a public space that would be a destination within the River District. The company has gathered public input through surveys and community meetings.

DHM also is working on a separate but parallel study of the Long Mill Dam's recreational value. The report outlines the existing conditions of the dam, the three possible scenarios being considered for the dam's future, and the impact of those decisions.

The three scenarios are to keep the dam intact, partial removal and full removal. One of the concerns with keeping the dam intact or partial removal is that a riverfront park, if constructed, would draw more people to the vicinity of the dam, thus increasing the probability of accidents at the dam. Partial or full removal of the dam also would facilitate the channelization of a water channel for use as a whitewater park element.

The presentation on Tuesday required no action by City Council. In work sessions, Council reviews non-routine matters that will be voted upon in future business meetings.

The next step in the process would be to authorize the engineering design of the park. However, City Council may first opt to accept an invitation from the Danville Regional

Foundation to host a trip to a city with a riverfront park that could serve as a model for Danville.

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