

Deputy City Administrator Sam Taylor responds to McGruber's concerns re: kayak launch near East Tubbs Hill Park (McGruber's original comment follows below):

Hi, McGruber: staff and the Parks & Recreation Commission have driven this process, held public meetings, etc., and now it's up for another public discussion this evening with the council. The public input is valuable.

I've explained here prior that City staff with Welch Comer Engineers did seek to plan this project for Independence Point, however there were some logistical issues that we believe the community would not have supported. Folks should recall that it's not as simple as saying there's parking there. We'd have to remove the already limited parking there in order to get space for the required sloping for ramps and other amenities to ensure those with disabilities can actually utilize what might go there. In order to ensure we retained parking, we looked at having to add more back ... behind the museum building. This would have meant more concrete/asphalt and removing green space along with some grand scale trees. We didn't think the community would support that, considering the local passion for trees here. That parking would also be further away from the launch itself, which would disincentive use by those with disabilities.

In terms of the 3rd Street launch, it's plausible, however staff believes there might be too many conflicts between folks launching motorized vessels in that space and it might just upset various user groups.

The east side launch has adequate space to build the necessary facilities (the paved path to get people to the beach and the proposed launch). Parking would be close enough to make this more feasible for people with disabilities.

This is a great community conversation and we appreciate everyone's perspective. The biggest thing I hope folks take away from this, however, is that they understand we have absolutely reviewed other locations. We didn't just throw a dart at a map. We also have discussed this at several public meetings with the Parks Commission. There have been no secrets. Unfortunately, try as I might, I can't get everyone to see every meeting notice or press release. I certainly wish I could. What we do attempt to do is get out information early and on our website so people can follow along and have a say.

Thanks again everyone!

McGruber's comment

it makes far more sense to have that access on the west side where there is already parking and a ramp at McEuen. There's got to be more to this story. Who's driving the push for the east side of Tubbs where there's an active marina? Putting non-motorized watercraft in the path of motorized watercraft makes no sense. For all the reasons Walkabout gave it sounds like a boneheaded idea to lose greenspace when the west side has just undergone renovation to make everything accessible. Is there really a demand by the kayaking public for a launch? I see people put their kayaks in the lake and river at every park. Is this really a problem that needs a solution?