

Cincinnati Urban Wilderness Center Project
Cincinnati Park Board/Camping and Education Foundation

12/4/20

Timeline

2014 – CEF began collaborating with Parks’ Explore Nature program.

2016 – CEF began working with the University of Cincinnati to offer a Certificate Program – *Experiential Leadership in the Outdoors* and began sponsoring a new class as part of the program – *Inquiry to Innovation*. Students in the program use Burnet Woods as an “outdoor learning lab” for class projects.

October 2016 – CEF received full support of former Parks Director Carden for a partnership with Parks and asked staff to develop a schematic for an Outdoor Education Center that would be presented to the Park Board in 3-6 months.

December 2016 - CEF joined Park Superintendent Schuckman, Explore Nature Manager Spears and other Parks staff for a visioning session to begin developing a detailed plan for site, program and facilities for the Wilderness Center.

2017 – Newly appointed Park Director Walcutt and staff attended a class presentation prepared by UC Certificate Program participants to be introduced to their work to date.

January 2018 – CEF made its first presentation to the Park Board outlining the Cincinnati Urban Wilderness Center that highlighted the collaboration with Parks and UC. The Board unanimously endorsed moving forward with the development of a Memorandum of Understanding, architectural plans and creation of a business plan.

March 2018 – Director Walcutt decided to broaden discussions with CEF to include a review of the Burnet Woods Master Plan and the evaluation of a request from Clifton Cultural Arts Center to build a new facility in the Park. Parks staff advanced the concept of a new building to house the Urban Wilderness Center in addition to the CCAC building.

May and August 2018 – Community input sessions were conducted to receive feedback on the Burnet Master Plan, CCAC proposal and Urban Wilderness program.

October 2018 – CEF presented to the Park Board an updated outline and project status report. Public comments were presented at this Board Meeting.

December 2018 – Following additional public comments, the Park Board voted unanimously to approve, in concept, the Urban Wilderness Project in Collaboration with CEF pending development of a Memorandum of Understanding.

January 2019 – Parks sponsored stakeholder meeting at Burnet Woods where CEF presented concept boards for proposed Urban Wilderness Center (1/23/2019).

April – June 2019 – CEF and Parks worked with a consultant to develop strategic approach to the Urban Wilderness Center. Community members participated in the strategy sessions.

June 2019 – Parks staff and CEF presented a project update to the Park Board and Board approved continued work on the project.

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Timeline (cont.)

September 2019 – Park Board approved a Memorandum of Understanding with CEF and agreed to have architectural designs developed.

September 2019 – Community feedback session held at Trailside to present architectural plans, provide a project update and to gather feedback (9/10/2019).

January 2020 – Parks staff and CEF present project update to the Park Board. Plans reflected a projected cost to renovate the 5,336 sq ft Trailside Center and add 3,000 sq ft which was subsequently increased to 4,500 sq ft to accommodate elevator and additional storage to allow for space to be used for additional events. Project cost estimated to \$3 - \$5mill or greater. Board was uncomfortable with design, impact to historic building and projected cost for the modifications. Board continued to support the project but asked for more specific plans to be presented at its March meeting.

March 2020 – Significant public input was provided by speakers at the Park Board meeting. Board expressed continued interest in the Urban Wilderness project but was unwilling to prioritize the commitment of \$3 - \$5million estimated need for Trailside renovation and addition.

April 2020 – November 2020 – CEF worked with UC DAAP Co-Op students to develop visioning for Burnet Woods Urban Wilderness Center utilizing community and Park Board feedback.

November 2020 – UC DAAP Co-Op students presented their work on visioning for Burnet Woods from the spring, summer and falls sessions in their ***Urban Explorers in Burnet Woods*** presentation to Park staff, CEF, Park Board members and community members. Complete presentation was provided to Park Board for review.

December 2020 – **Planned:** Review ***Urban Explorers in Burnet Woods*** with CTM Parks Committee members, participate in Burnet Woods update at CTM Meeting, provide Park Board meeting materials to the public, including the Urban Explorers item, to allow for comments, and formal presentation to Park Board at its December meeting.