Chattahoochee Brick Company Memorial, Greenspace and Park Board Meeting

Historic Fire Station #6, 39 Boulevard NE, Atlanta, GA 30312
October 28, 2026

Draft Minutes

Present: Peggy Dobbins, Donna Stephens, Keith Sharp, David Getachew-Smith (Chair), Dr. Tony Lowe, Erik Wilder, Kanata Herring, Nicole Morris

Absent: Don Rooney, Ola Reynolds, Dr. R. Candy Tate

David G-S called meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.

Keith S. – motioned to adopt agenda, seconded by Tony L and motion carries

Nicole M – motion to adopt previous minutes, seconded by Keith S and the motion carries

Public Comment: None

Doug Young opened the meeting. Overview of final public meeting on 10.3.26. Reminder that it is one part of a two-part project with Atlanta RiverLands as the second piece.

Talk of the 3 main agencies – DCP, DPR, and DWM. What happens after October 3rd? How do we best coordinate within the City and with the Mayor's Office.

Archeology, Interpretation and Education, the Site itself, the site as a park – still a lot of work. Brownfield remediation work as well.

Interpretation and Education was not in the existing Scope- but this will be a place we put our energy in the near future.

How will we, as the City, organize what needs to be done? 1- 2-year work program. Part of that is the ORLAP grant ($30M) and we'll know about that by next May '27. Must prepare for two scenarios essentially – one where we get the grant and one where we don't.

Visioning and Design structure to an implementing structure.

This would give the board a chance to re-envision their role.

In the Short term – we hope to have some clarity for internal governance structure – and we'll share next month.

Keith S: Is the grant specific to this site or all parks? It is specific to Chatt Brick: **Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP)** program is a nationally competitive federal grant program administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Peggy D: Who in the park department will be designing? That ties back to how the City is organized. Will they be consulted before a different design group is brought on? Yes. The funds for ORLAP would go to Parks and Rec. Will that go to Proctor Creek? No, just the site itself but other partners could fundraise that portion if prioritized. Would be a mistake to only do the site and not address Proctor Creek.

Keith S: Commenting on the question. Thoughtful email that Peggy sent. Proctor Creek and Riverlands – so it is connected. Taking it to James Jackson park – one final section to be planned and built. Original Chatt RiverLands study included the trail extension from 2020 with renderings. The land that watershed acquired (15 acres), that Keith brokered, warehouse refurbished… could be a great facility to connect in with Greenway and other. Consent decree noted that City also owns another 20 acres – so that connection is important and strategic. Should be kept in mind

David G-S: – What about the Stakeholders Advisory Committee (SAC) and how they relate to CBC board?

Doug Y: Normally that SAC is done for a particular process… but this process is longer. We as the City must figure out what will happen to the SAC in the future. That goes back to governance and communication structure. The SAC was convened by SCAPE (consultants for the project).

Keith S: That is a valuable resource and we as CBC could bring them into this group.

Nicole M: Question on the interpretation – that must happen regardless – correct? We should work to help with education and interpretation. This is also my lane. Would that be a great place for CBC board to start?

Doug Y: We would agree with that. This would allow us to strengthen and confirm what we already have.

Kanata H: – Thank you for bringing that up, that is the point we were trying to make last meeting.

Their interest is noted.

Dr. Tony Lowe- Partnerships with Universities?

Doug Y: Yes, the other thing with traditional research and a linear program. The other idea is to gather a hub since lots of people have done lots of different work, students, professors, advocates. All research has value – could we get that to all one place (or two) to get our hands around that. What are the gaps? That would include higher learning. One of the things we're interested in is the story of this property as a part of a larger narrative. There is the outcome to people's lives. There is a tertiary to that this was a part of a system that built the economy of Atlanta and went overseas even. Sometimes to even go back across.

David G-S: Is there funding in place for scholars while waiting for ORLAP

Doug Y: Kind of, there is some left over. There are possibilities to fill gaps without spending funds, but Anthony also has some ideas around gathering scholars and ways to begin this process. That is what we know now – we'll share that with larger staff. We're creating a work program – what will it cost to do that.

Erik W: I'm hearing 3 categories of work for the board. 1.Process/Funding/Governance – very opaque for me and not sure how we as board can support -but we could 2. Partnerships – community engagement and outreach- take on from consulting 3. Research and education. Then the elephant in the room is how do we do that? Has been contentious… but how do we do this every 3 months for 1.5 hours at a time. One helpful thing would be a process or information map- compare to other projects and that could help us think about how we could help.

Doug Y: Agree, that is the idea of the work program. It will be a City Park – but this is a special place with weight, gravity, history and context. So we must meet internally to talk more about that.

Donna S: Part of my fantasy would be a building /museum/ archive. Students in City have submitted those documents to me. Could we store that in this future building. Different people come up to me and mounds of documents dedicated to Chattahoochee Brick. They need to be examined and studied. Some small and some large – in addition to Doug's research. Like the Atlanta History Center (AHC), where you could check them out.

Doug Y: The building proposed represents our thinking about education opportunities. Call for papers? Call to sister sites like: Sugarland, Richmond, and NYC. Archives on the site is a different level of convo – but the first thing we want to do is to figure out what's out there. I think there is value and there may be first

Anthony K: Based on experience, having an archives on site is not recommended. And while we don't know what will ultimately happen on the site, to be frank, housing archives probably will not happen. You can't imagine the resources it takes to sustain an archive-- the HVAC system is just one thing. Building out an archive doesn't make sense given that

we can create partnerships with existing archives in Atlanta (e.g., Auburn Avenue Research Library and the AUC Woodruff Library) to house artifacts, papers, and ephemeral.

Donna S: Selected pieces, perhaps?

Anthony K: To build a building for one piece of paper is something that I don't think the City would sign onto it because it would be so expensive.

Keith S: Could go to Kennan center at AHC … could be staff issue as well. I suggested earlier – a file server? Daniel Scott master's thesis? I have mine on Google drive, but could there be something like that for the public? I hope an electronic collection will be archived.

Peggy D: I want to welcome Anthony's honesty. Donna is my friend and leader on this issue. Keith has done a lot as well. I am astounded at what AI can do. One thing we as a board could do is a voice for directing funding to schools and further research. The other thing I want to respond to Donna and what this space needs are restrooms and hopefully this will be for Atlantans and that it will be so wonderful with restrooms, rotating exhibits, and a building to learn at. Where artifacts should go is exciting, but political and cultural. Last thing, the I wanted an English stone – chip away at English stone to chip away at racism. Creating a pilgrimage from English Park to the river… which I believe turned the tide. I'll be dead and won't see it, but I imagine people coming down one side of Bolton road and then the other- and they go up the creek and meet at the river.

Keith S: Whether we get the grant or not… we still must get at least the $15M – that's where you get a fundraising consultant (I've done at initiatives with Cox).

Doug Y: City is very aware of that $15M. There is an internal strategy in place. Question of funding with SCAPE's scope. There is some money left – which is part of why we're doing work program.

David G-S: Is it possible for residual funds to identify an organization to organize funds, resources?

Erik W: How likely would we get the plan before December meeting? And get that early.

Doug Y: Answer is yes. All groups/departments to better understand the scope of that work. We're collecting tasks to put on the timeline and then who would be the owner of these tasks.

Keith S: Obviously, Planning Dept. is key. Parks does have a design team. I know Tara Bruckner.

Doug Y: Yes, and Tamara Graham works at DWM and is a part of our Project Management Team.

David G-S: Board Retreat? Is this proposed?

Anthony – Yes, thinking about the work that we each do and thought it might be helpful to have something in first quarter. You could discuss roles, responsibilities, priorities, and how you might calibrate work after SCAPE. Revisit bylaws? Elections? Now that we have new members and now – a full board vs. when you began. This could be a good time to start or complete that conversation. If you think that would be helpful – look at MARCH to keep with same schedule as your existing. 4 hours on Wednesday or Saturday with lunch?

David G-S: What is the position of the board?

Kanata H: I like that. There have been new members and things that we could discuss.

Dr. Tony Lowe: If council created the board- how much flexibility do we have?

Kanata H: I think there is some leeway with City created boards.

Anthony K: The council created the board, but as I understand it – the board has flexibility.

Keith S: There are Sept. 2023 – not sure if debated

**Attorney is reviewing the specifics…

Kanata H: Can we benchmark vs. other successful boards that the City have? Atlanta woman's commission etc.?

Nicole M: A retreat sounds delightful

David G-S: I'd like to hear what the lawyer has to say

Patrick O (City Attorney): Limited by legislation. You guys adopted bylaws and you can amend them. You cannot expand to do things you're not allowed to do – but you can amend.

Doug Y: City boards have process-oriented, substantive or procedural. Is the board equipped from your perspective to do what you believe you're called to?

Kanata H: Motion to do retreat. Seconded by Nicole M. Motion carries

Anthony K: Date for the retreat?

Keith S: Every Saturday in March I'm busy, I prefer a weekday.

Anthony K: March 24th could work. How long?

David G-S: Start with 3 hours?

Erik W: Middle of day is best

Doug Y: 10-2 with lunch? We can confirm firmer details on that during the December board meeting. Want to make sure we dovetail that with work program discussion

Erik W: I was intending to make a motion for the 3 groups I brought up.. or should we take about that at the retreat?

Kanata H: City should bring thoughts on retreat, and we can bring our thoughts on the retreat.

David G-S: Sounds good. Any further discussion? And they will bring us things in December

Keith S: By December or sooner for RiverLands. May include final report – so that is a big piece of the discussion

December meeting 12/16/26, 1p.m. – 3 p.m., at Northwest Library

Dr. Tony L: Motion to close and seconded. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 2:39 p.m.