

Tyler 21 Steering Committee Hears Recommendations On City's Goals

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Staff writer

Abundant trees, signage restrictions and revamped Lake Tyler facilities are topics that stole the show at Tyler 21 steering committee meeting Wednesday.

Work groups presented what they found to be the most important long-term goals for the community concerning the future of Tyler's parks, recreation, housing and community identity. The group then discussed recommendations for reaching those goals.

"We want to keep the outcomes in mind and come up with a series of ways to get there," consultant Larissa Brown said.

At the top of the list, the group discussed the importance of keeping Tyler green as the city continues to grow.

The stretch of commercial area on Broadway Avenue from Loop 323 to Amherst Drive was cited as an example of an area void of trees.

The group discussed possible ordinances that will provide incentives for property owners to replant vege-

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tation, the creation of a city-run nursery, and designating green corridors along city streets.

"The trees are what attracted me to Tyler years ago. I hate to see them go now," said Councilman Charles Alworth.

The committee also discussed giving public facilities at Lake Tyler a "face lift" to encourage more citizen use.

"Something that stuck out in our heads is that the folks who live inside the city are footing the bill, but getting the least benefits from the lake," said Walter Wilhelmi, chair of the Tyler 21 Parks, Open Space, Recreation and Lakes working group.

Wilhelmi said part of the money for the lake's upkeep comes from city of Tyler water bills.

"Lake Tyler provides a lot of

great amenities. We really need to make the facilities into something our citizens use," he said.

The group also touched on concerns about a new trend in commercial signs and the effect it could have on the city's ambiance.

The group is recommending the creation of an ordinance to regulate digital screens that are used as business signs.

"Digital signs are the wave of the future, but they can change the look of an area dramatically," said Director of Planning for the city, Barbara Holly.

The group also discussed concerns the signs could be a distraction to motorists.

Other major goals discussed during the meeting include: increasing the amount of public park space for the city, developing

a master plan for the Lake Bellwood area, and creating a new zoning ordinance to allow for loft apartments to be built above certain commercial structures.

Wednesday's meeting concluded the final discussion with the seven original working groups for the Tyler 21 project.

The working committees included parks, open spaces, recreation and lakes; housing, neighborhoods and community identity; congestion mitigation and transportation; downtown, historic preservation; north end revitalization and public facilities and services.

The steering committee is scheduled to meet again on June 18 at the Women's Building, 911 S. Broadway Ave., to discuss the "Business and Economic

Development/Future Land Use" chapter of the Tyler 21 plan.

The discussion will focus on future land use and potential annexation of land.

The committee is also scheduled to meet in July and August to discuss implementing the Tyler 21 plan.

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