Ridges Advisory Committee

Agenda

Ridges Advisory Committee
  • Members & Roles

Overview of The Ridges Framework Plan

Recent Activities
  • Comprehensive Master Plan
  • Kirkbride Stabilization
  • Lin Hall HVAC
  • Kirkbride Walking Tour
  • Ridges Observatory
  • Public-Private Partnership Exploration

New Project Review
  • Tier 1 Use Modification
  • Tier 2 Opportunities
Ridges Advisory Committee
Membership & Roles

**Membership**
- Deborah Shaffer, Ohio University Vice President of Finance and Administration, chair (Ohio University President designee)
- Andy Stone, Athens Director of Public Works and City Engineer (City of Athens Mayor designee)
- Lenny Eliason, Athens County Commissioner
- Christine Knisely, Athens City Council President
- Pam Callahan, community member
- Tom O’Grady, Southeast Ohio History Center Executive Director

**Role:** The committee, which is composed of members representing Ohio University, the City of Athens and Athens County, is tasked with periodically providing feedback on the comprehensive land use plans for The Ridges and the University’s progress toward its implementation. The committee reports its recommendations to Ohio University’s president.

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Sunset Review Committee:
The State Legislature passed and the Governor signed House Bill 471 late last year renewed the land use advisory committee which reports recommendations to the President of Ohio University, through December 31st, 2020.
Overview of the Framework Plan

Process

- Extensive 18-month endeavor
- Documented: https://www.ohio.edu/planning-space/up/d20.cfm
- A wide constituency of participants
  - Ridges Master Plan Committee
  - SCA/MKSK Consultants
  - Academic, Land-Use, and Building Sub-committees
  - Ridges Advisory Committee
  - City of Athens, community members, faculty, staff, and students
- What the Framework Plan does
  - Guides future planning and development
  - Addresses the current state of The Ridges
  - Investigates potential uses and adaptability
  - Identifies access issues and financial strategies
  - Provides guidelines for each of 5 identified zones
Considerations
• Site development should reflect that it is an essential green to campus
• The Kirkbride and cottages can support any number of flexible, creative uses

Key Recommendations
• Respect the historic front yard as essential open space
• Enhance connectivity to campus
• Buildings are prioritized in regards to significance
• Compatibility recommendations reflect a number of potential uses
• Consider public private development and other financial strategies to find resources for plan implementation
Considerations

• It is the primary vehicular access corridor for much of The Ridges
• It is also a development opportunity due to existing utilities
• The corridor presents an opportunity to build connections and support many needs

Key Recommendations

• Coordinate future development with the City
• Control the scale and appearance of development to protect OHIO image
• Use principles of Conservation Development that benefit both OHIO and local community
Considerations

- Occupies 200-acres with ongoing research and academic use (decades worth of data)
- While primary use is research and academic, there is a strong public recreational use within the zone

Key Recommendations

- Reserve the Land Lab primarily for research and academic use
- Permit continuing public, pedestrian access on existing primitive trails
- Provide clear, informative signs at key locations to alert visitors of the Land Lab’s boundaries
Considerations
• Characterized by its proximity to The Ridges Green and Dairy Lane
• The area is used by local residents and campus community for recreation
• Area is well-suited for residential opportunities and supplementary uses

Key Recommendations
• Planning should complement the mission and values of OHIO
• Development should demonstrate emerging methods of enhanced social and environmental aspects of life
• Expand recreation opportunities for the campus and community
• Develop and Eco-Village
Considerations

- Area is generally more remote, less developed, and less used by the public
- With limited access, initial infrastructure costs for roadways and utilities may be higher than those for Tier 1 Land

Key Recommendations

- Identify appropriate uses for development sites
- Identify and understand undeveloped land and expand primitive trails
- Explore opportunities to expand outdoor recreation and academic/research uses
- Work with the City to develop municipal roadway and utility infrastructure
Recent Activities

• Comprehensive Master Plan
• Kirkbride Stabilization
• Lin Hall HVAC
• Kirkbride Walking Tour
• Ridges Observatory
• Public-Private Partnership Exploration
• Review of project requests and Framework plan changes
Recent Activities
Comprehensive Master Plan

- Includes all areas of the University
- Incorporated elements of Ridges Framework Plan and refined Ridges Green with context of university as a whole

The Ridges Green
- Shape a new identity for The Ridges that strongly associates it with the rest of campus
- Careful, selective building edits
- Improve connectivity
- Provide for a mix of uses
- Consider relocation of Administrative Units to the Kirkbride
- Explore opportunities for executive education, conference spaces, mixed uses, and academic synergies
Recent Activities
Kirkbride Stabilization

First Project identified and implemented from Framework plan: $300,000

Roof & gutter replacement (2015-2016)

- Stop-gap roofing, water proofing, and gutter repair measures on the west Kirkbride buildings
- Long-term solution is to repair attic rafter systems with structural damage and install permanent roof replacements as done on Bldgs. 13, 14, and 18

Tuck pointing

- Water damage from failed gutters is a major cause of brick deterioration
- Stabilization work successfully addressed some areas that were damaged, including sandstone restoration
Project Description

- $2.7M
- HVAC work including calibration of existing equipment, supplement the existing heating and cooling units with new equipment, provide automation control and provide humidity control to protect the artwork
- Consolidated art/artifact storage and rehabilitation of former milk house
- Gutter replacement
- Stonework
- Flat roof repair

Recent Activities
Lin Hall HVAC
Recent Activities
The Ridges Observatory

• Second project identified and supported by the Framework Plan to be implemented
  • Construction began Fall 2016
  • Dedication May 6th, 2017

• Future improvements under consideration, including:
  • Architectural lettering to identify the observatory
  • Permanent staircase from Konneker
Exterior tours of the buildings are performed by George Eberts, local historian and former staff member of the Athens Asylum.

Mr. Eberts has also requested the ability to do walking tours inside the buildings.

The request has been reviewed with Facilities and Safety.

University Planning has determined a suitable route.

Currently, the University is reviewing financial and legal obligations as well as final review by Facilities & Safety.
Purpose

• Building on the Framework Plan recommendations, the P3 exploration was intended to gauge interest from private developers to partner in renovations

Objectives

• Moving forward on a major recommendation of the Framework Plan
• Exploring new opportunities/interests from the community
• Discovering non-University resources

Process

• The P3 opportunity was advertised
• Statements of interest were received
• An info day was done in January
• The University is reviewing next steps
New Project Requests

- Tier 1 Use Modification
- Tier 2 Opportunities
From the Framework Plan

- Identified areas in Tier 1 suitable for potential development, which are approximately 10% of overall acreage in the zone
- Recommended that development should be sustainable from an environmental, economic, and social perspective
- Development should also demonstrate what sustainable growth might be for Appalachia
- Focus on environmentally appropriate design, enhancing economic opportunities and quality of life
- Promotion of outdoor recreational opportunities
- Eco-Village and solar energy
Recent Concerns

- Various community individuals have expressed concerns about Tier 1 development for housing
- Concerns include the impacts of housing, cats, and vehicles that close to the Land Lab
- Planning/research met with these groups to discuss their ideas, several of which were reasonable and may have informed a different outcome if known earlier

Online Petition Comments

- Please preserve this wonderful space for future students to enjoy
- The Ridges is too valuable of a green space to develop
- Cross country, track teams, and local runners practice on the trails regularly
Tier 1 Use Modification
Proposed Ridges “Preserve” Options

- **Option 1** – apply the use restrictions of the Land Lab to Tier 1 land, such as:
  - Restrict most public and University access
  - No dogs or bicycles allowed
  - Promoted as drawing a line between land lab and preserve....

- **Option 2** – apply standard, less restrictive nature preserve rules to Tier 1, such as:
  - No unauthorized motor vehicles
  - No bicycles allowed off approved trails
  - No fires
  - Dogs on leashes on approved trails
  - Habitat management
  - Limited development near compost

Regardless: Continued University programmatic uses: ROTC, Orienteering, etc.
Framework Plan

- Shares many recommendations with Tier 1 land, including housing, recreation, development opportunities
- The City of Athens envisions a utility corridor through Tier 2 as part of the US-50 sanitary and water improvements
- The City also envisions a local roadway that connects Richland Ave to Blackburn Rd

Opportunity

- Coordinate development of City utilities and roadway to promote access to Tier 2 land
- Relocate Eco Village from Tier 1 to this area
- Review proposals from community/businesses
There are two areas suitable for development

A. A relatively flat area created from the excess dirt associated with the construction of Summit at Coates Run in 2008
   - Proximity to apartments and flat area make it appropriate for commercial uses

B. Open space along potential utilities corridor
   - Appropriate for single family uses
   - Eco Village

Illustration reflects a draft concept for discussion & planning purposes only. The illustration does not represent an actual design or imply a commitment to develop the area in the manner shown.
Tier 2 Opportunities
Alternative Eco Village Location

Commercial Development
• Approximately 8-acres of level area suitable for multiple, large buildings and open space
• Conceptual locations of these buildings allow for desirable views to the west and north
• Parking can be accommodated adjacent to the Carriage Hill Apartments

City Objectives
• Connect the new local road to Carriage Hill Rd
• The traffic signal at Richland and Carriage Hill has been designed with the road connection in mind
• Connect gravity sewer line from the US-50 utility project to an existing manhole along the Summit property line

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Eco-Village
- Roadways and lots follow topography to minimize earth-moving
- 50’x120’ minimum lot size
- Opportunity for alternative cluster residence “Eco-Village”
  - Community orchards
  - Dedicated community garden plots
  - Conservation Development

Sustainable Housing Area
- Part of the relatively flat area associated with fill from Summit at Coates Runs
- 800 SF – 1,500 SF residences

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Questions and Next Steps

Ridges Advisory Member Questions?

Next Steps:
• Feedback from Ridges Advisory Committee to be reviewed by Planning and University Leadership

Future Meetings
• Discuss how often group wants to meet

Updates:
https://www.ohio.edu/planning-space/up/d20.cfm