

Red Mountain Park Newsletter

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RED MOUNTAIN PARK

RED MOUNTAIN GREENWAY AND RECREATIONAL AREA COMMISSION APPOINTED

The Red Mountain Park Commission, a state agency created by the Alabama Legislature to administer the Red Mountain Park and Greenway Project, has been fully appointed. The 1,108-acre Red Mountain Park will span 4.5 miles along the mountain crest where U.S. Steel mined iron ore for its Alabama plants in the early 1900s.



Red Mountain Park, Photo by Lauren Seto

A draft master plan for the park was recently completed by Wallace, Roberts and Todd, an environmental planning and landscape architectural firm located in Philadelphia, PA. The master planning process involved hundreds of individuals from throughout the entire community.

Plans for the park grew out of an offer by U.S. Steel Corporation to make the property available for park purposes as part of the largest philanthropic gift in its history. The steelmaker, which is celebrating its 100th anniversary in the Birmingham District this year, agreed to sell the site, valued at \$16 million, for \$7 million and then return \$1 million as a gift.

Upon completion, the park will help make Birmingham one of the leading sites in the country in total acreage set aside for hiking and green space activities.

The 15 member Commission, selected by 8 appointing agencies, represent a diversity of experience and backgrounds. They include:

- **Ervin Batain**, a former employee of the U.S. Steel Mining Division;
- **Jim Bennett**, Commissioner, Alabama Department of Labor;
- **Renee Carter**, executive assistant to County Commissioner Jim Carns;
- **Rob Fowler**, attorney with Balch and Bingham, LLP;
- **Steve Jones**, Environmental Affairs, Alabama Power Company;
- **Robert Green** recently retired from Regions Bank;
- **Tom Howard**, U.S. Steel Realty Division;
- **Fred L. Keith**, President, HKW Associates, PC;
- **Charles McCallum**, Mayor, City of Vestavia Hills;
- **Gary Richardson**, Mayor of Midfield
- **Dalton Smith**, Executive Director of

Region 2020;

- **Temple W. Tutwiler III**, President, Tutwiler Investment Company;
- **Cameron Vowell**, Ph.D, civic leader;
- **Mark T. Waggoner**, attorney, Hand Arendall, LLC;
- **Dr. Perry Ward**, President of Lawson State Community College;

Stephen Jones, former Chairman of the Freshwater Land Trust, was named Chairman of the Commission. Other officers include Dr. Ward, Vice Chairman, Dr. Vowell, Secretary and Mr. Tutwiler, Treasurer.

Appointing authorities included Gov. Bob Riley, the Jefferson County House and Senate Delegations, the Jefferson County Mayors Association, the Jefferson County Commission, the City of Birmingham, U.S. Steel Realty Division and the Freshwater Land Trust.

The park board is currently engaged in a \$12 million fundraising campaign for the first phase of the project including finalizing the land acquisition, site preparation and trail development.

The Red Mountain Park Commission is pleased to announce that on August 22, 2007 they completed the initial closing on the property with U.S. Steel!

How can I help Red Mountain Park?

Contribute to the Red Mountain Park Fund—make a tax deductible donation by calling the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham at (205) 328-8641.

Visit and join the Friends of Red Mountain Park website—find the most up-to-date information about Red Mountain Park and the planning process, and sign up with the Friends group at www.redmountainpark.org.

Contact regional leaders—tell your elected officials: the Jefferson County Commission, private leaders, and philanthropists that you care about this huge opportunity and the benefits it will bring our community.

Visit and join the Red Mountain Park page on MySpace at www.myspace.com/redmountainpark.



MEET THE COMMISSION

When Commissioners were asked, "What could Red Mountain Park mean to this community and what made you want to serve on the Commission?", here is what they said:



The Red Mountain Park is a landmark anchor for a new vision of Birmingham - one of beauty, greenways and active appreciation for our particular place on this planet. ~ **Cameron Vowell**



I am honored to be a member of the Red Mt. Park Commission whose positive economic, recreational and cultural contributions will affect present and future generations of this community for years to come." ~ **Dr. Perry Ward**

As the park develops I think Red Mountain Park will become one of those city symbols, like Vulcan, that people identify with Birmingham. The overall project has the potential of unifying the larger Birmingham community and building bridges between cities and neighborhoods unlike any other in recent times. I was happy to accept appointment as the State Senate's nominee because I understand the park is something that can have a major impact on the metropolitan area. ~ **Jim Bennett**



George Washington Carver said "Reading about nature is fine, but if a person walks in the woods and listens carefully, he can learn more than what is in books, for they speak with the voice of God." Red mountain Park will be eleven hundred acres of woods for all to hear. Serving as a commissioner will require a lot of work and time, but it creates an opportunity to leave the community a little bit better place than you found it. ~ **Temple Tutwiler**

Large urban parks have played a significant role in the quality of my daily life and provided connection to my community for more than a decade. When I came home to Alabama and moved into the city of Birmingham, I was thrilled to discover the former "Pittsburgh of the South" was to become home to one of the largest urban green spaces in the country. I wanted very much to contribute and, fortunately, the Jefferson County Commission - also a big supporter of the Park - has given me that opportunity. ~ **Renee Carter**



There is no doubt that Red Mountain Park by itself will be a huge amenity for the area. But I think the big story is that parks and greenways have brought together the entire region with a common vision. That vision, manifested in the three park initiative has been enthusiastically embraced by the community and we have shown our support by generous donations to the campaign underway at the Community Foundation and Region 20/20. With the recent property closing of Red Mountain Park, Birmingham now has more parks and green space per capita than any other city in the country which provides a template to re-brand Birmingham and the surrounding area. It is very exciting to play a role in such a historic undertaking. ~ **Steve Jones**

I am extremely excited to serve on the Red Mountain Park Commission; the park will improve the quality of life for this region. It will draw people from all over the southeast. The variety of activities planned for the park puts it into a class by itself. ~ **Mayor Gary Richardson**



Red Mountain Park provides our community with the opportunity to build a 21st century active park that will help redefine outdoor recreation in Birmingham for decades to come. In addition, coming online in the same era as Railroad Reservation Park and the updated Ruffner Nature Mountain Center, Red Mountain Park will play an integral part in the shaping of a new identity for the Birmingham region--one that values greenspace and outdoor recreation. ~ **Dalton Smith**

Red Mountain Park is a win for the entire state. It brings about so many benefits and economic opportunities to our communities in healthy and environmentally-friendly ways. I got involved to ensure and protect the gateway entrance of the 3-D #11 Mining Camp to Red Mountain Park because I want to see the City protect the heritage of the mining community, specifically #11, the Headquarters. ~ **Ervin Battain**



I think this is one of the most promising projects we have had in a long time. The opportunities for recreation, public health and economic development are enormous. I am honored to be able to play a part in preserving this treasure for the future. ~ **Mark Waggoner**

Red Mountain Park has the potential of becoming "the weekend hangout" place for countless families in the Birmingham area. I agreed to serve on the Commission because of how Red Mountain Park will improve the quality of life for area residents and will be a catalyst for bringing people to the region. ~ **Rob Fowler**



Red Mountain Park will provide a great opportunity for the citizens of the Birmingham metropolitan area to enjoy nature, our environment and learn about the past history of the mining industry in our region. It will also bring people from the neighboring municipalities in the greater metropolitan area together and from this encounter we might be able to develop more cooperation between our cities which would enhance the quality of life in our community. ~ **Mayor Charles "Scotty" McCallum**



Red Mountain Park will provide a place where Birmingham can display its heritage, history, and cultural diversity at a single location. I have been a part of Birmingham's history and would like to continue being a part of this great City's legacy by serving on this Commission. ~ **Bob Green**



At US Steel, we are happy to be able to contribute back to our community, and there has been a lot of enthusiasm in our Company about our support for the park. It is a great privilege for me to be able to follow this project from the original concept of creating a park on Red Mountain to seeing it become a reality. ~ **Tom Howard**

Red Mountain Park will be both a literal and figurative bridge across the social, cultural and economic divides that separate our greater Birmingham community. Serving on this commission is my investment in the future of this region. ~ **Fred Keith**



Next Steps for Red Mountain Park

The Red Mountain Park Commission continues to meet regularly and has focused their most recent efforts on the following projects:

- Red Mountain Rising, a celebration event for the acquisition of the park land on Tuesday, October 30th. An invitation for this momentous event is on the back page of this newsletter. Please join us!!
- A nation-wide employment search for an Executive Director for the Park.



Red Mountain Park, Photo by Tom Spenser

- Continued fundraising in order to finalize the land purchase from US Steel in February, 2008 and build Phase I, including a round-the-loop trail.
- Defining the master planning process.
- Targeted community outreach efforts to spread the word about Red Mountain Park.

Please stay involved and continue to watch for further developments!

Please join us to celebrate Red Mountain Rising on October 30th (Invite on the back page)!!!

YOU HAVE BEEN CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND

RED MOUNTAIN RISING

WHEN A CLOSING OPENS UP THE FUTURE

A PARTY TO CELEBRATE THE ACQUISITION OF THE LAND

FOR THE FUTURE RED MOUNTAIN PARK

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30TH, 5:30PM

FESTIVITIES WILL BE HELD AT B&A WAREHOUSE

1531 FIRST AVENUE SOUTH

SIPS AND SAVORIES PROVIDED

ENTERTAINMENT BY:

THREE ON A STRING

AND

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RED MOUNTAIN PARK

Red Mountain Park Greenway and
Recreational Area Commission
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