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Joint Facilities Planning Subcommittee

Notes of Meeting
August 18, 2014

Mosaic Room,
Hacienda de las Flores,
Moraga

Attendees

Members Present

- Moraga School District (MSD): Charles MacNulty, Shari Simon
- Moraga Sports Alliance (MSA): Harry Crouch, Ken Towers, Chris Maher
- St. Mary's College (SMC): Tim Farley
- Town of Moraga (TOM): Phil Crosby, Mike Metcalf, Dave Trotter

Staff Present

- Town of Moraga: Jill Keimach, Jay Ingram
- Moraga School District: Bruce Burns

Members Absent

- Campolindo High School (CHS): John Walker
- Moraga Sport Alliance: Judy McNeil
- St Mary's College: Jim Donahue

Meeting Notes Approval

- The notes of the June 23rd meeting were accepted as final, with addition of a clarifying comment on the first (multi-colored) chart clarifying that the numbers shown in red indicate the number of chip votes received for each project idea.

Staff Activities Since July Meeting

- Jay Ingram reported that he has been engaged in further discussions with Tim Farley (SMC) on a joint usage agreement. Tim commented that he has had discussions with Jim Donohue on the points of an agreement. The College wants to ensure that any long-term usage agreement is consistent with the new campus master plan presently being developed. The idea of an interim joint use agreement has some attraction.
- Jay discussions with John Walker (CHS) have been impeded by summer vacations for both John and his staff. Now that CHS is back from summer recess, Jay expects to resume discussions.
- Jay reported the scheduling of a visit by Michael Harris of the Pleasant Hill City Council. Dave Trotter had suggested that Michael (a former Moraga resident and council member)

would be willing to share experiences with the 2009 Bond Measure that Pleasant Hill passed, enabling the Pleasant Hill Recreation and Park District to construct three new community facilities and improve one community park. Michael Harris is scheduled to present to the subcommittee on September 30th.

Field/Facility Projects Identification

General Discussion

- At the July 23rd meeting, the subcommittee chip-voted their preferences from an array of possible projects spanning a wide variety of recreation needs. The results of the voting clearly indicated a pattern of preferences for projects, not in priority order: (1) improved playing fields for organized sports; (2) gymnasium for basketball and volley, and other indoor sports; and (3) multi-generational community center. At the present meeting, the subcommittee reflected on these preferences. There was consensus that the three classes of projects would be adopted and continued for further consideration.
- At the July 23rd meeting, a list of potential sites for recreation facilities was formulated. The subcommittee agreed to remove the MCSP parcel behind Moraga Royale and Aegis because recreation uses on the site would not be consistent with either the MCSP or the General Plan. The site had been incorrectly included in the list of potential site. It has been removed from the list, see the chart at right.
- Since the July 23rd meeting, several subcommittee members received an email communication from an anonymous person suggesting that an additional potential site could be considered. The site is commonly known in Moraga as the “Painted Rock” project, and the sender of the email was Roger Poynts, the land owner and applicant for the development. Town Manager, Keimach explained that, while the “Painted Rock” vision has been discussed and revised with community members and town staff over the past several years, it has yet to be considered in a public meeting. She commented further that processing such an application would typically require significant time, perhaps years. Mr. Poynts, who was present at the meeting, described alternative project concepts for the Painted Rock property, and explained that recreation facilities, mainly playing field(s), could be possible. He further mentioned that a two acre flat site would be desirable for a full size soccer field type facility. This could be accomplished,

Potential Sites For Community Recreation Facilities

1. Moraga Center Specific Plan- Site A (between Moraga Rd and RV storage yard)
2. JMIS Fields/Gym including Pear Orchard
3. Moraga Commons Park-Back 40
4. Moraga Commons Park-Front Corner (St. Mary’s Rd/Moraga Rd)
5. Town-owned marquee property opposite Skate Park (west side Moraga Rd)
6. Moraga Tennis and Swim Club
7. Undeveloped property east of Moraga Rd, opposite Campolindo HS
8. Town-owned property north of St Mary’s Rd, from Rheem Blvd toward Moraga Commons, east side
9. Haciends de las Flores property
10. Painted Rock project site

but grading of the hillside would be required. After a brief Q&A period with Mr. Poynts, the subcommittee decided to add the Painted Rock site to the list as site #10.

- Charles MacNulty explained that MSD is about to commence a strategic/facilities planning study. A project consultant will soon be selected by the MSD and a scope of work will then be developed. Until the consultant's work is complete, the subcommittee was advised that it might be premature to advance projects at the JM school site; MSD could possibly determine that there are other education-oriented uses for the school district lands. Charles was asked if it would be reasonable to suggest that the MSD facilities planning study account for potential projects identified by this subcommittee. It was understood that, consistent with MSD's vision, namely educating children, this would be reasonable.
- The President of the Hacienda Foundation (Judy Dinkle) asked that the subcommittee consider the grounds of the Hacienda de las Flores as a possible site for a community center. She commented that the Hacienda Foundation is now involved in a study of possible future uses of the Hacienda grounds, some of which could include community center facilities.
- Several additional points were recorded which could have bearing on decisions about projects selected for further study:
 - Any site should be able to accommodate as many different recreation needs as possible. For instance, a complex of playing fields should allow simultaneous operation of soccer and flag football; baseball should be able to co-exist with softball, etc. A complaint heard among parents with multiple athletes is the current need to travel between various sites.
 - Moraga currently appears to have an adequate number of baseball diamonds — albeit, many of the baseball fields are older and could benefit from renovations. What is most needed are additional soccer and lacrosse fields.
 - The most discussed need among those in the youth sports community is the need for indoor gymnasium space. A space to accommodate a variety of sports is preferred.
 - In prioritizing sites for development, the principle of “going first for the low hanging fruit” should be applied. That is, if a site is presently available and/or at reasonable cost, it should be preferred over a site which would not be available for a long while and/or might be very expensive.

Fields Alternatives

- The subcommittee began the process of matching site alternatives with recreation needs. Each of the three recreation needs (sports fields, gym, multi-generational community center,) would be addressed in turn, considering each site’s potential for accommodating the identified recreation needs. It was acknowledged that this process might span several meetings.
- It was concluded that the three site alternatives, outlined below, are the alternative sites, specific to the “recreation need” of sports field.

Campolindo Lower Fields

- Improving the lower fields adjacent Moraga Road was discussed at the May 5th meeting. Steve Sutherland of SSA Landscape Architects described a possible configuration of the existing fields as shown in the figure at right. In the original concept, only a portion of the complex would be converted to artificial turf (shown in light green color). However, artificial and natural turf surfaces on a fields could pose problems with seams, and would probably not be advisable. In the subcommittee’s concept, the entire complex would be artificial turf (about twice the area as originally proposed).
- CHS presently conducts sports activities after dark under field lighting (football stadium and Soda Aquatic Center). A rugby club also plays on the lower fields adjacent to Moraga Road under seasonal, portable lights trucks. Some subcommittee members believe that permanent lighting could be installed on the lower fields as part of an improvement project.
- Campolindo sports programs are growing, with the addition of several new sports. These new programs will increase demand for CHS fields. Such growth could crowd out community uses.
- The predominant sentiment of the subcommittee seemed to be place priority on the CHS lower field project. However, if competition from CHS uses would severely reduce community use, priority would shift to JM fields.



JMIS

- The sports fields study conducted in 2009 identified potential for numerous playing fields on the site of the existing playing fields. A configuration of as many as six fields was presented to the subcommittee at the May 5th meeting. The figure at top right shows these fields (in light green) plus a 20,000 square foot gymnasium/community center possibilities (in pink). For purposes of this discussion, only the playing fields were considered.
- This concept could include new parking facilities in a portion of the pear orchard, which is MSD property. Parking could also be developed along Canyon Road. These parking facilities could connect to the playing field via a pedestrian/maintenance vehicle bridge across the creek separating the pear orchard from the main JM complex. These parking facilities could help relieve existing weekend parking.
- A number of subcommittee members felt a new field complex would need to include public restroom facilities (accessible after school and on weekends) separate from the existing JM buildings.
- Some discussion developed on lighting for the improved fields. MSD representatives stated that lighting would likely be out of the question, anticipating neighborhood objections.
- MSD representatives emphasized that the school district might need their land for other uses, more consistent with their mission of educating children, especially if current and proposed residential developments increase the population in town.

Rheem Elementary

- At the May 5th meeting reconfiguration of the existing field was discussed. The available space is limited, which precludes adding much. A project could focus on improving utilization of existing space and improving the existing condition of the field. The area is shown in the figure at bottom right.



- This project could provide playing fields for youth soccer, lacrosse, rugby and Little League baseball. However, some subcommittee members believe an improved field need not include a developed baseball diamond, due to the belief that there is currently adequate baseball fields in town.
- Some subcommittee members consider a Rheem Elementary project to be a smaller version of the field renovation project completed at Camino Pablo Elementary in 2011.

Next Meetings

- Tuesday, August 26, 6-7:30pm, tour of Pleasant Hill Community Facilities. Further information is forthcoming from staff.
- Monday, September 8, 6-7:30pm, Hacienda – regular meeting: Continue with site evaluations.
- Tuesday, September 30, 6-7:30pm, Hacienda – discussion with Michael Harris re Pleasant Hill Recreation District formation experience.
- Monday, October 6, 6-7:30pm, Hacienda – regular meeting to complete site evaluations.

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