



Approved: September 6, 2018

**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, MINNESOTA
CIVIC SITE TASK FORCE MEETING
JULY 31, 2018
6:00 P.M. - ARDEN HILLS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, Chair Lambeth called to order the City Council Work Session meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Chair James Lambeth, Vice Chair Arlene Mitchell, Members John VanValkenburg, Paul Beggin, Dan Erickson, David Radziej, Clayton Zimmerman, Miriam Ward, and Alternate Rich Straumann

Absent: Members Brenda O’Meara and Craig Wilson

Also present: City Administrator Dave Perrault; City Council Liaisons Brenda Holden and Fran Holmes

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – JUNE 4, 2018

Chair Lambeth stated the agenda will stand as published.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. June 26, 2018 – Civic Site Task Force Minutes

Commissioner Beggin moved, seconded by Commissioner Radziej, to approve the June 26, 2018, Civic Site Task Force Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

3. NEW BUSINESS/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Review of Previous Meeting’s Direction

City Administrator Perrault provided the group with a summary on the item discussed by the Task Force in June. He explained staff has provided a staff report with information on the TCAAP park amenities, an executive summary on the Space Study, demographic information for the metro area and an agenda from the HGA. He commented on the direction he received from

the group and noted the consultant was asked to further investigate Vadnais Commons, Silverwood and Cederholm.

B. HGA Presentation

Jennifer McMaster, HGA, introduced herself to the Task Force.

Victor Pichati, HGA, facilitated a discussion for a process to move the Civic Site forward and provided the group with a handout. He commented on the programs that were benchmarked for the site and reviewed preliminary images for the Civic Site. He requested the group provide him with thoughts on their program visioning and preliminary design plans for the site. Further discussion ensued regarding the planning process and direction that would be followed.

Mr. Radziej asked if the Civic Site would have hot soils under it.

City Administrator Perrault explained the entire site has been cleaned per MPCA requirements to residential standards.

Mr. Zimmerman asked if this site would have underground parking.

Mr. Pichati stated this would be further evaluated through the planning process.

Mr. Zimmerman commented it was his understanding underground parking would be the responsibility of the developer and surface parking would be the responsibility of the City.

Councilmember Holden indicated this remains to be seen how much underground parking would be constructed by the developer.

Chair Lambeth explained this would be identified in the option agreement with the developer and this has not yet been completed between the City and Alatus. He anticipated that the City's plans for the Civic Site would assist the Council in negotiating with the developer.

Councilmember Holden encouraged the group to focus on what type of use should be on the Civic Site and not so much what the building will look like.

Ms. Mitchell stated that it would greatly benefit the group to understand what the parking situation was prior to making plans for the site.

Chair Lambeth reported the main focus of this group was to keep a foot in the door to secure the 1.6 acres for the Civic Site from the developer. In order to secure this property, a concept plan has to be created. He recommended the group consider several concepts for the site for the developer to consider.

Mr. Pichati asked if there was a plan to allow this group to interface with the developer.

Councilmember Holden indicated the developer was interested in having a seat at this table but was encouraged to hold off until the Task Force had more concrete ideas in mind so as to avoid any unforeseen influence from the developer.

Mr. Ericson questioned what type of data would be collected for the Task Force to review.

Mr. Pichati reported he would be reviewing the population served, along with benchmark and qualitative information regarding the amenities the residents wants in a community facility. He provided further comment on the proposed project planning timeline.

Chair Lambeth stated he did not want the quality of the final project to be sacrificed due to a proposed timeline. He explained that once documents are signed the City would have to be ready to react as the City would only have two years to get shovels in the ground.

City Administrator Perrault estimated the developer would not have documents signed until early 2019.

Councilmember Holden indicated she did not support the City trying to host an open house in September. She suggested the open house be held in early November.

Mr. Beggin requested the City work diligently to reach and invite all members of the community for the Open House.

Ms. McMaster stated what was interesting about Arden Hills was that this City had more people who worked here than lived here and this may play into the proposed facilities.

Mr. Zimmerman explained if the Civic Site were to develop as a City Hall, the group would have to consider how to program the current City Hall.

Discussion ensued regarding how information would be relayed to the City Council. It was recommended the Council update and Open House be delayed by one month.

Mr. Pichati stated he would revise the schedule based on this input and asked if the Task Force wanted to meet in September.

The group supported meeting in August, September and again after the Open House.

Mr. Pichati reviewed three different building types (City Hall, Library and Community Center) with simple metrics taken into consideration with the Task Force. He described how Golden Valley came up with a collection of programs for their Community Center. He requested the members provide him with their vision for the 1.6-acre Civic Site.

Mr. Zimmerman questioned what the population on TCAAP would be after the site was fully developed.

Councilmember Holden estimated this to be 4,000.

Mr. Zimmerman indicated this would bring the City's population to 14,000 people.

Ms. Mitchell stated one concern may be how to make the existing residents in Arden Hills feel connected to this site when it will be difficult or would take time to reach. He explained the Civic Site would have to be a destination property in order to draw people to it.

Councilmember Holden stated the Civic Site could draw residents from New Brighton and Mounds View.

Chair Lambeth commented there were 11 acres of land available on TCAAP that could be used for Civic Sites if the 1.6 acres did not suit the City's needs. He encouraged the group again to focus on what would fit best on the 1.6-acre site.

Councilmember Holden clarified that this was not the case. She noted only the 1.6 acres would be available for a Civic Site and the other land was designated for parks.

Councilmember Holmes asked how many square feet could be located on the Civic Site's main level.

Mr. Pichati reported the entire site had a foot print of 70,000 square feet.

City Administrator Perrault indicated a 20,000 square foot one story building, or two story 40,000 square foot building has been discussed.

Mr. Beggin stated he liked the idea of an indoor play area given the number of young families that would be moving into the community. However, he also had concerns with the close proximity to the Shoreview Community Center. He commented his only concern for this amenity would be parking. He did not believe a wedding venue was a viable option for the Civic Site.

Mr. Pichati asked if the seniors had a gathering space in the community.

Councilmember Holden reported the seniors meet at McDonald's for coffee on Thursday mornings.

Councilmember Holmes stated the New Brighton Community Center offers a great deal of programming for their seniors.

Mr. Straumann discussed the rec programs currently being offered by the City in coordination with the Mounds View School District. He encouraged the group members to consider creating a unique destination as has been created with the New Brighton and Shoreview Community Centers.

Ms. Ward recommended the Civic Site offer program for people of all ages from children through seniors.

Councilmember Holden stated there was a manufactured home community located directly across the highway from TCAAP and it would benefit the City to offer programming for tweens in this area.

Mr. Radziej stated he liked the idea of having pottery classes and a kiln in the building that could be fired once a month. He suggested the City consider having an art focus within the Civic Site. He questioned if there was a demand for art classes through Parks and Rec.

Mr. Pichati commented an even better question was would there be a demand for arts in the demographics that would be drawn to this area. He was of the opinion there would be a demand for arts in the millennials that would live in this area.

Ms. Mitchell stated another thing the community could use was a gathering space. She explained the local coffee shops were too crowded.

Councilmember Holmes indicated she would like to see the City pursuing cost-sharing or partnerships in place for the Civic Site. She anticipated the City would not be able to fully staff the Civic Site and City Hall, but a shared space may be an interesting avenue to pursue.

Councilmember Holden explained she would like to see the Civic Site programmed for physical youth activities, such as basketball given the length of winter in Arden Hills.

Ms. Mitchell commented a gathering space in the Civic Site could be used for sewing, knitting, or quilting classes.

Mr. Zimmerman stated this may be a good way to bring together multi-generational residents within the community for these types of classes.

Mr. Erickson indicated students really enjoy having open gym space and a supervisor. He commented on the success of a four-square program he supervised.

Mr. Pichati stated a new definition for City Hall was an interesting concept and he encouraged the group to think on this more. He requested the group to discuss this further.

Ms. Mitchell commented on the existing City Hall space and noted it was approved through a community vote. She understood that the new City Hall was serving its purpose and anticipated there would not be a lot of community support to build another “new” City Hall. In addition, if City Hall were to relocate to TCAAP it would be even further away from 2/3 of the Arden Hills residents. She suggested the Civic Site be used for community programming as there was not enough parking at City Hall for these types of events.

Mr. Pichati asked what type of programming was occurring at City Hall currently.

Councilmember Holden reported there were dance classes and driver safety classes. She then commented on the amount of bonding the City would have to do to complete the infrastructure on TCAAP and stated the Civic Site would add to this expense. She stated one way to proceed may

be to construct a one-story building on the Civic Site with the knowledge that a second or third story could be added if the programming being offered was successful.

Councilmember Holmes questioned if the current park programs were profitable.

Councilmember Holden explained the programs were running at 85% costs being recovered and 15% were subsidized. She stated she fully supported park and recreation programming even if they were operating at a slight loss. She believed it was valuable to the public to have park and recreation programming available.

Councilmember Holmes indicated a wedding venue may be something to consider as this would bring in more revenue than additional rec programming for the Civic Site.

Mr. Ericson stated birthday parties and other family gatherings could also be considered for the Civic Site if it were to have a gathering space.

Ms. Mitchell commented meeting space was difficult to find for local non-profits and committees as well.

Ms. Ward suggested the gathering space be able to be broken down into smaller rooms and then back into a large room. She believed the more adaptable the space was the better.

Mr. Pichati reported there were numerous community centers in the metro area that were subsidized and this would have to be a conversation the Council would have to have.

Mr. Zimmerman stated City will have to consider what type of revenue generators could collocate within the Civic Site space. He indicated a fitness center may be a good use to consider.

Ms. Ward discussed how the Maplewood Community Center operates and noted the amenities provided at this facility. She indicated partnerships would be a great thing for the Task Force to consider.

Councilmember Holmes questioned how the group felt about the Civic Site having a gym and fitness center. She wondered if the site was large enough to house these amenities.

Mr. Beggin stated a small work out space could fit. He noted that there were some park and rec programs that were profitable and these could be further evaluated for the Civic Site.

Mr. Zimmerman suggested partnerships be pursued with Bethel and Northwestern students to see if they would be willing to teach fitness or other types of classes.

Councilmember Holden commented she did not want the Civic Site to take away commercial opportunities from TCAAP.

Chair Lambeth requested the HGA representatives and staff consolidate all of the comments made this evening into a plan that would be reviewed in August.

Mr. Ericson suggested staff and HGA representatives not pursue any suggestions that will not fit on the site or are dead end streets.

Mr. Pichati thanked the Task Force members for their input and stated he looked forward to presenting several building options to the group in August.

4. TASK FORCE MEMBER COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURN

Chair Lambeth adjourned the Civic Site Task Force meeting at 8:20 p.m.