

City of Alexandria, Virginia

JOINT MEETING
PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION AND
YOUTH SPORTS ADVISORY BOARD

Thursday, July 18, 2013, 7:00 p.m.
City Council Workroom
City Hall-301 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Summary Minutes

P&RC Members Present: Judy Guse-Noritake-Chairperson, Jennifer Atkins, Gina Baum, Rich Brune, Judith Coleman, William Cromley, Brian McPherson, Emma Schutzius.

Excused Absences: Stephen Beggs, Ripley Forbes.

YSAB Members Present: Bill Rivers, Secretary, YSAB, Laura Fries, Beth Hamed, John Lavelle, A. Melvin Miller, Jeff Murphy, Donnie Simpson, Fred Wixson; Brian McPherson, Judy Guse-Noritake.

RPCA Staff Present: Director James B. Spengler, William Chesley, Deputy Director, Recreation Services, Dinesh Tiwari, Deputy Director, Park Operations, Jack Browand, Division Chief, Marketing, Special Events, and Waterfront Operations, Ron Kagawa, Division Chief, Park Planning, Design and Capital Development, Laura Durham, Open Space Coordinator, David Ghezzi, Architect, Mac Slover, Director of Sports, Robin DeShields, Executive Assistant.

Guests: Vice Mayor Allison Silberberg, Councilman John Chapman and Aide Lashawn Timmons; Kendrick Ashton and Craig Dixon, St. James Group, LLC; M. Catharine Puskar, Attorney, Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley, Emrich, P.C. representing the St. James Group; Katy Cannady, Kerry Donley, James Durham, Pat Halpin, Paul Hertel, Ernie Lehmann, Katherine Papp, Jack Sullivan, Converse West, Erin Winegrad.

PUBLIC HEARING

- I.** Call to Order by Chair, Park and Recreation Commission, Judy Guse-Noritake. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m., introductions were given of Commission members, guests and staff.
- II.** Presentation- Unsolicited Proposal from The St. James Group, LLC to build a Sports and Entertainment complex at Joseph Hensley Park, Eisenhower Avenue - M. Catharine Puskar, Attorney, Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley, Emrich, P.C.

Puskar – introduced Co-Founders and Managing Partners, Craig Dixon and Kendrick Ashton, St. James Group, LLC (SJG). Dixon and Ashton gave brief introductions about themselves followed by a presentation on the project. To view their biographical information and the St. James Group proposal information go to:

<http://alexandriava.gov/UnsolicitedProposal>

Dixon said the project is a culmination of a lifelong involvement in athletics, and combines their passion for sports, business, and a desire to work with the community. Puskar said she was the impetus to the SJG looking at Hensley site. She recalled a proposal to build an All City Sports Facility in Alexandria on the Hensley site in 2007. The SJG submitted an unsolicited proposal so everyone could review information at the same time. The City established a "Process to Consider Unsolicited Proposals, dated June 25, 2013- See Attachment. The process includes meetings with various stakeholders. If concept is approved a decision will be made by City Council in fall to evaluate the merits of the proposal and whether or not to issue an RFP. If issued, RFP is a 90 day competitive process. All RFP's received would be reviewed by the City and a decision made to move forward or not. Puskar stated that specific details regarding certain costs, memberships, value of lease, parking, traffic, and how to compensate City for loss of fields, could not be shared at this time because it would put the SJG at a competitive disadvantage. If the project moves forward, more information will be provided during the Development Special Use Permit process. A forty year lease is proposed for the property. The land on site is non-taxable; however the building as well as business revenue is taxable. The SJG could allocate a certain dollar amount to help compensate the City for reinvestment to parks and open space. Puskar said proposal could be a real opportunity for Alexandria and positively enhance the quality of life for many residents who currently have to drive to other jurisdictions to participate in certain recreational events. The project will also create many jobs, and help draw people to Alexandria.

Dixon- reviewed the facility amenities (See pgs. 6 and 8) Facility Layout of Complex Design). Amenities include: Field House, Ice Rinks, Aquatics Center, Racquet Center, Golf Club, Lobby, Basketball Center, Baseball Center, Branded Retail, Health Club & Wellness Spa, Restaurant and Events, Observation Deck and Outdoor Pool, Climbing Center, Gymnastics Center, Childcare Center, Rehabilitation Center, Running Track, and two levels of parking. The Highlights of Programming and Services can be found on pg. 9.

When questioned further about the membership fees, Puskar said there would be several membership models, members would pay a fee and have full access to facility, and non-members could access facility on a fee per use basis. There will also be access for participants of teams and leagues. Tournaments and other events are planned to help draw people there. Specific details will be provided at a later time.

Dixon said he and Ashton have spent their professional careers developing large financial transactions and structuring financing, however they have never developed/operated a sports facility. The SJG has put together a comprehensive management team: The Atwood Consulting Group; FXFowle-Architect; Hunt Construction Management; M. Catharine Puskar-Attorney, Walsh, Colucci, etal; Wells and Associates, and Corporate Counsel- Kirkland & Ellis.

Puskar said similar facilities exist in the country at Chelsea Piers in NY - a large 1.2 million sq. ft. complex; Chelsea Piers, Stanford, CT, approximately 500,000 sq. ft., comparable in size to SJG proposal with similar uses, and The East Bank Club, Chicago, IL. The SJG has done market research to evaluate the needs of Alexandria. In closing,

they feel this is a great way to leverage land; it will create recreational usage for the community from children all the way up to seniors. They hope that the Concept has enough interest to proceed to a RFP process.

Chair Noritake polled the PRC and YSAB members for questions and comments.

Questions/Comments:

Q. Fries- Membership Fee Structure - would there be resident and non-resident benefit, and military and/or student discounts.

A. Puskar- there will be different plans and levels, i.e. individual, family, children, military, etc. more details will be provided later.

Cromley- the philosophy of government is to provide services and public facilities that benefit everyone in the community. If facility benefits the wealthy he could not support it. The detail is in the numbers.

Q. Rivers- it was mentioned that negotiations would take place during the DSUP process. Is there a reason why negotiations could not be made at time of bid closing?

A. Puskar- there will be criteria in the RFP that bidders would have to respond to.

Jinks- typically when the City receives an RFP-staff negotiates with the entity, i.e. developer, consultant etc. In this case, negotiations will be done to decide the draft proposal, subject to community review. Initial task is to come up with something the City thinks is good proposal for community, then let the community have input. It's similar to Development review process, City works initially with the developer, to try to get something in the City's interest. This may result in revised agreement at some point.

Q. McPherson- has the City established a formal process for evaluation of unsolicited proposal?

A. Jinks-There is an outline of process adopted by City Council; Process to Consider Unsolicited Proposals, dated June 25, 2013 – See Attachment. The City Manager will make recommendation in October whether to proceed or not with the RFP process. City Council would decide whether to proceed.

Q. McPherson- Can lease dollars be used as a credit for Alexandria users?

A. Puskar- that's an assumption; the City could ask for something different or to be issued a check.

Q. McPherson- How can a balance be struck between profit, lease and City benefits?

A. Puskar- this will be part of the negotiations with City. She's unsure why the assessment went down at Hensley, and other parks (See-Assessment devaluation). Typically City would assess value in development cases, and work with developer in getting best value.

Q. Baum- Is there an option to not go forward with project once RFP is issued.

A. Jinks-The City could reject all proposals. There are points in the process where an RFP can be rejected. Procurement process provides this if criteria are not met, or if negotiations fall through.

Q. Fries- her concern is about what the City would do about the taxes?

A. Puskar- when the City did the Beauregard Corridor SAP– they negotiated what the developer contribution would be, and came up with a dollar per sq. ft. amount that developers will pay when they build. The community decided benefits such as: a fire station, athletic field, transit, intersection improvements and affordable housing. They figured dollars and costs of amenities and money can allocate to City stated priorities. They can work with City to determine any offsets.

Q. Fries- She is interested to know what the SJG would give back to the community. When she spoke with swim groups they did not feel project would benefit them.

A. Puskar- it's difficult to have a conversation around the fees at this point. This facility will need enough members to be sustainable, there will be monthly fees. Facility may not be affordable for everyone. Some people could participate through teams and leagues.

Q. Cromley- Perhaps there could be different pieces with different fee structures.

A. Puskar- there are camps, memberships, leagues, drop in fees; the idea would be to accommodate as many people as possible, and to work with the City of Alexandria to provide opportunities for low income persons. The SJG have committed to starting a foundation to help children in need. Additional scholarships could be discussed.

Dixon said in addition to scholarships, the SJG is committed to using the foundation to promote how participation in athletics and sports competition helps development of youth and health and wellness including that of adults. The SJG is interested in partnering with different organizations within the community to develop innovative programs.

Brune- said the closest Metro station is 1.5 miles away, and there is no bus service to Hensley Field. Access from King St. Metro to area is limited.

Puskar-said there is good access and buses on Eisenhower Ave., and also proximity to metro-rail. A Transportation Management Plan will be completed; could include a discussion of shuttle service.

Q. Hamed- how many fields will there be, her understanding is there will be one turf field that is soccer regulation which can be used for lacrosse, field hockey, etc.

A. Dixon- they will ensure field will be able to handle all regulation sized games. There will also be a field on the track level equivalent size to half the field upstairs.

The Chair asked for comments from each member of the PRC and YSAB, she said a public hearing could be held as early as October.

III. Park and Recreation Commission and Youth Sports Advisory Board Discussion Period.

Park and Recreation Commission Members:

Park and Recreation members generally said that the concept plan presented by the St. James Group is a good idea. However, members expressed several serious concerns with this proposal. Among them, is the taking of public parkland and open space for private use, and, the loss of use of the four public fields at Hensley Park. Brune said the issue of the City giving away parkland is a slippery slope. Cromley said that the charge of the

City and P&RC is to provide recreational opportunities available to everyone in the City. Scholarships are needed at all levels, not just the most needy. Baum said that Hensley is currently available for use by all City residents, proposal is for exclusive use. Coleman said the first step is to discuss the philosophical question of whether the City will move on project prior to any further discussion of fees. Atkins said there is a larger philosophical question that should be addressed first by the City, prior to further discussion which is protection of public parkland and open space in the City. Another great concern discussed was cost, affordability, and access to the facility by the general public and by people who cannot afford membership fees. Schutius said although the facility provides access to things she has to drive to now, she's concerned with cost as she is in high school and doesn't have a lot of money, affordability is a major concern. The proposed provision of scholarships for 50 youth was also a concern expressed, as not being enough and the need to also provide additional incentives. McPherson expressed concern with giving up a large block of useable land (15 acres) in the City. Several members expressed concern with the speed of the process and its move to City Council and said it needs to be slowed down, as this is a long-term decision.

Youth Sports Advisory Board Members:

Simpson-The facility speaks for itself. The question is what the future use of Hensley site is, and can the City upgrade site to add additional amenities there. Currently the fields located there are not artificial turf, and have low use or get rained out. How will open space be impacted. Are there tradeoffs at other facilities? The City has a shortage of fields. Could funds be used to upgrade other fields in City? The project provides additional sports amenities currently not located in City - this is positive from a youth sports prospective. City Council and PRC need to answer questions on open space. Great facility, offers a lot of things the City cannot afford. As a potential compromise perhaps there is a way to keep a public field which is lighted for use for softball or baseball may help cover shortage due to loss of fields.

Rivers- he agrees with Simpson's comments. Until you see the finance side it's hard to make a decision. He appreciates the process Jinks laid out. Realistically the City can't provide these services because of a lack of funding. Have to look at existing use of fields. Regarding access to site is similar as people drive to Hensley currently. From youth sports prospective, we have look at mitigation of loss of use of fields how to ensure they get representation in the facility through negotiations with the City. This is a significant decision due to magnitude of land to be provided to private sector. City already allows private sector to use public land, but on a smaller scale, i.e. bike share program is on public land. There may need to be decision by City Council philosophy before proceeding further.

Hamed- concerned with loss of space. She fights all the time to keep all the turf and grass play areas in City, as there is a shortage of fields. Since she took over program it has doubled in size. Lighted fields increase use by 70%, it has been difficult to get fields lighted in City.

Murphy- his concern is loss of public land that is slated to be used for years. We know what we would be giving up today, but we don't know what we will give up tomorrow. Regarding affordability, he coaches many children that may not be able to afford to use

this facility. He doesn't see how there will be time for all the proposed uses. He has serious concerns with losing what City has, and not knowing what City will get and giving away use of land for such a long term.

Miller – you can't argue with the facility itself. His problem/concern is with the loss of public land, and access by those who use Hensley Park for free now. The City went through similar process in 2006/2007 when proposal for All City Sports Facility. The SJG proposal precludes City doing anything else with land at Hensley. Any lease would probably extend beyond 40 years, if project is successful, this would tie up land at Hensley for a long time. He doesn't see how facility can serve a large number of residents in Alexandria. A lot of people are being cut out of using certain public facilities due to costs.

Wixson- His biggest fear is if the project is unsuccessful, the City would lose money and have land remain vacant. Looking at current field use, the City would lose one rectangular field, and three diamond fields. The St. James Facility would replace rectangular field with an indoor lighted turf field, that could be used more hrs. than used at Hensley today. When it rains the field at Hensley is unusable. City should review the number of hrs. of usage at Hensley field, this could be an area of negotiation, if City receives compensation usage hours in the new Field House, or money could be used to improve other City baseball diamonds? The question of accessibility is neutral; new facility will have similar access as Hensley currently has. The City would gain amenities which they are currently lacking, this is a plus. However, it comes down to affordability, particularly for youth and leagues, will they be able to use it. Will Olympic size pool be priced out of range for swim teams, more details would be needed.

Lavalle- He grew up in Alexandria facility would be wonderful to have. Surrounding jurisdictions have sports facilities. Our children are traveling and using other facilities to do gymnastics, ice hockey. The demand is there for such a facility, the question is should we take this to the next step, he would support further exploration of proposal.

Chair Noritake- Although some people support the overall concept of the SJG proposal, there are a lot reservations. The rumor that devaluation of parkland was done in order to accommodate facility is a false assumption. A few years ago she proposed that large parks be placed under conservation easements because she saw them as under threat from development. The City needs to protect our land. These parks were devalued in assessment under the assumption that they did not have development value; we now know this is not true. The City needs to ask itself how much land is for sale. Puskar said we are going to leverage Hensley for recreational assets the City does not have. The Chair does not believe that the City should use open space to leverage anything. Some people are willing to discuss a middle ground. On the table is the current use of Hensley property-the grass fields are poor condition. A larger issue is the future use of Hensley Park, and the City's vision for this park, if RFP does not go forward. As Chair, she has spent much time doing land conservation, and been heavily involved in writing the City's open space plan. Dedicated money for Open Space Plan has stopped, land is scarce. She stated that for her however, it's an ethical issue. Public open space and park land should never be turned over for private use. Concern has been expressed about this project moving too quickly; PRC is in recess in August, people are on vacation etc. More consideration and information is needed about this proposal, the process and more time is

needed to hold a public hearing. The RFP illustrates a need to improve facilities in the City, particularly with the growth in population. The City needs to maintain the land for future use. She's unsure what to do at this point, but is sure that we need to ask City to slow the process down.

Coleman- start from the premise that there will be an RFP. We are just getting past Beauregard SAP; Eisenhower East is next, there needs to be more space around project.

Baum- she's not sure more time will help. She likes the idea of coming up with an additional field City may have use of, she doesn't feel like more time will change how we feel.

Atkins- said it's not entirely clear that everyone wants to move to RFP process.

Noritake- asked the Sports groups to take the information back to their groups. There is a public hearing planned for October. The PRC's first goal is to lobby for more lights on fields. She agrees with Fries, the political will for certain things has not been strong enough. She will communicate with City Manager City Council what was discussed. We need to hear from the public and sports organizations.

The Chair closed the public hearing.

REGULAR MEETING

Items for Action:

- IV. Approval of Summary Minutes: June 20, 2013 – deferred to September meeting.

Items for Information and discussion:

Item V-D, 6. - Braddock Park Guiding Principles-June 2013: Laura Durham, Open Space Coordinator. The Braddock SAP, calls for a 1.0 acre park on the Wythe St. Post Office lot. The City has acquired ½ acre on the site, they are in the process of working with the Advisory Group in planning the 1.0 acre park; it has been a lengthy process. At meeting in May the group developed Guiding Principles for the park that can be included in an RFP for design consultant. The Guiding Principles were distributed to the Advisory Group without any adverse comments, and will be put on-line for approximately three weeks. The design process will be a public process. There were no questions or comments from the Park and Recreation Commission.

- V. **Division Updates:** To view full copies of staff reports go to (<http://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/recreation/info/PRCJuly182013StaffReport.pdf>)
- A. **Recreation Programs and Service Update** - William Chesley, Deputy Director- See Staff Report. A discussion was held about the possibility of keeping certain outdoor pools open unto fall, due to the temporary renovation of Chinquapin Rec. Center. The Director RPCA said that Old Town Pool will remain open for lap uses. The reason pools are not left open longer is that schools will open soon, and use of pools will decrease, additionally night-time temperatures affects usage, as pool is not heated. Doggy Swim Day will be held-location to be determined.

Feasibility Study on Chinguapin: Following discussion of the SJG proposal, the Director said that RPCA's Park Planning, Design and Capital Development group is working on a Feasibility Study for a 50 meter pool at Chinguapin to go out in September. The first question is does a 50 meter pool fit, if not, explore alternatives. If 50 meter pool does fits, the question is, how to proceed contingent on the St. James Proposal for Hensley, or do we wait until negotiations are completed. The P&RC and the Alexandria for Aquatics group should weigh in on this as soon as possible.

Potomac Yards Landing Sites- See discussion below under commission reports.

B. **Park Operations Report** - Dinesh Tiwari, Deputy Director- See Staff Report.

C. **Marketing, Special Events, Waterfront Operations** - Jack Browand, Division Chief – See Staff Report.

D. **Park Planning, Design & Capital Development Reports – Ron Kagawa, Division Chief and Team Reports:** - See Staff Reports.

1. Active Park Projects including Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) – Update of Selected Projects
2. Active Capital Facilities Maintenance Projects (CFMP) Report – Update on Selected Projects
3. Eisenhower East Carlyle Plaza II – Information Update
4. Chinguapin HVAC Photo Journal – Progress Update
5. Potomac Yard Park – Construction Update
6. Braddock Neighborhood Park Principles – Discussion

VI. **Director's Report** - James Spengler- no updates.

VII. **Attendance and Annual Report due July 31, 2013.** Attendance report for the period of July 1, 2012 through June 20, 2013 will be completed and sent to Rose Boyd, Secretary for Boards and Commissions. Staff will follow-up with completion and submission of the Annual Report.

VIII. **Reports from Commissioners (verbal updates):**

A. **Waterfront Commission** - Gina Baum reported that Landscape Architecture firm, The Olin Studio was hired for the Waterfront Plan. Mr. Olin designed Canal Park. A Feasibility Study is underway to look at closing the 100 block of King St., as part of the Union St. Corridor Plan. Browand said if option proves viable then further design elements would be discussed. Cromley said this idea was tried in the 70's but it didn't work. Baum said maybe a shared street concept would be better. Beachcombers Property- three proposals were received. Boat Tours: the Waterfront Commission will be taking more boat tours: August 13 to Georgetown Park, and August 26 to Diamond Peaks to see the work of Mr. Laurie Olin.

B. **Youth Sport Advisory Board (YSAB)**-Brian McPherson reported that the YSAB discussed lights on tennis courts at T.C. Williams, H.S., Kagawa said the Alexandria City School Board discussed project last week. ACPS is moving forward with the DSUP for tentative discussion at Planning Commission and City

Council in January 2014. DSUP is a major amendment and opens up all conditions for discussion. ACPS intent is for construction to begin in spring 2014.

- C. **Four Mile Run** - Chair Noritake reported an event to be held on Four Mile Run 10 a.m. on Monday Arlington side with the swinging of a sledge hammer to start the demolition of the bridge. Congressman Moran and Mayor Euille are expected to attend. Other – the PRC discussed the power lines around the terminal building. Agreement has been reached to relocate buses. Item will go before the Planning Commission and City Council in September. The PRC has expressed their support for this project. A letter will be written.
- D. **Freedmen’s Cemetery**. No updates.
- E. **ACPS & Capital Improvements** - Judy Guse-Noritake. No updates.
- F. **Community Gardens Policy**- Judy Guse-Noritake. No updates.
- G. **Ft. Ward** - Ripley Forbes. No updates.
- H. **ACPS School Projects**- Judy Guse-Noritake. No updates.
- I. **Jefferson Houston School** – William Cromley. No updates.
- J. **Open Space** - Judy Guse-Noritake. See St. James Proposal
- K. **Braddock Plan Park**- Judy Guse-Noritake. See Report-Item D 6.

Potomac Yards Metro Station Landing Sites-The Chair said that over the summer, the City will be doing more work on the P.Y.’s landing sites project. The P&RC and DRPCA staff toured the landing sites on May 23rd. At the time, discussed landing site alternatives, parking and other transportation issues. None of this is shown on the drawings. The Chair asked if the PRC should write City Council and ask Planning & Zoning to include these options upfront now. Kagawa said negotiations will be done in August. Action: Atkins moved that the PRC write a letter to the Council asking that Planning and Zoning include detailed descriptions of planned landing sites, including whether they include parking, kiss & ride, and taxi stands. Brune seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- IX. **Public Comment Period**: Jack Sullivan, resident, Alexandria, Virginia commented on the St. James Proposal. He said he worked on the Cameron Station project, and is proud of the City doubling the size of open space now known as Ben Brenman Park. He has concerns regarding the project, and the philosophy of using public land for private use. Even discussion of issuing an RFP, sends a wrong signal, that it is appropriate to give public land to private developers. The cost for a family of four to join the East Bank Club in Chicago, IL was \$4,900 the first year including initiation fee, and \$4,200 dollars each year thereafter, many people can’t afford this. The promise of the provision of 50 scholarships is not enough for the number of children who would use these facilities. He plans to make his feelings known to City Council.
- X. Agenda items for September 19, 2013, meeting and location- to be determined.
- XI. List of upcoming public meetings-distributed by email after meeting.

Adjourned: 9:10 p.m.

City of Alexandria
Process to Consider Unsolicited Offer

1. Proposing entity submits summary of unsolicited proposal to the City Manager and submits confidential proprietary proposal details to the City Attorney.
2. City public announcement of receipt of proposal, as well as process and timetable to consider whether or not to create a formal RFP process. City posts public elements of proposal on City's web site.
3. Proposer briefing of community stakeholders including relevant boards and commissions.
4. City staff review of proposal and discussion with stakeholders.
5. City Manager recommendation and City Council decision on whether or not to issue an RFP (first Council Legislative meeting in October is targeted). If yes, then continue. If no, process ends.
6. If process continues, City issues RFP in the fall which any entity can respond to
 - a. RFP needs to satisfy 15.2-2100 et seq. including 40-year maximum lease term
 - b. Formal evaluation criteria to be established and used for evaluation purposes
7. 90 day period for responses to RFP to be submitted.
 - a. Submissions to include details of proposals, financial capability of offerors, proposed business terms, public benefits, etc.
8. Staff review of proposals
 - a. Utilize existing City Real Estate Committee with added subject matter staff.
 - b. Best and final second submission could also be utilized based on the number and quality of the first submissions.
9. Staff recommendation to City Council whether or not to proceed to negotiate an agreement with a proposer deemed to have best met the selection criteria, and if so which proposer.
10. If Council authorizes continuing to contract stage, negotiate at staff level
 - a. Terms and conditions of agreement/lease
 - b. Public use/benefits plan
 - c. DSUP level plans
 - d. Iterative community and stakeholders meetings during planning process
11. Undertake public approval process via Planning Commission and City Council
 - a. Rezoning if needed
 - b. Land lease and business agreements incorporating public use/benefits plan
 - c. Decision on utilization of lease proceeds and tax revenues
 - d. 9.06 process
 - e. DSUP process

June 25, 2013