



CITY OF West Linn

Memorandum

Date: June 18, 2018

To: West Linn City Council

From: Jennifer Arnold, Associate Planner

Subject: Public Testimony submitted for the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan update
(PLN-18-01)

On June 5, 2018 Staff received written testimony from Rebecca Adams expressing concern about draft Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan presented and if the Planning Commission's recommendation was received by City Council.

On June 15, 2018 Staff received written testimony from Rebecca Adams expressing concern about the draft Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan as presented to City Council. Adams also mentions concerns about the Meeting Notes details and video from the Planning Commission's May 16, 2018 public hearing. On June 16, 2018 Staff received further testimony from Rebecca Adams clarifying her June 15, 2018 testimony.

On June 15, 2018 Staff received written testimony from Roberta Schwarz expressing concern about the draft Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan as presented, the lack of public outreach to the Neighborhood Associations, and expressed opposition to the community center/aquatic center.

On June 16, 2018 Staff received written testimony from Alan Smith expressing concern about the draft Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan as presented to City Council. Smith asked for a clearer comparison from the plan presented to the City Council and the plan with corrections recommended by the Planning Commission. Smith also requests serious consideration to the financial challenges facing the City.

Arnold, Jennifer

From: R Adams <radams014@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2018 3:04 PM
To: Walvatne, Gary; Arnold, Jennifer
Cc: City Council
Subject: The PC Recommendation about the Parks Master Plan appear to be absent

Hi Chair Walvatne,

I thought the PC members should be aware that last night was the night that the Planning Consultant and Parks Director presented the Parks Master Plan to the City Council for the first time. I hope each of the PC members were able to watch, but understand that you all already invest a lot of time and can't watch everything. Anyway, I thought it was surprising to see that what was presented appeared to be the exact plan presented to you. What I mean was I was not able to see or hear any reference or note referring to the actual PC recommendations, nor was I able to see that the plan had been altered, though I did not check every alteration you required such as in the budget lines which I cannot actually read due to the small print. I did have to miss 3 minutes of Planner Arnold's introduction. I was playing close attention to the language excluding smaller community centers from the Master Plan, a topic I wrote to you all about a few weeks ago. Interestingly the consultant, who is a very skilled communicator, also explicitly supported this idea of exclusion from both planning and budget without any reference to the PC's objections.

So, I do not quite know what to make of this absence of your recommendations since I think that is actually part of the required process. I definitely got the impression there were some councilpersons who likely had not watched how thoroughly your Commission had considered the plan over those 2.5 hours of your hearing. Luckily Council has not voted on it yet, and they did express some concerns similar to yours, especially about the massive expense of the "Rec Center" which the Director has in the last year renamed as a "Community Center" as more and more support has grown from the smaller Community Centers.

In any case from a legislative stand point, I just do not know what to make of this when your recommendation is nowhere to be seen in the packet or in the testimony given to Council, and yet the Plan is forwarded as if the PC hearing recommendations did not occur. Of course there's lots of good in the Plan, but the consultant actually pushed the very part that you all objected to, and the Director emphasized a few times this is the Parks Board's vision and the PC as if all parks board members endorse it all, and of course no mention of the PC ideas. I understand the Council does not have to follow your recommendation, but for them to not even see/hear your recommendations while the Director and Consultant argue their exclusionary angle seemed a bit like gaming the process.

The Planning Commission not "closing the door" on the smaller centers really meant a lot to the growing number of citizens who value what the smaller centers offer. Our city has recently lost one important non-profit (The Friends of the Library) due to a space/facility issue, and we really may also lose the Community Pre-school and the Food Pantry if nothing is done. To me the non-profits not only help people in need, but provide the opportunity to meaningfully help others. These types of venues for volunteerism are very important to the fabric of our community. So keeping the "door open" as you all discussed with the visionary document really made sense to me.

Possibly, if staff is just not up to the task of forwarding your recommendations, your group could just forward something itself. Or perhaps since the recommendations were apparently skipped, the PC hearing should just be reopened so that your role in the process can be fully completed with recommendations specifically noted in a

transparent record. Possibly this should be discussed at CCI also since it does really have implications for legitimate engagement and due process in Planning if the PC recommendations can be left out like this. Going through the proper steps (due process) is a "technical adequacy" issue that has actual implications for citizen engagement.

Thank you for such time and care devoted to citizens' issues.

I'm really sorry to have to alert you to this puzzling occurrence, but we will be living with this plan for a very long time,

Rebecca Adams
Address on Record

From: R Adams <radams014@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 16, 2018 3:07 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Re: Missing Video from recent Planning Commission Hearing about Parks Master Plan

UPDATE AND CLARIFICATION REGARDING PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING VIDEO LINK:

Dear City Council,

City Manger Stein informed me that one must click on *only* the word "video" to bring up the video record. This actually did work today.

For the record, both Karie Oakes and I previously tried to view the Planning Commission Hearing video and failed, myself trying about four or five times. It seemed to me to be functioning as one link, but it is certainly possible I was not zeroed in quite correctly on the exact spot to get the proper effect. I'm afraid the subtlety of this split link would be lost on the typical citizen if both Ms. Oakes and I were completely stumped by it given that we are both regular users of the city records system. Why this matters is there appears to be a lot of politically motivated misinformation swirling around this entire topic of community centers including a particularly vicious maligning of the Bolton proposal as a private "clubhouse" by a disgruntled former staffer, a characterization quite unfair with respect to the actual proposal which renders benefits to citizens citywide if you believe in things like emergency food services for families and school kids, early childhood education, as well as meeting and classroom space. The electioneering energy around this topic is really getting quite intense and the thoughtful approach of the Planning Commission was something that transcended the political rhetoric in a way respectful of our Comprehensive Plan/s and the general values of the population. It appears the Parks Board is unaware of that a Community Center in Bolton has been part of the Neighborhood Comprehensive plan sine 2006 or 2008, or the citywide value of the current proposal.

The great irony is the plan submitted by the Bolton Taskforce was crafted with much input from the Director of Parks, following his advice and respecting what I think is an informal and arbitrary framework where the community center would not be part of parks at all. I say informal and arbitrary since Sunset and the Adult Community Center are part of Parks, and Bolton Fire Hall for quite a few years now has been used extensively for the storage needs of the Parks Director and some non-profits of his choice, not that those aren't very nice non-profits, but the place in the last two years really looks like a firetrap with combustibles strewn everywhere inside and out. I think we as a city can do better to provide for these favored non-profits and can save the Community Pre-school and Food Pantry as well. With a little wise investment in taking care of what we have we can foster all these non-profits that strengthen the fabric of our community. Or we can turn our backs on some of them and watch them disappear as has recently happened to "The Friends of the Library" which was founded in 1978 and was recently terminally displaced leaving a void in our community.

Whether through Parks or through the Bond I hope we can somehow take care of what we have and extend that care to the various non-profits that add value to our community. It is small minded to pit one non-profit against another, just as it is small minded to pit one neighborhood against another. This only serves those who would profit from contrived political wedge issues. The Planning Commission was right, explicit exclusion of the community centers does not belong in our Parks Master Plan. Also, beware the plan's curiously inflated Budget is not at all "just numbers", so please be careful about the phrasing of the three stage Aquatic Rec Center

Gymnasium idea, as the proposed phrasing is far too leading, too defining of what is likely a fiscally disastrous path.

Again, please require a readable final draft before you sign anything. A page and a half single spaced does not give you the chance to really see the changes in context and the typographic errors to be corrected were not even presented to you, meaning if you agree to this, we have no idea what the final may contain. We are paying a consultant to handle this, surely drafts showing revisions would be part of any professional service worth it's paycheck, so please do not accept anything less than an actual final draft for approval.

Thank you again for your time,

Rebecca Adams
address on file

On Fri, Jun 15, 2018 at 12:24 AM, R Adams <radams014@gmail.com> wrote:

PLEASE ADD AS TESTIMONY FOR CITY COUNCIL HEARING ON THE PARKS MASTER PLAN

Dear Council,

Once again there is something odd to report about our public record. I think this is a Council and CCI matter since without adequate information it is hard for citizens to engage in the Parks Master Planning. As you prepare for the hearing on the Parks Master Plan, I bet some of you will want to review the Planning Commission's hearing. After all we have a well-versed Planning Commission that spent two and a half hours discussing the plan and making specific recommendations. I was just today going to review the tape for the section on community centers. I know Commissioner Farrell said something quite eloquent about them being part of our heritage and he added some reference to this being a mill town historically, a reference I wanted to hear again. Each commissioner said something supportive and interesting, and Commissioner Melten came up with the defining phrase of the evening by suggesting we "keep the door open," a beautiful metaphor when you consider it.

Well, the Planning Commission video is no longer posted at all! Instead are some of those thoroughly aggravating "Meeting notes" that the one staffer does which are so unfairly selective in what is included, in this case the entire substance of citizen testimony is excluded. The four verbal citizen comments are noted in totality this way:

"Kevin Bryck, Alan Smith, Vicki Handy and Don Kingsborough spoke."

Zero substance was related, and Commissioner Farrell's statements about our heritage and the mill town idea which I was trying to review were completely absent. What else could be missing? Commissioner Metlen's complaint that the financial figures did not actually add up is soft-pedaled. I thought he might have actually said he could not in good conscience vote for something which would pass forward such numerical errors. The universal concern about the financial tables being microscopically small so as to be unreadable, that's missing too. This begs the question of whether we as a community were supposed to read the numbers at all.

So these "meeting notes" is the official record that the public or a councilperson will see on the eve of what might be the final hearing or when reviewing the matter into the future. I hope you will ask yourselves why the shorting of the public record is allowed to regularly occur in our town, and how these "meeting notes" have an odd way of spinning things to staff's advantage by marginalizing citizens' ideas and obscuring staff's mistakes or indiscretions, at least those of you keeping up with CCI know about the disappearance of mention of various

staff mistakes that gummed up the land-use process and how the concept of insuring "technical adequacy" arose from the problematic examples which were then missing.

And speaking of staff indiscretions I am only going to say this about the staff's "Proposed Revisions for the Parks Master Plan," the revisions have managed to partially honor your instructions and partly dishonor them by a bit of slippery phraseology which reads like it is probably intended to commit the city to making this Mega Rec Center happen. Look carefully at the proposed language changes and how much it commits to. What I heard you saying in the work session is if the city *were* to consider the various phases of such a large Rec Center, it would need to evaluate very carefully the financial matters because PERS will soon strain our budgets and the voters have not at all wanted to pay for the two or three aquatic Centers proposed before and the staff to run such things.

From public testimony I assume most of you are aware that there is a lot of what looks like political electioneering centering around the denigration of the smaller Community Centers and the posturing over the big Rec idea. This began with the last election and is sure to continue into the next. I just do not see the voters agreeing to the \$65 million dollar money loser, or even a \$13 gymnasium when our district has plenty of gyms. I think it would be cheaper to persuade the School District to rent at a favorable rate those school gyms which we are already paying for via taxes. As skeptical as I am about any money guzzling albatros, I am humbled by Metlen's idea of keeping the door open. I only hope you will discard staff's leading language and use subjunctive phrasing on the matter as in *"If the we someday look into a gymnasium complex, we must really be sure the financials pencil out."*

One last thing, please do not approve this until an actual final finished draft is put in front of you so that you are assured you know what you are approving. The proposed revisions are just not very readable, and are missing the normal features to help you see changes in context. The list of typographical errors is not even included. How are you to know they actually know where the typos are? And what if the numbers still don't add up in the final?

Thank you for consideration of these ideas, and I sincerely hope each of you had the chance to view the Planning Commission Hearing since there was much substance to it.

Rebecca Adams
Address on file

From: Roberta Schwarz <roberta.schwarz@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, June 15, 2018 9:17 AM
To: Axelrod, Russell; Cummings, Teri; Sakelik, Richard; Martin, Bob; Perry, Brenda; City Council
Subject: Community Comments on the proposed Parks Master Plan
Attachments: Community Comments on the proposed Parks Master Plan.docx

Please enter the attached comments as part of the public record for the West Linn City Council hearing on the proposed Parks Master Plan update, PLN-18-01.

Thank you,
Roberta Schwarz

Please enter this email into the Public Record for the City Council Hearing on the agenda item on the Parks Master Plan Update PLN-18-01

Dear Mayor Axelrod and West Linn City Council,

I just reviewed the information available online for the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan. There has been very little citizen input on this plan because there has not been much outreach. This should have been discussed at all eleven Neighborhood Associations and at the most recent meeting of the NAP since it will impact all the people who live in West Linn.

I am very much opposed to the large community center/aquatic center which is once again being proposed in West Linn. Check page 156 for this proposed 16,500 square feet of pool space. How many times does a unified "No" need to be heard? In November of 2013 the people of our city spoke very forcefully when they voted "No" on this idea on Measure 3-432. In an article the Tidings headlined "Pool Measure Sinks by Large Margin" the 76 percent vote against spoke volumes. A recent Poll done by the City in December of 2017 and January of 2018 once again showed support of only 22 percent. That makes it twice in the past 5 years that the people have said that they oppose this idea and by almost the same numbers.

In the past nine years more than 2,000 pools have closed throughout the US. This is according to Mike Nelson, facilities development director for USA Swimming. The substantial expenses that accompany public pools include lifeguard wages, training, and insurance. Construction, maintenance and PERS contributions are also major costs.

Instead, I am in support of smaller community centers which have already been built. They just need to be updated and made ADA compliant. The three that fit the bill are Robinwood, Bolton Fire House, and Sunset Fire Hall.

Neighborhood support for all three of these facilities is solid. Most citizens want you use the three community centers that have already been built in this town and have withstood the test of time. Please do not waste money on new construction when all you need to do is upgrade what we already have in West Linn. I noticed in one of the recent articles on this in the Tidings that there are volunteers ready and willing to help with the needed upgrades.

I respectfully ask that you who will vote on this Parks Master Plan reflect the actual vote of the people and say "No" to the large community center and pool. Please say "Yes" to reusing what we already have in the three community centers.

Thank you for considering this request,

Roberta Schwarz
West Linn

From: Alan Smith <aalansmith57@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 16, 2018 8:26 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Concern when reading the proposed changes written by the Parks staff

Dear Honorable City of West Linn Council,

I read the summation of changes written by the Parks staff as recommended by the Planning Commission, and passed out at the Parks Board meeting. Astonishingly they passed a resolution 4-1 to approve the Master Plan AS WRITTEN!

As far as I know, the majority never even asked for a draft that incorporated the PC recommendations! Unbelievable that the Parks Staff chose to do a half truth on the Parks Board. Presenting only a summation of the PC recommendations to the Parks Board was at best disingenuous.

Three things I ask you to please seriously implement:

- 1) The production of the full plan in a side by side format, with the PC recommendations, be made available to you BEFORE you discuss the fate of the Master Plan.
- 2) The production of the full plan in a side by side format, with the PC recommendations be made available on the front page of the city's web site.
- 3) That PERS is a huge challenge and the city needs to work out the full financial burden to the tax payer before any proposed aquatic/gymnasium be included in this Parks Master Plan.

Given the thousands of tax dollars spent on this plan the professional arrangers of the document should be held to the highest standard. When working with important documents, a production of a side by side draft is common practice. I don't know if there is already one, and the Parks Staff chose to withhold it from the Parks Board.

It is my hope that City Council can find their way to agree to implement the Planning Commission recommendations *in toto*.

Thank you for your service,

Sincerely,
Alan Smith
West Linn Resident
address on file