

Special Meeting

May 5, 2015

At the call of President Glen Marcum, the Joliet Park District Board of Commissioners met for a Special Meeting on Tuesday, May 5, 2015 at the Hartman Recreation Center, 511 N. Collins Street, Joliet, IL 60432. The meeting began at 6:00pm.

Pledge to the Flag

The Pledge to the Flag was led by Vice President Schultz.

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Marcum, Schultz, Broderick, Gould, Gulas

Commissioners Absent: None

A. Discussion of the East Side Recreation Center

Dominic Egizio, Chief Executive Officer, stated that the Board would allow an extra ten to fifteen minutes to view the different designs of the new East Side Recreation Center and write down any comments on the comment sheets. Mr. Egizio encouraged everyone to write down comments because the Joliet Park District takes the suggestions seriously. The building is for the residents and it is important that the design fits the needs of the residents. Mr. Egizio also stated there is a sign in sheet for anyone wishing to address the Board.

The public did not need to take additional time to review the drawings. Mr. Egizio introduced Daniel Atilano from Dewberry Architects.

1. Daniel Atilano, Dewberry Architects Inc.

Mr. Atilano went through the presentation. Main features for the recreation center would be turf fields for soccer, baseball and lacrosse, walking track, fitness center with locker-rooms, multipurpose rooms and child care area. The Romeoville Recreation Center and the Lockport Facility were shown as examples for the turf fields and the inside space for the front desk and fitness center.

Mr. Atilano talked about the different uses of the multi-purpose rooms; such as child and adult programs, low impact exercise classes, playing cards and birthday parties.

Mr. Atilano presented pictures for the child care room. Mr. Egizio stated that the child care is not an all-day child care. It will be for a limit of an hour and 45 minute while patrons exercise.

Mr. Atilano showed drawings and pictures of Nowell Park as the site for the East Side Recreation Center. Mr. Atilano stated the Joliet Park District wanted to get the public's opinion on the four different designs and location of the East Side Recreation Center at Nowell Park. All of the designs show that the recreation center will be in the same area as the bath house. Mr. Atilano stated that a survey will still need to be conducted to have a better idea of what is underneath the site location.

Mr. Atilano continued the presentation by going over each site location at Nowell Park. Site A would take up 4.1 acres and have 115 parking spaces. The building would be where the current bath house is located. Site B would take up 3.0 acres and have 104 parking spaces. The building would be where the current parking lot is located. Site C would take up 3.0 acres and have 76 parking spaces. The bath house would remain but will be untouched. The money from the referendum is only for a new facility. Site D would take up 3.7 acres and have 74 parking spaces. The building would be located where the bath house and pool is located but closer to the street than Site A.

Mr. Egizio finished the presentation by stating that the sites and drawings are only a rough idea and that the Joliet Park District is looking for feedback from the residents.

B. Opportunity for the Public to Speak – 3 minute time limit

Archie Gavin, 221 Belmont Avenue, stated that he has known Nowell Park for fifty years. Mr. Gavin stated that he likes all plans except one which is the one that keeps the old building. Mr. Gavin said he is familiar with the bath house because he was part of a program called First Tee, which used the bath house. Mr. Gavin stated that he feels that the bath house has no significance and should not be kept.

Sharon Merwin, 922 N. Raynor Avenue, Joliet Historic Preservation Commission, stated that she has been talking with the Joliet Park District about the historical significance of the pavilion, bath house and pool. Ms. Merwin gave a brief history of the bath house and the architect Webster Tomlinson. Ms. Merwin expressed that the building is unique to Joliet and the hope is that any new building at Nowell Park will have the same features as the bath house incorporated into the design.

Mr. Egizio stated that he met with the city manager. The hope is to keep the pavilion and if the bath house was torn down, the Joliet Park District would be able to feature story boards about the history of the bath house.

Kay Bolden, 454 S. Joliet Street, Warren-Sharpe Community Center, stated that she uses Nowell Park doing the summer with the kids. Ms. Bolden's concern was the impact that the new building would have on the creek but now sees that the site will not affect the creek. Ms. Bolden asked the Board to consider provisional protocol for the kids and families who currently use the park but would not be able to afford the cost of the facility.

Sara Broadnax, 500 4th Avenue, stated her concern is the cost of the facility and having senior programs.

Geraldo Ruiz, 361 2nd Avenue, stated that his concern is the availability of the soccer fields and the cost of the facility. Mr. Ruiz is a soccer coach and stated that it is hard to find an indoor facility to coach soccer.

Ranona Dixon, 306 Schorie, stated that her concerns are having a place to play basketball for a reasonable cost. Ms. Dixon stated that she does not play lacrosse or soccer and would rather see activities like basketball for minority children.

Ritha Seabron, 2201 Spencer Road, asked if there was any consideration for an indoor swimming pool because there is no swimming facilities on the east side.

Hal Carlstrom, Joliet resident, stated that he is an architect and has lived in Joliet his whole life. Mr. Carlstrom stated that the bath house will never be a bath house again and at best it would be a washroom storage area. The only importance of the bath house is the historical significance of the building. Mr. Carlstrom gave a brief description and history of the mission style of the bath house. Mr. Carlstrom addressed the Board about having ice-skating at the retention pond. Mr. Carlstrom also asked the Board to consider looking at a triangle portion of forest area of the park to be use for a recreation area.

Fr. Raymond Lescher of Sacred Heart Church in Joliet stated that his concern is that there are two soccer fields. Father Lescher stated that he knows very little black children that play soccer but they do play basketball. Father Lescher would like a basketball court in the Center the day it opens; not in the future. Father Lescher asked about what the gym rental cost for the facility.

Saul Black, Joliet resident, asked about a walking trail and bike trail at Nowell Park.

Amy Sanchez, Joliet resident, stated that she is hearing from everyone tonight that there is a need for diversity with the programs that are offered at the Recreation Center. Ms. Sanchez made a suggestion that the Joliet Park District continues to include the community.

Mary Robinson, Joliet resident, stated that she is confused about the lacrosse field. There is a need for basketball courts for the kids to play.

Denise Winfrey, Will County Board Member, stated that the basketball courts are a necessity. Ms. Winfrey appreciates the Joliet Park District showing the plans but it needs to continue and have additional meetings. Ms. Winfrey mentioned Forest Preserves plans about extending the trail near Nowell Park.

C. Board Comments

President Marcum thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and stated that the Joliet Park District prides ourselves on listening to the community. President Marcum also thanked Terry D'Arcy for all of his support. President Marcum wanted the residents to understand that the goal for the Joliet Park District is that the East Side Recreation Center meets the needs of the residents while generating enough revenue to be self-sufficient.

Ms. Dixon asked the Board if they would consider a major sponsor for the new recreation center like Presence Hospital sponsors the Inwood Athletic Club. President Marcum stated that he would love to see sponsors for the new facility.

President Marcum invited the residents to attend Board Meetings which are held every month on the fourth Monday.

D. Adjournment

With all agenda items discussed, a motion was made by Vice President Schultz, seconded by Commissioner Gulas, to adjourn the meeting. The motion unanimously carried. The time was 6:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dominic P. Egizio, Jr.
Board Secretary