

Pleasant Hill Library Task Force Meeting Notes

Meeting Date: **October 13, 2015**

Small Community Room, Pleasant Hill City Hall, 100 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

Attendees:

- Michael Harris, Pleasant Hill City Council
- Sue Noack, Pleasant Hill City Council
- Lisa Chow, Supervisor Mitchoff's Office
- Sandy Bonato, PH Recreation & Park District Board
- Sherry Sterrett, PH Recreation & Park District Board
- Jack Prosek, Pleasant Hill Library Fund
- David McDonald, Friend of the Library
- Bill Bankert, Planning Commission
- Mitch Avalon, consultant, Contra Costa County Flood Control District
- Wendy Gollop, resident
- Diane Longshore, resident
- Jeff McDaniel, MDUSD
- Jessica Hudson, County Librarian
- Patrick Remer, PH Library
- Susan Weaver, Friends of the Library
- Norman VanHole, PH Citizens for Responsible Growth
- Mike Lay, resident
- June Catalano, City Manager
- Danielle Habr, City staff
- Martin Nelis, City staff

Public Comment

Mike Lay asked that the Task Force consider the possibility of locating an urban food forest adjacent to the new library facility.

Update from Contra Costa County staff

Mitch Avalon reported that the County's disposition process for the three County-owned parcels includes informing other public agencies of the plan to sell the properties. The County had received one response to this public noticing from the PH Recreation & Park District which had expressed an interest in purchasing the 10-acre site at 1700 Oak Park Blvd. The County has now entered into a 90-day negotiating period with the Rec & Park District. This period will end on December 17, 2015. The County's position is to sell the property at its fair market value. Mr. Avalon stated that if the property is sold to the Rec & Park District, it might impact the financing of the library building.

Jack Prosek questioned why the County took so long to mail out the letters notifying other agencies of the disposition of the properties. He asked when the schedule for the planning and development process would be available. In response, Mr. Avalon replied that the Dahlin Group

has been selected as the planning consultant but their contract still has to be approved by the Board of Supervisors. One of the first tasks of the consultant would be to develop a schedule.

David Mc Donald asked what the Rec & Park District's plan was for the Oak Park site, if it was successful in purchasing it. Boardmembers Bonato and Sterrett stated that the site would be used to build additional ballfields. They also stated that the district was looking at potential funding sources to purchase the property and that the district was using its own appraiser to value the property.

Councilmember Noack stated that her biggest concern was that the Rec & Park District's attempt to purchase the property could potentially impact funding to build a new library. Ms. Sterrett responded that the district was sensitive to the needs of the library, however, in so much as the district wants to support a new library, its mission was to provide sports and recreational activities; but if the two could be matched together, they could be good partners. She also stated the district could bring support from the community and that the district has an obligation to its voters to do what's best for them.

Chair Harris asked about the timeframe for negotiations between the County and the Rec & Park District. Ms. Bonato responded that the negotiations must be completed within 90 days which would end in mid-December. She stated that the financing of the library has been speculative and that she doesn't feel that the district's desire to purchase the Oak Park property would necessarily impact the financing of the library.

Chair Harris asked Jeff McDaniel if there was anything to report on the Pleasant Hill Middle School track area property. He replied that it had been discussed very briefly in closed session with the MDUSD board and that the board had asked for a proposal to be presented in an open meeting of the board. County staff were working on this proposal now.

Reports from Sub-committees

Needs Assessment

Chair Harris reported that a library consultant would be brought into the discussion in the near future. The subcommittee discussed how to respond to outside groups seeking space in a new library facility including the Friends of the Library, the PH Historical Society and the Genealogy group. All three groups would be invited to the next meeting of the subcommittee. The group also discussed presenting a revised 'bubble diagram' of the library spaces and uses at the next meeting.

David McDonald expressed a concern that was prevalent among some residents that the County was driving the process in regard to the size and site location of a new library facility. Chair Harris responded that he also heard such concerns but that everything was a coordinated effort and that the Task Force was working cooperatively with the County. He stated that people need

to remember that the County owns the properties in question. Jessica Hudson stated that a library in the range of 20,000 to 25,000 square feet would be sufficient to meet the needs of a Pleasant Hill community library. Ms. Bonato pointed out that the new Community Center was around 20,000 square feet and was very spacious.

Jack Prosek stated that the current 'bubble diagram' showing space usage did not include spaces for the Historical Society, the Genealogy Group, and a café. Chair Harris responded that after visiting other libraries, the Needs subcommittee concluded that cafés at libraries generally did not prove financially viable and that the space could be used for other purposes. He stated that the Task Force remained flexible in terms of the space usage but at this point no commitments could or should be given to outside groups but that they would be given the opportunity to meet with the Needs Subcommittee to give input on why they should be included in a new facility.

Outreach Subcommittee

Patrick Remer reported on the Citywide Read program at the library which occurs during October. He played several audio clips of young library users which would be used in a new promotional and outreach video.

Funding Subcommittee

Jessica Hudson reported that the Funding Subcommittee would be meeting to discuss funding possibilities before the next Task Force meeting.

Future Meetings

The Task Force agreed to meet again at 11:00 a.m. on November 9, 2015.

The Task Force adjourned at 12:10 pm.