

**MINUTES  
CITY OF SARATOGA  
CITY COUNCIL JOINT STUDY SESSION  
CITY COUNCIL & PLANNING COMMISSION**

**AUGUST 27, 2007**

Vice Mayor Waltonsmith called the Study Session meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Councilmembers Jill Hunter, Kathleen King, Chuck Page, Vice Mayor Ann Waltonsmith  
Planning Commissioners Joyce Hlava, Manny Cappello, Rishi Kumar, Robert Kundtz, Susie Nagpal, Linda Rodgers and Yan Zhao

**ABSENT:** Mayor Aileen Kao  
Planning Commissioner Yan Zhao arrived at 6:00PM

**ALSO PRESENT:** Dave Anderson, City Manager  
Barbara Powell, Assistant City Manager  
Richard Taylor, City Attorney  
Ann Sullivan, Deputy City Clerk  
Michael Taylor, Interim Recreation Director  
John Cherbone, Public Works Director  
John Livingstone, Community Development Director

**REPORT OF CITY CLERK ON POSTING OF AGENDA FOR AUGUST 27, 2007**

Ann Sullivan, Deputy City Clerk, reported that pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2, the agenda for the meeting of August 27, 2007 was properly posted on August 21, 2007.

**1. DIRECTION REGARDING ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS RELATED TO A PROJECT PROPOSAL FOR THE USE OF NORTH CAMPUS**

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Accept report and direct Staff accordingly.

Michael Taylor, Interim Recreation Director, presented staff report. Michael Taylor also provided a detailed cost analysis handout addressing the North Campus CDC Gymnasium Construction Costs.

Discussion continued regarding costs and how specific improvements to the North Campus would affect cost.

Planning Commissioners asked to be brought up to par and needed clarification as to what had transpired previously for the project to be at the current stage. Michael Taylor explained that a Council Study Session had been held on June 27, 2007 to ask Council for direction regarding a conceptual proposal received from Alan and Lisa Beck for the use of the North Campus. At that meeting Council directed staff to conduct parking and environmental studies; schedule a Joint Study Session with the Planning Commission the end of August; and invite the public to participate in the discussion. The meeting was scheduled for August 27, 2007; was noticed and meeting notices were mailed to residents within 500 feet of the North Campus property.

Michael Taylor stated that tonight's meeting was being held to discuss detailed costs of the conceptual proposal and that staff needed direction on specific project items regarding the Beck proposal. He also discussed setback requirements, parking, traffic analysis, design review and environmental reviews.

Vice Mayor Waltonsmith stated the Beck's would provide more detailed information in their presentation.

Planning Commission Susie Nagpal asked how staff went about getting a conceptual design plan.

Councilmember Page stated Council asked for anyone to come up with an "idea" for the front half of the property and explained how the proposal process is done and the different conceptual designs that were received.

Michael Taylor responded that the City received nine conceptual proposes.

Planning Commissioner Yan Zhao asked how the decision was made to go with the proposed conceptual design.

Vice Mayor Waltonsmith stated the decision was made to go with what seemed do-able for the front half of the property.

City Manager Dave Anderson commented that Council direction to staff was to solicit proposals for use of the front half of the property only.

Vice Mayor Waltonsmith then introduced Alan Beck. Mr. Beck went on to explain their proposal and that their goal was to turn the property into a point of gatherings for community events. Mr. Beck continued to explain the exterior of the buildings would be made of a steel/tin type material along with the use of stucco on the exterior. Mr. Beck showed samples of flooring that could be used and explained the cost difference between various types of flooring, noting that wood flooring is more expensive. Mr. Beck noted that the total proposed conceptual design comes to \$1,217,500.00 and that the Beck's would fund an additional \$100K in Child Development Center (CDC) items such as; cots, mats, etc., and would have the Center ready for immediate move in and use condition. Vice Mayor Waltonsmith invited public comments.

The following people requested to speak on this item:

Bill Ford – asked if a poll of the residents had ever been done regarding the North Campus.

City Manager Dave Anderson stated that a poll of the community did take place in 2005; which resulted in citizens wanting a gymnasium.

Bill Ford commented that he didn't care for the proposed use of steel/tin for the exterior; and that the buildings would always look like a steel/tin building no matter how much stucco was used. Mr. Ford also stated his concern about the fact that a hundred kids coming in would bring 200 cars coming in and circulating the building. He asked if there was some other way to approach this problem.

David Egglestone – stated the Planning Commission appears not to be up to speed and had a lot of questions. The community didn't have a lot of input and that we really need to first determine just what is needed and then go out to bid on that information – have more bids. Mr. Egglestone doesn't feel this proposal is in line with the neighborhood; variances not in line with what the neighborhood is; and the samples shown this evening are more in line with a “school” neighborhood, not a residential neighborhood. Mr. Egglestone also had concerns regarding injury liability in a gymnasium.

Councilmember King asked Mr. Egglestone what he would like to see at the North Campus. Mr. Egglestone said he would like to see a Senior Center at North Campus.

Howard Miller – stated that we all need day care centers at some time and that a day care would be nice as well as a arts facility. Mr. Miller asked who is going to manage this project and felt the City should be the one running the project – not a private firm.

Doug Robertson – stated he is a structural engineer and is very concerned about steel buildings and the City needs to scrutinize the appearance of whatever is used. He noted that maintenance is very low on steel; but you need to have the look and feel for Saratoga. He also noted that there is a tremendous need for a gym in this community and that it would get a lot of use; however, the seniors should have something also and recommended a joint use –for seniors and youth. (Mr. Robertson offered his professional services, if needed).

Councilmember King stated both seniors and youth would be able to use the North Campus facility.

Marc Hoffman – feels strongly about community sports for children and encourages Council to go forward with the gym proposal.

Tom Saari – supports what Council wants to do to provide places for activities; but must look at what the proposed plan will do as far as hundreds of cars entering and exiting the property as well as traffic issues occurring on Prospect Avenue.

Councilmember King asked Mr. Saari what he would like to see on the property and his response was that he would have liked to see houses built; and also likes the multi-use facility for both seniors and youth.

Roger Piazza – stated he has several issues. Parking, kids screaming and cars in and out of the property and suggests a sound wall around the property. If a gym is constructed – who is going to control it? It is important to know what affect it will have on the neighborhood.

Sujatha Bodapati – stated her family is very concerned about the traffic and noise; people hanging out in the parking lot; and people throwing things over the fences into yards. When asked by Councilmember King what she would like to see on the property, Ms. Bodapati replied with something that would not generate a lot of traffic and noise; a senior center would be ideal.

Karlina Ott – stated that this reminds her of Kevin Moran Park in many ways. People have to live with change and she likes the proposal and that it would be a nice facility for kids. It would also bring in tax dollars.

Catherine Seng (no speaker card) – likes the proposal; lets move forward.

Sue Cohn (no speaker card) – stated it is a good idea to have a multi-use facility; and is surprised at a gym proposal. Would like to see something that serves seniors more.

Councilmember Page asked what kind of senior activities she supports and Ms. Cohn responded a large meeting room for arts, crafts, dancing, etc. – rather than a gym.

Councilmember Page stated that the current remodel would accommodate the meeting room needs, and we are looking at the front half of the property for now.

Vice Mayor Waltonsmith closed the public speaking portion at 8:09PM.

Vice Mayor Waltonsmith asked the Planning Commissioners to voice their concerns:

- Rishi Kumar – Re-design site to minimize traffic; need more alternatives.
- Manny Cappello – Aesthetic/design concerns; traffic flow; parking issues; sound wall. Feels this is a great project and recommends we move forward.
- Susie Nagpal – Concern of quasi-public facility use in a middle of residential area. Likes the gym idea and feels there is a need for a daycare also. Has concerns about where the Planning Commission is in the project compared to the Council and feels there should be more public outreach.

Concerned about the façade – can't have an industrial appearance; has traffic and parking concerns.

- Robert Kundtz – Would like to encourage Planning Commission and Council to button down the process – starting with appointment or hiring of project manager to handle nature of the project, sensitivities of neighbors, traffic, parking; etc., in order to have a better understanding of what the community would like to see on this property.
- Yan Zhao – Feels gym/child care could be a good fit for this location. Has concerns about a steel look as well as noise and traffic getting in and out of property.
- Linda Rodgers – Stated this is a beautiful lot and the beauty must be preserved as much as possible; must preserve the trees. Would like to see quality design with both exterior and interior and stated a commercial appearance would not be good in a residential area.  
Conditional Use Permit: concerns about hours of operation. Construction of sound wall would have to be aesthetically appealing. Feels the proposed design is good for this site, but encourages more input regarding gym.
- Joyce Hlava – Concerns about trees coming down; has difficulty with taking down a tree when residents are told they can't remove a tree. Has concerns about parking; if parking is in back and people are walking to front of facility, feels a "drop off" and traffic queing would be better. Has concerns about the height; pre-fab structural buildings. Suggests staff find some pre-fab buildings and have Planning Commissioners take a look at them to get a better idea of what the proposed design will look like. The exterior needs to fit into the community. Has signage and noise issues as well. Has gym concerns and that we may end up with a gym we don't like.

Vice Mayor Waltonsmith thanked the commissioners for their input.

Interim Director Michael Taylor asked for direction to staff.

Councilmember King then asked Planning Commissioners what they would like to see on the site.

Robert Kundtz stated 1.2 million is a very low price of construction for what was presented and feels Mr. Beck should spend some money to provide better estimates. Would like to see a multi-purpose room and feels traffic and sound concerns are real issues.

Jill Hunter has a lot of reservations about the project, including money issues and traffic concerns, and feels more research should be done for more ideas for the North Camp. Mrs. Hunter also has concerns about pre-fab buildings; feels they are not attractive and doesn't believe the proposed project can be done for \$1.2 million.

Susie Nagpal stated we should get more input from the community and see what they would like at the North Campus. Also feels the cost would be higher than projected.

Chuck Page stated he would like to have a citizens group help decide what can be done with the property. He also stated he has reservations about the \$1.2 million figure. Mr. Page noted he would like to see something that seniors can use and thought this was a good “first step” in getting everyone engaged in this project; but would have to be realistic about what we can do financially.

Linda Rodgers suggested doing things in sequence with the money that is available.

Joyce Hlava feels the gym is a good idea in terms of low impact use; but feels money and design issues are concerns for everyone.

Councilmember King stated that she had assumed the Planning Commission was at the same stage in the North Campus planning process as the Council and feels we should have more of these meetings with the Planning Commission. She also feels the Becks came up with the gym idea because it was brought to them by Council and suggested maybe they could present more ideas with more of a multi-purpose use.

Vice Mayor Waltonsmith would like to move forward with the Beck proposal and would like money put towards a sound wall and sewer and water upgrades. Suggested staff work with Mr. Beck for a longer contract and feels we should go forward with the site proposal and mitigate the issues brought up this evening.

Councilmember King noted she would like to add to Vice Mayor Waltonsmith’s comments in that she would not like to see the public having voted to keep the property and in 20 years still see these dilapidated front two buildings; and the buildings deteriorating. Councilmember King agrees we need to move forward.

Councilmember Page stated he would like to see us move forward; keeping in mind that we do need more public input.

City Manager Dave Anderson noted the environmental impact is a concern voiced by most everyone that spoke this evening and we would need money to do a formal Environmental Impact Study. He also stated staff could research additional architectural plans with the Beck’s and bring it back to another Joint Meeting.

Councilmember Hunter stated that before we do architectural plans we need to take a look at these types of proposed buildings. We need to take our time and do it right and do it well; build a nice building instead of a manufactured building. Councilmember Hunter suggested going for a bond measure to support the North Campus.

Vice Mayor Waltonsmith stated people are usually not in favor of bonds and that we move forward with the proposal.

Councilmember Page stated that by moving forward – it doesn't necessarily mean the buildings are being built. He feels the Beck's will have to do more and will have to put some money into it.

Vice Mayor Waltonsmith ended the discussion by stating the consensus is to direct staff to work with the applicant on the environmental impact issues and schedule another Joint Meeting with the Planning Commission.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There be no further business Vice Mayor Waltonsmith adjourned the Joint Meeting at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Sullivan, CMC  
Deputy City Clerk