

DRAFT Meeting Summary

Project: Town Park and Community Center Master Plan
Date Prepared: February 2, 2007
Date of Meeting: January 29, 2007
Meeting Purpose: Public Workshop #3 – review of revised concept design alternatives

A public workshop was held from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. on January 29, 2007, at the Corte Madera Recreation Center. The purpose of the workshop was to review the revised concept alternatives for the Town Park and Community Center Master Plan. Three alternatives (“Concepts A, B, and C”) were presented. The alternatives consisted of revisions of the preliminary concepts that were presented to the public at Workshop #2, held on October 16, 2006. Copies of the alternative plans are included at the end of this summary.

A total of 104 people signed in at the front table. Meeting agendas, copies of the plans, copies of meeting minutes from community workshop #2, and comment sheets were given out at the table. Not all present signed in, and the total attendance is estimated at 135 to 150. When asked for a show of hands, approximately 90% of participants indicated being residents of nearby neighborhoods.

The workshop was structured in four segments. An open house was held from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m. This allowed participants to circulate, review the concept plans and other supporting background information posted on the walls, and ask questions of Town Staff, elected officials, and consultants. The second part of the meeting included an introduction by Mayor Melissa Gill, followed by a presentation of the revised concepts by consultants Bill Harris of Harris Design Landscape Architects, and Janet Tam and Trina Goodwin of Noll & Tam Architects. Following the presentation, participants broke into 10 small groups with 10 to 15 participants each. The groups evaluated the alternatives, identified and discussed project issues, and expressed preferences. In the final portion of the meeting, all participants assembled for summary reports given by a spokesperson from each small group, followed by general discussion and public comments.

A copy of the meeting’s PowerPoint presentation is available on the Town web site (www.ci.corte-madera.ca.us).

The following is a summary of the small group discussion, followed by a transcription of comments received during the large group discussion. A matrix summary of the small group results is presented at the end of this report, followed by the alternative plans and reproductions of the meeting notes from the large group discussion. Copies of the revised alternatives are included at the end of this report.

Small Groups

Each group self-organized, appointing a facilitator, recorder, timekeeper, and spokesperson. The groups had approximately 25 minutes to work. Individuals in each group were provided with a red dot, green dot, and blue dot, to be placed on the alternative which they most preferred in terms of its community center design, park design, and the way in which the alternative related to the Park Madera Center property respectively. They also were provided with post-it notes on which to write additional comments. The following notes are transcribed from the spokespersons' presentations.

Group 1

- Concerned about parking in Scheme C, possibly not enough
- Turf drainage needs improvement
- Relocation of skatepark is not a good use of funds
- Splash pool not desired
- 7 of 11 group members preferred scheme A; 1 preferred scheme B, none for scheme C

Group 2

- 6 preferred scheme B; 3 preferred scheme A with size reduced to existing footprint; none for scheme C; 2 wanted a scheme D – yet to be developed
- None wanted a 25,000 SF building
- People like the way scheme A had the entrance away from the street, how it handled the parking, and how it could be developed with Park Madera later
- Parking is best in scheme B
- Don't move skate park
- Don't make building so big it requires revenue – too commercial

Group 3

- Opposed to all the concepts
- Concerns: building is too big; loss of green space; parking expansion at Pixley
- Skatepark is not good at corner – too dangerous; noise too close to neighbors
- Neil Cummins School needs expansion and could compete with this project for funding
- More fields will work against local use of the park; park should serve locals
- 80% of the group opposed to any new development at all

Group 4

- Understand that some improvements are necessary; question is what can we live with?
- 25,000 SF may be OK, but would prefer a smaller building
- We are still unclear about what the community center will be used for, what type of spaces and activities
- Do not favor a new location for the building especially with Park Madera opportunity

- Town residents are the first priority
- What is the cost and benefit?
- Why a splash park?
- Why an amphitheater?
- Sound proofing the skate park is essential

Group 5, subgroup 5A

- (All of the subgroup members are neighbors)
- Need to research adequate parking numbers to support a larger building
- Skate park on corner is problematic – Chapman and Tamalpais is a dangerous intersection
- Lion's club should have input
- Did not like any of the plans
- Keep building entrance away from Tamalpais
- Basketball near tennis courts is good idea
- Fields arrangement on scheme C is preferred
- Why an amphitheater?

Group 5, subgroup 5B

- No one was willing to express preference for any of the schemes
- What is a park vs. a commercial space?
- Concern re: rentals of the park space
- Large size building requires lots of parking – how much parking is necessary exactly?
- Need to understand the parks and recreation programs needs in order to design the park and community center

Group 6

- Scheme B is preferred by majority of group for both building location and park design
- Minority of group opposed to any new development because: lack of specifics on funding presented at this meeting; questioned the planning process to date, has it been fair and inclusive; questioned overall cost of the project; questioned why Park Madera schemes a=only show parking and not new buildings
- Drainage will be expensive to fix
- Why and amphitheater?
- Skate park should be larger – it is too small now, kids get bored of it
- Restrooms needed near play area
- Group expressed a lot of negativity about the process, however this was not every group member's view

Group 7

- Included younger residents
- Scheme B preferred because it gives a new building but in the same location
- Fewer fields needed

- Skatepark should be bigger and better – kids use it every day
- What if there was a teen center here?

Group 8

- Have lots of questions about the 25,000 SF size
- No splash pool
- Less regional use, more local
- Pool – joint agreement with School District is good
- Split between scheme A and B; 3 for scheme C
- Skatepark should remain in current location, needs better noise buffer
- Do the plans show enough parking?
- Park users use post office lot as overflow
- Like the fields in scheme C

Group 9

- Prefer a variation on all schemes
- Scheme C building is too close to the corner, pedestrian crossing would be too dangerous
- Prefer a size in between existing and 25,000 SF
- Need more restrooms
- No splash play
- Keep skatepark as is
- Prefer natural grass, not artificial turf
- Prefer scheme B for the building

Group 10

- Too much impact on the neighbors
- Can noise be reduced?
- Is the Town paying for facilities that serve other cities' residents, not locals?
- Need a dog park
- Can we have public representation on the steering committee?

Large Group Discussion

Following the summary reports by the small group spokespeople, a general discussion was facilitated. The following comments were recorded, and are grouped according to topic.

The Planning Process

1. Take a long term approach. 8 years does not seem like too long a time. Renovate and reorient the existing building, then determine how to expand into the Park Madera Center property later.
2. A 17,000 SF building was proposed last time, and it failed 65% to 35%. People thought it was too big. What makes us think this larger building will pass? Recommend refurbishing the interior. Expand toward Park Madera later.

The last bond measure divided the community and was a negative experience for everyone. Listen to the community or it will lose.

3. Questions the process – what will happen with all of this information? Do we really have a say? If you get private funding, will the public have a say? How will this information be synthesized?
4. Keep the community informed incrementally as the process proceeds.

Community Center Building

5. Have not seen anything that justifies a need for a larger facility. Where is the hard data?
6. It is essential to get something done now. What we had is disappearing. The heart of any community is a place to come together. Need to work on a sense of community.
7. The existing Lion's Club building has charm. It has history and karma. It would be a shame to lose it. We don't need a glitzy center like Mill Valley. Fix the existing building. Possible expansion.
8. We are losing our sense of community. The 25,000 SF building is justified based on the 8,000 SF built for a much lower population 50 years ago.
9. Revisit the original plan of 1998. It was more modest.
10. Initially preferred a renovation. Now will consider a new building, but needs to know costs for various alternative sizes to make a decision. Need more choices.

Skatepark

11. Skate Park gets a lot of use; is a valuable resource for young people.

Local vs. Non-Local Use

12. Is the plan for Corte Madera residents? Seems like more of a commercial enterprise for the Town to raise money. Plan does not address Corte Madera's needs.
13. Local people should be promoted to use the park. Do we need the 25,000 SF facility to serve the local population?

User Behavior

14. Concern about crime at the park. Dense vegetation obscures views. Skatepark and bathrooms may encourage crime. Plan may attract more people and outsiders to the park.

Parking

15. New parking will impact the neighborhood with noise, light, and traffic.
16. Not happy that the expanded parking scheme on Pixley was not reduced from the last meeting. The public did not like the expanded parking on Pixley at the last meeting as stated by the consultant.

Passive Open Space

17. Love the openness of the park.
18. Keep the "window" into the green space from Tamalpais Drive open.

19. Resident on Tamalpais loves the green window to the park.
20. Removal of any green space is a problem.

Dog Use/Dog Park

21. Dog owners want to use the park, animals are prohibited currently.

Funding and Implementation

22. What is the budget? How will it be funded?
23. How much money has been spent so far?
24. Other Corte Madera areas need funds too. Erosion, flooding. Maintain funds for these needs.
25. Questions the time assumptions given in the cost estimate (two years' escalation). This will take 7 years. Do a renovation instead. Reuse the youth center site for a new building. It will last for 10 years until Park Madera becomes available. Get a more immediate result.
26. Put in toilets at tot lot now, with the available cost recovery funding.

SUMMARY MATRIX – SMALL GROUP EXERCISE

“red” dot = community center location

“green” dot = park layout

“blue” dot = relationship between the park and community center, with the hypothetical future development of the Park Madera Center property

Post-it notes were provided for additional comments.

	Red	Green	Blue	Comments
GROUP 1				
Scheme A	0	1	0	"NO TO ALL"
Scheme B	0	0	0	
Scheme C	0	0	0	
GROUP 2				
Scheme A	0	0	0	"Downscale size way less than 25,000" "Cheaper to rebuild than do major rehab"
Scheme B	1	2	2	"Focus on small scale activities for residents <u>not</u> huge events." "Move door to east side of building instead of Tamalpais" "Don't want commercial facility with revenue focus"
Scheme C	0	0	0	"Keep cost and tax low" "Keep parking away from homes"
GROUP 3				
Scheme A	3	1	2	" <u>Opposed</u> to moving the skate board park to Southwest Corner!!" (B) "Do <u>not</u> like enlarging the recreation center to take up so much of the park. Cannot support any of these plans. Why not eventually extend the Rec Center to the east where current buildings and pavement exist?" "Want a smaller scale project." "Can support upgrading of fields so they don't flood." "Adamantly opposed to removing green belt / grass along Pixley Ave!! If Green Belt is left <u>as is</u> I would vote for 'B'." "Add onto existing Bldg. Do <u>not</u> add more soccer courts to add to traffic & noise."
Scheme B	2	3	0	
Scheme C	1	1	0	
GROUP 4				
Scheme A	3	0	1	
Scheme B	9	6	6	
Scheme C	0	4	1	

GROUP 5A			
Scheme A	3	0	0
Scheme B	1	3	0
Scheme C	3	3	6
GROUP 5B			
Scheme A	0	0	1
Scheme B	3	3	0
Scheme C	0	0	0
GROUP 6			
Scheme A	2	1	5
Scheme B	9	3	2
Scheme C	0	6	0
GROUP 7			
Scheme A	0	1	0
Scheme B	4	3	2
Scheme C	0	0	1
GROUP 8			
Scheme A	0	4	0
Scheme B	6	1	6
Scheme C	0	1	0

GROUP 9				
Scheme A	1	0	1	<u>Blue Comments:</u> "Like plaza layout, <u>not</u> in favor of a pool" "Ampitheater on north side of center" "Group picnic area adjacent somehow to center & ampitheater"
Scheme B	5	5	5	
Scheme C	0	1	0	
GROUP 10				
Scheme A	0	1	1	"Any new buildings to be built at Park Madera." "Additional parking here also." (Park Madera Center) "Please provide Dog Park with water, fences, and benches." "Yes!!!" (to above comment)
Scheme B	1	4	2	
Scheme C	3	1	0	

	Red	Green	Blue
TOTALS			
Scheme A	12	9	11
Scheme B	41	33	25
Scheme C	7	17	8