

**CITY OF AUBURN HILLS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

September 18, 2008

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Hurt-Mendyka called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present. Beidoun, Hitchcock (6:27 pm), Hurt-Mendyka, Kittle (6:07 pm), Mitchell, Ouellette, Pierce, Verbeke (6:07 pm)
Absent. Doyle
Also Present. Director of Community Development Cohen
Guests. 4

LOCATION: Community Center – Wesson Room, 1827 N. Squirrel, Auburn Hills, MI 48326

PERSON WISHING TO BE HEARD – None

MINUTES

Mr. Pierce moved to approve the minutes of September 4, 2008.

Supported by Ms. Mitchell

VOTE: Yes: Beidoun, Hurt-Mendyka, Mitchell, Ouellette, Pierce

No: None

Motion Carried (5-0)

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Overview of the Auburn Hills Police Vehicle Garage Project (6:05 p.m.)

Bruce Johnson and Mark Vizena from Campbell/Manix presented the proposed Police Vehicle Garage project as a courtesy to the Planning Commissioners. The site plan is being reviewed administratively by City staff and consultants. The design and cost estimate was approved by the City Council on August 18, 2008.

The visual presentation and Commissioner's discussion hi-lights are as follows:

- The garage is 9,000 square feet and can house 22 vehicles.
- The cost of the structure is approximately \$910,000.
- The building will be constructed with pre-engineered steel (re-cycled steel).
- There is vinyl siding inside and outside of the garage.
- There will be no windows installed on the south side of the building due to security purposes.
- The stone tower is actually for foot traffic into the building, which is also a wind/weather break.
- The garage is climate controlled; air quality and movement of air, there is no air conditioning in garage area.
- The vehicles will not be serviced in the garage; it is only used for parking.
- The temperature sensitive items are stored in a storage area with heat and air control.
- The driving lane in the garage can handle two-way traffic.
- The patrol cars will have activators in each vehicle to automatically open the garage doors. You can manual open the garage doors from the inside.
- The garage doors into the facility are 12 feet high; which will handle a flat bed wrecker if a patrol car needs to be removed.
- The floor is concrete with a straight drain down the middle.
- The building will be sprinkled; a wet system.

- There are two side bays connected to the west side of the building, but separated from the garage, to check out other vehicles, store bicycles and use as storage.
- There will be two security gates one off University and the other off of Squirrel Road.

In regard to the Commission's questions regarding Green Building design, the City is looking into using solar panels and bio-swales in an effort to see if the building can qualify for the LEED program. Mr. Cohen advised the Commission that Mr. Keenan, the City's Water Resource Coordinator, is looking into obtaining LEED – Existing Building Certification for all city buildings. (6:55 p.m.)

SPECIAL PLANNING PROJECT

Parks & Recreation Plan Update (7:02 p.m.)

Mr. Marzolf and Mr. Cohen explained the Recreation Department has completed 50% of the projects in the last five (5) year plan. They are looking for assistance in prioritizing plans for the next five (5) years.

The Recreation Department used a five step program to come up with the proposed 2009-2013 Recreation Master Plan. Mr. Marzolf gave an overview of the findings of both the survey and the focus group.

The focus group met on September 16, 2008. Mr. Marzolf gave a brief overview of the results of the Focus Group Meeting. The group was satisfied with the city parks/public spaces because of the clean, safe and secure feeling as well as the numerous and diversified events the City offers. The items the City could work on in this area would be making Dennis Dearing Park more attractive with the plantings as a group effort with city and residents. Another suggestion was to add baby changing stations to the Community Center lavatory facilities.

The recreation programs were thought to be wonderful because of the low fees, the quantity, the friendly staff, and the diversity of programs for all ages and types of programs. The items to work on in this area would be mailing of the Auburn Hills Review earlier and more weekend evening classes. Also a suggestion was given to include swimming programs in coordination with the Avondale Schools or YMCA facilities.

The missing factor in outdoor recreation was stated as the absence of a sledding hill and ice skating rink and as far as indoor activity would be the lack of a community pool. The greatest asset was said to be the parks in the summer and the Community Center in the winter. This included the sports system, the skate park and the quantity of activities and trails the City has to offer. The layout and accessibility was also considered an asset.

Improvements for our parks were suggested to be basic maintenance issues of more vegetation in certain locations, the addition of new equipment where needed, and signage including a kiosk and/or changeable copy board strategically located for upcoming events.

Some great ideas were suggested for additional programs or enhancements which included classes for preschool, nutrition, organic food, going green (conserving, recycling, and green products). Also, suggested was a Parents Night Out while children are babysat at the Community Center. Another suggestion was to get a free program after paying for a certain amount of programs.

Suggestions were given to add a cross-walk on Baldwin to Great Lakes Crossing for the Canadian Subdivision.

Facets of funding were explained and suggestions were to use general fund with park improvement funds, Tax Increment Funding Authority for development and general fund, Recreation, and Department of Public Service for maintenance.

Funding sources or collaborations were considered and the list of partnerships were suggested as corporate sponsors, state and federal grants, and tournament sponsors.

Technology is said to be a draw back on Parks and Recreation operations that include the on-line registration, credit cards, and the convenience factor.

Suggested goals by the year 2013 were to open the Community Center on Sundays for more family time, especially in the winter time, an addition of a swimming pool, more cultural programs, increase awareness for volunteer opportunities by using newsletter and cable. Placement of recycle bins in parks and at special events was also suggested.

A questionnaire was also given and the following responses were tallied:

- 90% of the people had taken part in parks and recreation programs or events
- 86% of the people would recommend the programs to others
- 100% of the people rated their parks and recreation experience as fair or better with 53% rating it excellent
- 57% of the people rated the importance of parks and recreation programs, events and facilities to be very important
- Types of programs that rated the highest use would be athletics, games, nature, dance and crafts
- A suggestion list for programs were given ranging from more programs for 3-4 year olds, after school programs such as Boy Scouts and Brownies, all-day camps, writing workshops, mechanics/small engine workshops, to sign language and dance classes, walking club/fitness walking, computers and photography, to scrapbooking, yoga, and ceramics, a billiards league and cultural programs
- A list of people signed up for special skills that they could bring to offer at the Community Center

Mr. Marzolf found the questionnaire and survey to be most helpful in determining direction the citizens wanted the City of Auburn Hills to take in their Parks & Recreation Master Plan and thanked all participants.

Mr. Marzolf requested that the Planning Commissioners review the suggested five year plan and prioritize each year and try to find some balance for the projects and budget. Everyone will meet again on October 16th to discuss their recommendations.

COMMUNICATIONS – None

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is October 7, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeanne Tyler
Clerk III