Legislation Details (With Text)

File #:	14-4095	**Name:**	Patrick Henry Rec Center Program
Type:	Other	**Status:**	Agenda Ready
File created:	5/20/2015	**In control:**	City Council Legislative Meeting
On agenda:	6/23/2015	**Final action:**	
Title:	Consideration of Recommendation for Programming of the New Patrick Henry Recreation Center.		
Sponsors:			
Indexes:			
Code sections:			
Attachments:	1. 14-4095_Attachment 1 2014 Neighborhood Needs Assessment, 2. 14-4095_ Attachment 2 Patrick Henry Recreation Center Feasibility Study, 3. 14-4095_Attachment 3 Patrick Henry Recreation Center Programming Options, 4. 14-4095_Attachment 4 Patrick Henry Recreation Center June 2015 Survey Results, 5. 14-4095_Attachment 5 Patrick Henry Presentation, 6. 14-4095_After Items		

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 17, 2015

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

DOCKET TITLE:
Consideration of Recommendation for Programming of the New Patrick Henry Recreation Center.

ISSUE: Recommendation for the programming of the new Patrick Henry Recreation Center.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

1. Consider programming options for the redevelopment of Patrick Henry Recreation Center,

2. Select the Neighborhood Recreation Center Scenario "C" to inform the future design for the Patrick Henry Recreation Center; and

3. Direct staff to continue to work with Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) staff to jointly refine the design and site layout for the school and recreation center.

BACKGROUND: The existing Patrick Henry Elementary School building, located at 4643 Taney Avenue, was constructed in the early 1950's. The City constructed a 9,400 square feet recreation center, including a gymnasium addition constructed in 1973, primarily to serve children from the Patrick Henry School. Additionally, there are athletic fields on-site that are heavily used by both the school and general community. In 2006, the City determined that the existing recreation center no longer met community needs, and in 2008 the Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA) and the Department of General Services initiated a feasibility study to renovate and expand the center. Through that study, the public identified a need for a larger gymnasium, additional multipurpose space, an adult fitness room, space for seniors and teens, additional programming space, and a running track. The study also found that existing building support systems, utilities, building materials and functions were either at the end of their useful life or not compliant with current codes and required full replacement. The 2008 study included renovating the existing recreation center while maintaining the existing connection to the school. A new Patrick Henry School was not contemplated at that time.

Following completion of the 2008 study, which recommended a significant increase in the size of the recreation center, ACPS determined that the school building and related capacity would also need to be studied, and as noted above, the City opted to ensure the two projects went forward jointly. ACPS and the City issued a purchase order to an Architecture/Engineering (A/E) consultant team headed by Sorg Architects of Washington, DC in the fall of 2014.
The joint feasibility study of the entire Patrick Henry site, including the school and recreation center, involved staff from ACPS and an interdepartmental team of City staff, a group of community stakeholders, and included regular public meetings. The feasibility study includes an analysis of existing and proposed programs, site development options and constructability, potential phasing and cost estimating for a pre-K to 8 school and replacement of the recreation center. The early focus of the feasibility study analyzed options for rebuilding a new school versus renovating the existing school building, along with related site options. RPCA's goal was to ensure the plan for a new recreation facility responded programmatically to both the current community's needs, as well as the future needs related to a projected increase in enrollment at the school.

In 2013, RPCA conducted a city-wide Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment ((<https://www.alexandriava.gov/recreation/info/default.aspx?id=51672>) to determine community needs for both indoor and outdoor park and recreation facilities. The 2013 needs assessment identified the highest such needs in Alexandria included walking trails, natural areas and wildlife habitat, biking trails, and indoor exercise and fitness facilities.

To support the recreation center project, in July 2014 RPCA conducted a Patrick Henry Neighborhood Recreation Needs Assessment, a random sample, statistically representative survey to assist in the confirmation and development of recreation programming that meets the City's revenue recovery model for fees and revenues generated from facility use (Attachment 1). The highest indoor recreation needs identified in the Neighborhood Needs Assessment, included: indoor swimming pool, indoor exercise and fitness space, and an indoor walking/running track. The highest outdoor needs included: outdoor walking and biking trails, outdoor running/walking track, and natural areas/wildlife habitats. These findings are very similar to the highest priority needs identified in the 2013 Citywide Needs Assessment.

Based on findings from this needs assessment, the consultant team tested initial options of versatile and flexible indoor multi-purpose space that also remained consistent with community needs identified in 2008. The first phase of the feasibility study showed that the shared school and recreation site can accommodate multiple options for a new school as well as a new recreation center that meets the broadest community needs for parks and recreation.

In May 2015, the consultant delivered the final Feasibility Study and Estimate (<http://eboard.acps.k12.va.us/attachments/502d0182-10cc-41ad-9811-7ba9cece5a43.pdf>) for the school options to ACPS. After several work sessions and discussions in May and June, the School Board voted on June 11, 2015 to move forward with Option 2 (with siting to be determined) the construction of a new Patrick Henry PreK-8 grade school on the existing property and subsequent demolition of the current school building. They authorized moving forward with the design phase of the project directing staff to continue to work with the community and an architectural firm to develop the final design of the new school and construction documents, while studying and addressing the concerns outlined by the School Board, school staff and members of the community during the feasibility phase. While no decision has been made regarding a preferred site concept, Option 2 of the school feasibility study was the recommended ACPS staff option. The Draft Recreation Center Feasibility Study (Attachment 2) is considered a subset of the ACPS Feasibility Study and builds recreation center options based on Option 2 of the ACPS Feasibility Study. This location was used for illustrative purposes only. The actual location of the school and recreation center will be developed during the design phase of the project. The location of the school is the primary driver with the location of the recreation center to compliment that school site choice.

Following ACPS School Board receipt of the School Feasibility Study in May, RPCA sought additional community input regarding a range of potential programming models to determine the appropriate facility needs for a new Patrick Henry Recreation Center. The City held two public meetings (June 4 and June 6), conducted an online survey for a two week period, and held a public hearing with the Park and Recreation Commission on June 18 regarding the following 3 primary options for programming the new recreation center:

1. **School Centered Scenario:** Focuses on before and after school care and programs for the students and their families enrolled at Patrick Henry preK-8 school.

2. **Neighborhood Recreation Center Scenario:** This model has a market focus of the 1-mile radius surrounding the site, in addition to the Patrick Henry students and families.

3. **Community Recreation Facility Scenario:** This model includes programs that attract users from the entire City.

The attached table (Attachment 3) describes the market focus for each scenario and the types of programming each could offer.

The consultant developed three building layout options to match these programming scenarios.

Community Recreation Facility Scenarios:

A. **Single Level Recreation Center with Indoor Flexible Multi-purpose Space (28,000 square feet):** Building Option A is a one-story building scheme that can be either free-standing or attached to the new School. It has a 100'x 120' multi-use recreational space with a 12'track/runoff area around the perimeter within the building. The building also includes a flex court, multi-purpose room (with a sink for crafts), fitness room and administration office. Building option A also has a main lobby area to accommodate reception and some breakout space. **Estimated construction cost: $8.1m; estimated annual net operating cost (general fund cost after anticipated revenue): $400,000.**

B. **Two Level Recreation Center with Indoor Flexible Multi-purpose Space (37,000 square feet):** Building Option B is a two-story version of building option A that can also be either free-

standing or attached to the new School. It has a 100'x 120'multi-use recreational space with a 12'-wide runoff area within the building. The second floor provides access to the 12'-wide track directly above the runoff area. A flex court, multi-purpose room (with a sink for crafts), and administration office are located on the ground floor of the building while the fitness room is located on the second floor in close proximity to the elevated track. **Estimated construction cost: $9.4m; estimated annual net operating cost: $400,000.**

Neighborhood Recreation Center Scenario:

C. Single Level Recreation Center with Flex Court (17,000 square feet): Building Option C is a one-story building scheme with a 50' x 84' flex court and a 12' track around its perimeter that doubles as a runoff area. In addition, it includesa multi-purpose room, fitness room, and a separate crafts room. This option also has a main lobby area with visibility to all entrances/exits, the recreation center, flex court and school gym. **Estimated construction cost: $6.3m; estimated annual net operating cost: $335,000.**

School Centered Scenario:

D. Single Level Recreation Center with Multi-Purpose Room (7,600 square feet): Building Option D is a one-story building scheme with a multi-purpose room to accommodate after school programming, a fitness room, and a crafts room. It also contains a main lobby area similar to the Option C. **Estimated construction cost: $3.8m; estimated annual net operating cost: $220,000.**

Option D is based on the current after school/summer camp programming provided at Patrick Henry. Because this option does not include any additional programming and the size can be accommodated within the space layout for Option C (only without the flex court), it was not included in the Draft Recreation Center Feasibility Study. Staff has evaluated this option in response to feedback received from the community. The School Centered Scenario does not meet the additional recreational programming needs identified in either the 2008 or 2014 needs assessments for Patrick Henry and provides only the current level of services.

All of the scenarios considered provide outdoor recreation opportunities, including walking trails, preservation of the wooded/natural area, a play area for younger children, and multi-purpose recreation fields/courts. However, due to the additional requirement for the larger school, not all of the existing, programmable outdoor recreation space will be accommodated with the future improvements.

As three Head Start classrooms will be included as part of the eight Pre-K classrooms that are included in the design concept for the Patrick Henry School, the recreation center program scenarios do not need to provide for these facilities.

DISCUSSION: The community feedback received via the two public meetings and online survey showed that for the 146 respondents, the first choice selections were: 78 respondents chose the Community Recreation Facility, 24 chose the Neighborhood Recreation Center, and 52 chose the School Centered Recreation Center. One hundred and five (105) respondents selected the Neighborhood Recreation Center scenario as their second preference. When asked whether they would use each type of center, 63% of the respondents said they would

use the Community Recreation Facility, 60% would use the Neighborhood Recreation Center, and 25% would use the School Centered Recreation Center.

The cost estimates provided through the feasibility study process showed that the construction cost for both the school centered and neighborhood recreation center building options fall within the current $6.8 million budget included in the FY2016-2025 CIP. The cost estimates for the community recreation facility options exceed the current CIP budget.

Staff Recommendation: Based on the needs assessments, findings from the community process described above, and the cost estimates provided through the Recreation Center Feasibility Study, staff recommends that the City continue to work with ACPS on a site plan/design option that includes a level of programming consistent with a **Neighborhood Recreation Center Option "C"** based on the following:

* Provides sufficient space for school and after school related programming;

* Potential program offerings provided under the Neighborhood Recreation Center address needs identified in the 2008 Patrick Henry study, 2013 Citywide Recreation & Parks Needs Assessment, the 2014 Patrick Henry Recreation Center Needs Assessment, and findings from the June 2015 online survey;

* The Neighborhood Recreation Center cost estimate for design and construction is within the current $6.8 million budget proposed in the FY2016-2025 CIP.

The Neighborhood Recreation Center provides programming options for users beyond the school children/families, thus expanding the public benefit of the capital investment. The community recreation facilities (Options A and B) exceed the current City CIP funded amount of $6.8 million and raise issues with existing adjacent neighborhood land use patterns in regard to mass and scale. While a community recreation facility with its all weather large indoor playing field would be a good addition to the City recreation center portfolio, the Patrick Henry neighborhood may not be the right location for this large facility.

The Park and Recreation Commission held a public hearing on the recommended programming for a new Patrick Henry Recreation Center on June 18, 2015. Out of the six public speakers, three spoke in favor of a community serving program while three expressed a preference for a school serving program. The Commission members spoke about the need for community-wide programming in the West End and a desire for a holistic approach to meeting the needs of an increasing population of West End residents. While the Commission chose not to recommend a specific programming scenario, they voted to draft a letter to City Council outlining the need for programming beyond school-centered only and highlighting the need for a holistic approach to addressing recreational needs in the West End.

The Jun 23, 2015 City Council Patrick Henry Recreation Center Presentation is at Attachment 5.

FISCAL IMPACT: Based on the building layout options developed in the Recreation Center Feasibility Study, construction cost estimates were prepared by the consultant. The costs included above with the design options include a factor of 8% to account for design costs associated with delivering the project. The estimated cost to deliver the Neighborhood Recreation Center is $6.3 million. The Adopted FY 2016 to FY 2025 CIP includes $6.8 million for this project. The estimated annual operating cost of this design option is $500,000. Staff anticipates an annual revenue of $165,000 based on the proposed programming, leaving a net annual cost of $335,000 that would be funded out of the General Fund. The current Patrick Henry Recreation Center has a net annual operating cost of $226,000.

ATTACHMENTS:
Attachment 1 - 2014 Neighborhood Recreation Needs Assessment

Attachment 2- Patrick Henry Recreation Center Feasibility Study
Attachment 3 - Patrick Henry Recreation Center Programming Options
Attachment 4 - Patrick Henry Recreation Center June 2015 Survey Results
Attachment 5 - Patrick Henry Presentation for City Council

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