

Greenbelt Middle School Task Force Approved Meeting Minutes ~ April 14, 2011

Present: David Lange, Elizabeth Hammett, Janet Mirsky, Sharee Koenig, Ken Blue, Rosemary Pezzuto, Beatrice Rodgers, Barbara Simon and David Whaples

Excused: Brenda Cooley, Keith Chernikoff, Rev. Dan Hamlin and Shane Wisdom

City Council: Ms. Leta Mach, Liaison (not present)

Board of Ed.: Ms. Peggy Higgins, Liaison (not present)

Staff: Joe McNeal, Liaison

Guests: None

The meeting of the Greenbelt Middle School Task Force was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by David Lange in the City Council Chambers at 25 Crescent Road.

The minutes from the 3-14-11 meeting were review and unanimously approved.

Ms. Sharee Koenig provided the Task Force with an update from Franklin Park.

- It was noted there have been approximately 280 renter evictions.
- It is expected it will take about two years to complete all of the desired Franklin Park renovations. The renovations will be made in all the rental spaces and include new hardwood flooring, stainless steel appliances, new cabinets, etc.
- It is expected that the monthly rent for a one bedroom apartment will increase from \$800/mo. To \$1,200/mo.

The Task Force inquired about data on the senior population in Franklin Park. Ms. Koenig indicated she would work to gather information on this demographic. It was also suggested that GAIL staff be contacted to determine if they had any information on Senior Citizens living in Franklin Park.

- Franklin Park has hired a Military Liaison to increase military renters. It is expected that five military families will move in this week.
- Franklin Park has hired a Student Liaison to increase student renters. There is no data on this initiative at this time.
- A meeting with local hospitals, fire department and law enforcement personnel is planned to increase renters in this population as well.
- Many aesthetic improvements are underway including window, screens and general cosmetic improvements.
- It was noted that a study was recently completed in Prince George's County and the results indicate there is not a shortage of low cost rental spaces but that there is a shortage of middle priced housing. Franklin Park will work to focus on this

housing price range. They are working to develop a renter demographic that shifts the current median household income of \$30,000/yr. to \$50,000/yr. over the next two years.

- Anyone who works for a government entity gets a preferred renter rate.

The Task Force inquired about the status of recreation facilities and amenities. Ms. Koenig advised this is being reviewed but is not aware of any definitive improvement plans other than that the old Giant Learning Center is expected to be renovated to include a fitness center for tenants.

- It was noted that the Head Start Program will be moving out of the complex on June 22, 2011. Camp Fire USA received notification they will be permitted to use the Head Start Program space.
- Police are now using golf carts to conduct patrols of the area. This has shown to be an effective means of moving around the complex without being noticed.
- Franklin Park staff met with the City Recycling Coordinator to discuss new approaches to recycling efforts in the complex and plans to negotiate a new contract for these services.

The Education Committee reported the Advisory Committee on Education recommends retaining the old GMS and that it be an inclusive facility that serves all demographics. They recommend that facility be a Community Center that serves as much of the population as possible. If the comprehensive community center is not feasible the new Middle School should adopt the Community School model to address the needs of the student population and their families separate from the services that would be provided in the renovated "old" middle school.

Possible revenue sources could be rental of satellite teaching spaces to area colleges, tech programs, etc.

Bea Rodgers moved to endorse the Education Committee recommendation #1

"The City of Greenbelt operate/sponsor a comprehensive community center in the historic middle school building. Services such as adult education, county health services, computer literacy classes, tutoring, and performing arts space could be offered. Income could be generated by renting space to Prince George's County Community College, Bowie State University and/or Capital College"

Rosemary Pezzuto seconded the motion. The motion was passed 9-0 in favor.

The Technology Committee reported a strong desire to include a comprehensive and full service computer lab. It is believed that GATE could provide IT support to the computer lab. GATE would probably want to maintain two separate operations, one space in the Community Center and one space in the renovated Middle School building. If space in the renovated Middle School was sufficient, it is possible one space could be enough and the entire GATE operation would move the middle school.

Ken Blue made the following motion;

“That there are adequate technology resources for both educational and operational technology. At a minimum the facility should have the following;

- 1. Appropriate wiring and access technology for all aspects of the facility.*
- 2. A technology lab that includes public use computers, adequate software to address a diverse population and is inclusive.*
- 3. Expand ability that will allow for programming in science, the arts and technology.*
- 4. Has appropriate cyber security.”*

Bea Rodgers seconded the motion. The motion passed 9-0 in favor.

Lizzy Hammett, the Youth Advisory Committee representative related discussions YAC has had on this issue. They included the desire to provide tutoring spaces and a soup kitchen. Ms. Hammett advised she would work to solicit more input from YAC on the middle school project and report back to the Task Force.

Barbara Simon provided a report on behalf of the Arts Advisory Board representative who was unable to attend the meeting. It was suggested that rather than voting on each individual art medium, the Task Force should consider fine arts as a whole and get input from the community on specific needs for actual programs. It was felt that a survey needs to be conducted to determine the current levels of service versus the desired levels of service as specific needs are considered.

Ken Blue made the following motion;

“The comprehensive community center should include a fine arts component that is integrated and in balance with other community fine arts programs within the Greenbelt Community.”

Barbara Simon seconded the motion. The motion passed 9 – 0 in favor.

Ken Blue, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board representative gave an overview of PRAB discussions on this topic. PRAB has compiled a draft list of anticipated uses and needs that middle school facility could support including;

- 1. Adult and youth sports league and activities** – that would have the intended use of the gym, exercise, MS ball fields and multipurpose room.
- 2. Gymnastics program** – that would have the intended use of the gym, exercise, multipurpose room and possibly the stage.
- 3. Pre-school programs / shared with education** – that could use the total communal space.
- 4. Summer holiday camp programs** – that would have the intended use for the total communal available space.
- 5. Special events** – that would focus on sharing the larger spaces (Gym and Multipurpose Room, but could use nearly all of the communal space.

6. **Community dances / shared with art** – would look to use the larger spaces of the Gym and Multipurpose Room
7. **Smaller Recreational Meetings** – using the classrooms Day care after care programs and services - shared with education
8. **Community non profits / long term and short term** – using nearly all of the available communal spaces
9. **Rental space (party rooms / small caterers)** – using nearly all of the communal spaces
10. **Fundraising spaces** for community groups to sell food and packaged items during events

Mr. Blue advised a formal report would be finalized and presented to the Task Force at a future meeting.

Joe McNeal advised the Task Force that the MNCPPC recently completed a statistically valid survey of Prince George’s County related to Parks ad Recreation needs. Copies of some results of the survey relevant to Northern Prince George’s County were forwarded to the Task Force in advance of the meeting for review and consideration. The results of the entire survey are available for review if desired. It is believed this survey will provide valuable information to the Task force as it moves forward.

Senior Citizens Committee had no report

The Homeless Committee reported that the area where the middle school is located is not zoned for this type of use. Additionally, the Committee recommended that this space not be considered for this type of use for many reasons including; compatibility with other nearby facilities and possible users of the historic middle school facility.

Sharee Koenig made the following motion;

“Endorse the Homeless Committee recommendation to not use any of the space in the historic middle school as a homeless shelter.”

David Whaples seconded the motion. The motion passed 9 – 0 in favor.

Revenue Committee no report.

There was discussion related to the Prince George’s County Economic Development Corporation conference call. Items discussed included the loss of federal funding for federal telecommuting centers and various other programs. Discussion of possible other revenue sources included adult education classes, ESOL classes, Pathways Schools as a rental group, WIC programs and investigating program opportunities through the Health Department.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:47 p.m.

Approved Unanimously May 12, 2011