

Hillmoor Ad Hoc Meeting 1/18/2024

1) Attendance:

Present:

- Mayor Klein
- Dave Quickel
- Skip Atwell
- Henry Sibbing
- Adam St.Marie
- Cheri Borowiec
- Michael Krajovic
- Fred Gahl
- Betty Volquardsen
- Peggy Schneider
- Paula Porubcan
- Lawrie Weed

Excused:

- Celine Lillie
- Karen Yancey
- Deborah Beagle

2) Meeting Minutes:

- Clarification: Michael Krajovic inquired concerning how many members we can have on a sub group and wants to clarify if four people could be allowed in a sub research group. YMCA Sub Group Members: Fred Gahl, Michael Krajovic, Peggy Schneider. Request made to inquire of the City Attorney regarding the legality of four of the sub research groups.
- Mayor Klein will check with the City Attorney 1/19/2024

3) Approval of Minutes: All in Favor. 4:08pm

4) Report From the Friends of Hillmoor

5) Presentation/Discussion and Possible Action concerning the proposed Living Amphitheater

- Mayor Klein Presents:
- Amphitheater could have music

- Puppets for kids
- Small Theatrical Performances
- Music Groups
- But would not have it being used all the time.
- Construction: it could be made rather quickly.
 - Engineering - 10k
 - Excavation - 50 k
 - Stonework - 50 k
 - Stage - 100k
- Funding Initiatives
 - Private Donations
 - Crowdfunding
 - Etc.
- The Value:
 - Decades of enjoyment for Lake Geneva
- Integration:
 - Possibly needing a building and maybe adding the Ice Rink/ Curling with a Summer Splash Pad. Maybe a small cafe.
- Questions?
 - Paula: Did you get any information on maintenance?
 - Mayor: The company that did this made the width of the landings
 - Michael K: This price is very low. Likes the idea but until it's engineered we do not know exactly, but the cost will be higher than this.
 - Adam St.Marie: Yes, the cost would be much higher. Electrical alone could be that.
 - Hank Sibbing: This could also be a revenue source.
 - Lawrie: So the building is not in the cost estimate but would need to be part of all of this. It also needs to be handicapped accessible.
 - Mayor Klein: Absolutely handicap accessible. What I would like would be to have a vote to integrate this into the master plan.
 - Paula: Where does this land in terms of the Zones that the ABC group made?
 - Michael: It could be closer to zone 5 but at the edge of zone 3
 - Betty: I have a question about the Master Plan. It seems like a Master Plan would involve more details and cost.
 - Hank: Let's discuss this
 - Peggy: I thought we were going to make the presentations and then make the recommendations.
 - Betty: Could we separate the items here. Separating the ice rink, the building, and the splash pads.
 - Adam: We are just clarifying that we all recommend that we like how it "could" be added to a Master Plan not that it "would" be.

- Hank: Motion is made to approve the amphitheater presentation to be included as part of the preliminary conceptual plan and its planning process.
- Hank: Confirms this is the motion.
- Fred: Seconded
- Further discussion between members continues.
- Peggy: Can I ask one more clarifying question: When the trails were presented it was said that the trails could be moved but then later I heard they can't be moved. Do we know this for certain? I feel like sometimes things are presented somehow and then things later develop and contradict and I am hesitant with it.
- Hank: Sometimes we are hesitant to ask questions. Please ask questions.
- Adam: Who decides how many people it should accommodate? We are recommending it?
- Mayor: That will be done by the Master Planner.

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor

Present:

- Mayor Klein : Yes
- Dave Quickel: Yes
- Skip Atwell: Yes
- Henry Sibbing: Yes
- Adam St.Marie: Yes
- Cheri Borowiec: Yes
- Michael Krajovic: Yes
- Fred Gahl: Yes
- Betty Volquardsen: Yes
- Peggy Schneider: Yes
- Paula Porubcan: Yes
- Lawrie Weed: Yes

Motion is Approved. 4:52pm

Michael: Just to clarify that the location was recommended in Zone 3.

Paula: To the ABC group who has presented. Is there anything in particular that you wanted to come back to us with?

Michael: We will get back to you on that.

6) Discussion concerning the most recent letter of intent from the YMCA

Mayor Klein: The YMCA is presenting their letter of intent again to the City Council

Hank: Do you think the committee ought to reinforce our previous recommendation?

Fred: I was thinking of the brief report Michael and I could give from our Monday morning meeting with them.

Paula: I would like to have a discussion to hear what that research group found?

Mike: Mayor, do you want us to talk now?

Mayor Klein: Well, with our original letter it didn't address the YMCA directly.

Group: Discusses the language of the letter.

Lawrie: Would it be appropriate at the next council meeting, when the YMCA is going to address the council, for this letter to be added to the council meeting.

Motion: Submit the letter to the clerk for the council meeting on Monday.

Michael: Second

All in Favor

Betty: Even recommending we do not sell the Hillmoor property in perpetuity, this doesn't mean it's going to happen. But it took us 14 years to get it.

7) Report from the Committee members who attended a meeting with the YMCA

Michael Krajovic: Reads his statement *Need to add Michael's letter to these meeting minutes.

Fred: My opinions concur with Michael's. I was surprised, we walked in at 7 in the morning in sub zero weather to work with them. So no one can say we weren't willing to go in and work with them. Essentially, the conclusion was that it was better to make a bad decision than no decision at all. They bought the property on Hwy H with that kind of approach. They referred to the Lake Geneva Comprehensive plan outlines a "deal" to be offered to the YMCA. Hank, can you speak to the comprehensive plan since you were a part of that.

Hank: Refers to packet with pages from the Comprehensive Plan: I found on page 17 the language of the Comprehensive Plan. This is a summary of what Vanderwall and Associates found from their vision workshops in 2019. What is alarming is that the YMCA has their packet that makes it look like the Comprehensive Plan "outlines 'a deal' to be offered to the YMCA". But it doesn't outline a deal. It mentions it as an option amongst other options.

Fred: Mike Kramp, after about two hours said, "I can't see any reason to have any future meetings with you." Which was very frustrating.

Lawrie: But the Y requested this meeting?

Fred: Correct. They want to go full speed ahead.

Michael: I tried explaining even the value of hiding the parking lot so that people on the rest of the property didn't see it, and I'm still in disbelief, because they said they don't see what the need is to meet anymore. It's a disappointing report. Everyone was pretty respectful. It wasn't confrontational.

Lawrie: This might be naive on my part, has there ever been discussion about a lease on this property as opposed to the buy?

Fred: They were very clear they wanted to buy. The average Y is about 4-5 acres but they are asking for 38 acres. Their terms also say they want to have their own zoning and usage.

Michael: The 38 acre comment prompted something else. I told them that if they want a clear decision, I told them I don't speak for the committee, but a 38 acre proposal is a no. I do not feel like that is what the community wants from that property. The argument they are making about the services they provide are not linked to Hillmoor. They offer those services wherever. I'm still willing to work with them but I think the ball is in their court.

Fred: Mike even made some suggestion for how to help them bring down the red flags such as: Don't keep referencing the survey, don't bring up that the City "said" they would offer you a plan, just offer it based on the services.

Peggy: I still would like to move forward with this to see if it is a possibility or not a possibility.

Fred: I don't think you are hearing what we are saying. Bottom line is they don't want to talk to us. Michael was the most optimistic person here on the Y and they didn't want to hear us. But the part you missed was how shocked we were.

Peggy: I am saying this for my own personal satisfaction. I'm not disputing they were not open to discussion.

Fred: I remember Sean Kelly exhorted us to be discriminatory on how we use this value asset.

Hank: Skip, Dave, maybe you guys can go back to the board and ask them to consider being more collaborative with the City.

Dave: I don't think anybody made a good approach. Them or us. I think it is unfortunate that we have such a big disagreement on something of this nature. The Y has done more for this City than any single other organization. Are they coming with the wrong approach? Apparently they are. But we can somehow say, hey Y straighten up. If they came in with the wrong attitude that's their fault. I am surprised they treated it that way. I don't want us to say to hell with this now. I think we should still be open to talking about this. Maybe it will be put to bed in a bad way. I had two people come up to me today and say I can't believe why your committee is fighting the Y.

Peggy: As an outsider, I did not see the first presentation, but I must say that the second presentation the dialogue that took place here made me feel uncomfortable. It did not feel professional or cordial. No wonder the Y left feeling that way.

Michael: Peggy, what's so confusing to me, is that I have tried multiple times to help them understand the synergies here so that it would make it easier for them to get approval.

Hank: I think we were saddled with the responsibility to find out what is best for the Hillmoor property, not what is best for the Y. The Hillmoor would be best for a lot of businesses. I love the Y. The Y needs to come to us and say we think our project is best for Hillmoor.

Peggy: I understand that. I just am saying for me personally I want to make sure that I explore the feasibility of the Y there.

Paula: Does anyone have any insight into the urgency of the Y.

Fred: Yes, the Y makes money from memberships and donations. They stopped fundraising until they know what they are selling. The Hillmoor Property has a lot of sizzle and they want to be able to access the kind of funding that would get naming rights.

Michael: Everything Fred said is valid, but this is true even 90 days from now.

Fred: This is their business decision and I respect that. They want to try to get what they get.

Dave: They have already been approached by a substantial donation of 25 million dollars if they can get to Hillmoor. They need to be a little more honest about that. They should have had a salesman present what they wanted rather than a commodity trader. There are tremendous benefits to having them there for the community.

Betty: What does the Y letter of intent have a confidentiality agreement?

Michael: The fact that it's to a public body, most documents have a confidentiality agreement. But it won't matter since it needs public approval.

Mayor Klein: We should end this.

Adam: Motion to adjourn

Michael: Second

All in favor

Hillmoor Ad Hoc meeting January 18, 2024

Agenda item #7 – Report from committee members who attended a meeting with the YMCA.

Mike Krajovic read the following statement to the Ad Hoc committee to give his report regarding the first meeting held at Y on Jan 18th at 7 am. between the Y and the Ad Hoc Committee's sub-working group:

"The Y is a very important project and perhaps the largest one our Ad Hoc committee will review. It is so important that I felt I needed to carefully write down my comments to give my account as to what occurred at the meeting.

This is all my personal opinion -

I have been one of the most outspoken Committee members arguing that we should not make quick decisions and should wait to hear all the facts before making a decision about any project on Hillmoor, especially for a project as big as the Y.

And so the Y was advised by City Council to work with our committee and the Mayor appointed members to the committee two of which were requested by the Y themselves – myself and Peggy Schneider.

We had our first meeting at 7am this past Monday at -14 degrees. Peggy, Fred and myself were there. Peggy had to leave early for work. (note: Skip was unable to attend.)

After the meeting, I was and still am very disappointed. Let me tell you why.

First – I understand the Y is frustrated. Over the last 10 months, they gave multiple presentations to City Council and the Ad Hoc Committee involving projects of a variety of sizes. I revisited all of their materials.

I think we are all frustrated. Many people in the community, City council, the Y, etc, feel that we, the Ad Hoc Committee, have been dragging our feet and haven't accomplished anything. We have a tough, often thankless job sorting through different competing interests to consider what is best for the residents of Lake Geneva

We have listened to many presentations, researching and evaluating projects, preparing presentations.

We are all volunteers who have invested countless hours....doing jobs that would normally be done by paid staff or consultants.

Before forming the Y working group, the Mayor asked my opinion on why I felt we needed one.

And I explained, how this large project requires a lot of planning to determine things like best location on the property, location of access roads, where best to run utility lines, etc. The property owner needs to be involved in these decisions.

I speak from experience I worked 25 years in community and economic development working with government bodies and businesses, engineers, architects, and planners in site location. Prior that I worked as a civil engineer for 4 years. I built business parks that addressed issues such as land use, access roads, utility layouts, design standards etc.

So Here's what I told the Y at the beginning of our meeting. (Mike Krajovic then read the following comments.)

See below - **Comments delivered by Mike Krajovic at first YMCA working group meeting held 7am at the Y on Jan 15, 2024**

It became clear by the end of the meeting that the Y wants a quick yes or no answer. They handed out another powerpoint presentation and I guess they felt that is enough data on which to base significant decisions.

Mike then passed around parts of hand out that showed the Summary Page, a map showing a proposed placement for the Y, golf, and amphitheater on the property and two maps showing different configurations and size of a 38 acre site on the property.

(Note: This relates to item #6 on the agenda regarding the recent Letter of Intent sent by the Y to City Council to purchase 38 acres of the Hillmoor property.)

The Y had little or no interest in hearing our concerns or working together to determine what would be best for both the Y and the City.

...concerns such as the potential cost to the City for utilities or access roads, how to orient their project on how best to minimize these cost, investigate possible synergies with other projects, how reduce negative impacts on other potential uses or projects, what would the best site plan to preserve green space, how to best address the concerns about negative impacts to our residents such as noise and traffic.

And they do not want to answer the concerns of residents who still don't understand as to why Hillmoor is better location than the other sites they have considered.

What they are proposing is that the City agree to sell them the property, then they will do all the engineering and negotiate with the City later, bypassing all of these other issues.

Regarding greenspace, Hillmoor now belongs to all the residents of Lake Geneva who fought hard to preserve its green space and we have a responsibility to honor that mandate in every project we consider.

The final thing, the urgency that the Y has to get their project moving, is not our urgency or responsibility, or should override our thoughtful process to properly evaluate a project.

The Y keeps saying that Hillmoor has always been their first choice, but I have not heard anyone ever speak about the Y proposing a purchase of property when it was under private control during my 4 years serving on the Planning Commission.

I also cannot recall the Y as an organization ever taking a public position about preserving Hillmoor from commercial development.

In summary:

It is very disappointing that they seem unwilling to work with our working group over the next few months now that we have a better understanding of the property. I was told by one of their board members that making "no decision is worse than making a bad decision" – which I interpret as saying they don't care if Hillmoor is a bad decision for everyone that could cost many millions of dollars. It's better than not making a decision at all.

Our working group of volunteers were not there on our own time early morning in subzero temperatures to stall or avoid making decisions. We were there to work together with them to find the best decision for everyone, the City, the residents and the Y.

You have heard me say this before, 100 years from now, people are not going to talk about how fast we did something at Hillmoor, but how well we did it.

After discussion by other committee members, Mike Krajovic reiterated his disappointment and said that it felt like a gut-punch when the Y's CEO said he didn't feel there was a need for additional meetings.

Mike K. also stated that the services the Y provides the community are not site dependent.

Comments delivered by Mike Krajovic at first YMCA working group meeting held 7am at the Y on Jan 15, 2024

We do not speak for City Council or the ad hoc committee.

We are resident volunteers interested in working with the city to ultimately determine if it would be beneficial to the city as well as the city if the Y built its new building on the Hillmoor property.

We are not here to negotiate land sales or leases for the city.

I can personally say that there are many different potential uses for the Hillmoor property including simply preserving green space which is probably the most popular use. Therefore, the smaller the site needed by the Y, the less it conflicts with the desire to preserve green space.

I personally am looking to discover what potential synergies could exist that would be beneficial to both the Y and the city and its residents. For example, a new access Rd. for the Y could become a public St. that could be used by residents to access the property for other uses. Strategic placements of utilities could also be of benefit to other future facilities on the property such as restrooms or buildings.

We should help the Y determine the best site alternatives for Hillmoor which will involve analyzing multiple site plan options of which each could include different features, uses or facilities that the Y might want to include in its development. Each option will have its own strengths and weaknesses, its unique benefits and cost.

We're here to assist the Y in developing these possible options and helping to determine their cost and the pros and cons for each option.

If I was a board member of the Y, I would also be doing 4 site evaluations- Hillmoor, Veterans Park, Well Street next to the State Park and building a new building at its existing location to determine what location offers the lowest cost and the best overall attributes for the Y.

We won't be focusing on building standards at this time because they have not yet been developed for the property and/or for any structure.