

Park Forest Community Swimming Pool  
**Pool Renewal Project - Public Forum SUMMARY**  
 on Tuesday, April 25, 2006 at Park Forest Middle School Cafeteria

<p><b><u>Presenting:</u></b>          Alan Popovich, HPArchitects          Scot Hunsaker, Councilman-Hunsaker          Todd Roth, CRPR Aquatics Supervisor</p> <p><b><u>Others Present:</u></b>          Cindy Solic, CRRRA          Roy Harpster, CRRRA          Jim Steff, COG Exec. Director          Ron Woodhead, CRPR Director          Todd Smith, ELA Group</p> <p>Please comment to: <a href="mailto:troth@crcog.net">troth@crcog.net</a></p>	<p><b><u>Community Members Present:</u></b>          Mike Troyan, 304 Douglas Drive          Karen Anderson, 305 Douglas Drive          Don &amp; Marlyn Keat, 316 Douglas Drive          David &amp; Patrese Huff, 322 Douglas Drive          Lee Ahern, 328 Douglas Drive          Daniel Henning, 137 West Blade Drive          Ann Miller, 413 Galen Drive          Jeff Laninger, 224 Leawood Lane          Rick Madore, 1252 Mayberry Lane          Anne &amp; Lisa Lawrence, 685 Stoneledge Road          Dale Reed, 252 Wooded Way          Cheryl Knobloch, 2090 N. Oak Lane          Ed Prince, 2611 Sleepy Hollow Drive</p>
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***Project Staff comments & responses are presented in italics.***

*The emails submitted by those who could not attend the forum are attached at the end of this summary. This document and other pool renewal info is also posted at <http://www.crpr.org>*

*Mr. Roth began the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and describing the meeting format. He then gave a project history, overview, and time line. He then introduced Mr. Popovich and Mr. Hunsaker. Mr. Popovich and Mr. Hunsaker gave an overview of this planning process and showed an array of examples of municipal pool projects from across the country. Mr. Hunsaker also talked about current trends in aquatics.*

*Mr. Ahern asked for clarification regarding his property as it was displayed on one of the surveyor's maps displayed at the meeting. Mr. Roth and Mr. Popovich clarified the information on the surveyor's map.*

*A question was asked regarding projected attendance for a renovated facility. Mr. Hunsaker responded by stating that each concept that will be developed will include projected attendance numbers.*

*Ms. Keat asked for additional available time for adult swims. The facility at one time offered a 5:00 lap swim which she felt worked better with many people's schedules. The 7:30 lap swim is too inconvenient for many people. She would like to see additional options or times for lap swimming and thinks that the market exists for it in the area.*

*Ms. Huff did not have interest in a flashy pool or flashy features. She felt that the pool must remain conducive to its neighborhood setting and wanted to have an option to keep the facility the same or very similar. She also felt that it would be nice to flatten out the swale area near the pool so that patrons could enjoy a flatter grassy area.*

*Mr. Ahern wished to keep the "neighborhood feel" of the pool and stressed that traffic needs to remain minimal through the neighborhood. He pointed out that the pool has many walkers and that their safety should remain a priority. He also felt that the style should remain appealing, it should blend in to the neighborhood; access to the pool should not come via Douglas Drive. He added that there should be parking fees for nonresidents and that the admission fee for nonresidents should be increased. He*

suggested remote-parking for the facility and noted that the facility has an adjacent bus route. He suggested that the current late-night problems in the (dimly-lighted) lot, as well as illegal overnight parking, be addressed before the renewal. *Consultants and staff clarified the current fee policies regarding nonresidents.*

Ms. Knobloch pointed out the demographic changes in the neighborhood and thought that the pool should cater to opportunities for all populations, including older teenagers, senior citizens, and nontraditional groups.

Ms. A. Lawrence pointed out that the facilities are becoming dilapidated in some areas, wanted a new gutter system, and liked the idea of the splash pad. She wanted a design that would be 'simple and lasting'.

Mr. Steff asked whether the 65% user fee / 35% municipal contribution for funding was typical for pools of this type. *Mr. Hunsaker responded that most facilities fall into three categories. First, the subsidy model, where tax dollars are used to build and operate, constitutes about half of the facilities that he has worked with. This group is shrinking, however, and about another 40% of facilities are break-even models, where tax dollars are used for construction, but user fees approximately offset all operational expenses. The smallest group (10%) generates enough revenue to offset capital expenses and/or other park services.* Mr. Steff asked whether 65% was typical for subsidy models. *Mr. Hunsaker responded that most newly renovated pools are in the 80% to 100% user fee funded range - which is primarily tied to the fee schedule for the facility.*

Ms. Huff stated that modesty is good and that while the pool has lots of walkers, there are no traffic signals or crossing guards in the summer. She felt that if people or the authority wanted a water park it may be a good idea, but should be built elsewhere. *Mr. Hunsaker reiterated that the goal is to generate ideas and present options for discussion at this point and wanted to explore what would be appropriate for this site for the next 30 years and how that compliments the overall community aquatic program.*

Mr. Ahern asked about accessibility from Valley Vista Drive to help change traffic patterns. He feels that any renovation will increase pool use. *It was pointed out that the site does not extend to Valley Vista and that direct access would not be achievable due to the grades involved, and that solving traffic patterns will be part of the design solution.*

Mr. Prince pointed out that while he does not live in Park Forest, he still considers it to be his neighborhood pool. He noted that changes did not have to be drastic, but he wanted to upgrade the facilities by adding something fun and new, especially for the kids. He feels that the facility is currently too limited.

Ms. A. Lawrence asked about the possibility of removing the bulkhead (the wall between the lane pool and the diving pool). *Mr. Hunsaker explained that the depth difference between the two pools would result in too great a slope, and that modifying that would be cost prohibitive.*

Ms. Anderson liked the beach entry and wanted a solution for parents with children of differing ages and needs. *Mr. Hunsaker explained that current trends agree, showing that the separate tot pool can be difficult for parents to use if they have another child in the main pool.*

Mr. Huff stated that he has seen a splash pad and that he thought that it would be popular and a good idea.

Mr. Ahern was concerned over the existing drainage problems under School Drive. He pointed out security issues with poor lighting for night time use and poor lighting in the parking lot and high speeds along School Drive. He suggested a chain or sign for this. He added that the lot is used by RV's on football weekends and asked about the site responsibility for drainage and security. He pointed out that the swale becomes waterlogged every heavy rain and that the culvert screen has not been cleaned.

Mr. Laninger wanted the pool status clarified in terms of what needed to be fixed. *Mr. Roth explained that the primary concerns included the bath house and the bulk head and gutter system in the*

pool structure. *Mr. Hunsaker added that the age of the original shell and filters (replaced in 1992) are also of concern as they are reaching the end of their serviceable life. It was pointed out that one of the options will likely leave as much infrastructure as possible and make necessary repairs.*

Mr. Ahern asked about the possibility of an indoor facility and expanded competitive and lap swimming use. *Mr. Hunsaker responded that for this community, it would be cost prohibitive. He showed that for competitive swimming, lap lanes do not accommodate many swimmers as compared to what can be accommodated by recreational swimmers. The question that needs to be addressed will be capacity management and showed examples of using multiple bodies of water to address differing needs. He pointed out that while competitive swimming is a very important service, it does not make money, so a balance needs to be established and we need to look at the overall community aquatics program and how it applied to this specific facility. The question of pool depth was also addressed concerning diving boards and starting blocks. The diving boards will likely remain within code, but the current starting platform depth of five feet may change within the lifespan of a renovated facility.*

Mr. Madore asked about the determination of facility capacities. *Mr. Hunsaker responded by explaining that this will be done by putting site-specific solutions together and determining possible uses.*

Ms. Huff expressed that she did not want a busy pool and that the design should add to the buffer between the facility and adjoining properties. Mr. Ahern added by explaining that the houses are raised above the swale so a solution needs to address this.

Mr. Ahern thought that the 65/35 funding split was fine and that it would be OK for rates to go up if the facility was nicer. He added that the pool should accommodate special populations and low income families without getting too outrageous and that competitive decisions could be made later. He included that adding some features would be nice for the kids.

Ms. Keat wanted to keep the natural setting, keep the trees, and keep the atmosphere. The bath house should fit in with the landscape. *Mr. Hunsaker agreed that the park setting should be preserved.*

Ms. A. Lawrence stated that the showers and floors were bad and asked about the possibility of matting for the floors. *Mr. Hunsaker responded by explaining some of the additional problems with keeping the mats clean.*

Ms. L. Lawrence pointed out that competitive swimming in this area has grown. Swim team programs start at age 5 and are a huge draw for the facility. She asked about the possibility of an 8-lane pool (adding 2 lanes).

Mr. Ahern asked what was going to be done to survey pool users this coming summer. *Mr. Hunsaker responded that we will be tracking pool use this summer. Mr. Roth added that some decisions will need to be made to comply with code requirements.*

Ms. Solic pointed out that as her children aged, their interest in the pool waned. She feels that we have an obligation to keep our older teens closer to home by providing spaces and fun activities for them and their friends. She thought that the site topography lends itself to a slide or feature that could blend in. *Mr. Hunsaker added that many teens do not visit the pool to swim and that many facilities need to address teen socialization, and that usually teens need some sort of thrill or feature as a draw.*

Mr. Ahern asked about the project budget. *Mr. Roth responded that the feasibility studies identified possible project budgets at just under \$1 million, although that number has likely grown since. He also pointed out that what this project will do is present options to local elected officials and that they will need to make any decisions regarding capital expenditures. He added that a goal of the project is to identify probable costs.*

Ms. Keat asked about facilities with teen hang-out spots such as a café or snack bar area. She also felt that the pavilion was underused. *Mr. Hunsaker responded that usually snack bars are not cost effective until the facility has closer to 60-70 thousand visits/yr. (PF pool currently hosts about 14,000 annual visits).*

Mr. Madore commented on the lifetime of this facility and its importance as a 30 or 40 year

investment in our community. *Mr. Hunsaker added that a renovated pool will likely have a 40-50 year lifespan. He added that many new features are available that meet new community needs.*

*Ms. Solic asked about the ADA requirements that would be met through construction. Mr. Hunsaker explained that the current requirements for two means of access will be met with the design.*

*Mr. Troyan asked about the Welch project and about what considerations there were for amenities at both sites. Mr. Roth explained that the hope is to have the two facilities work together to contribute to the overall aquatic program. Since season pass holders can visit either pool, the facilities should not duplicate services beyond meeting basic needs and should each provide for a unique aquatic experience.*

*Mr. Huff asked about the popularity of competitive swimming in this area. Mr. Hunsaker explained some demographic data regarding getting the most out of a facility based on the number of kids within a radius of the pool.*

*Mr. Ahern asked about the possibility of a third pool and about what has been found to be thrilling for teens. Mr. Roth responded that the idea of a third pool has been discussed and was identified by the Aquatic Studies to be not sustainable by the community at this time, but could remain open as a future option. Mr. Hunsaker addressed the thrill question by showing some examples of features that are popular and used in community pools.*

*Ms. A. Lawrence thought that the design should include something more exciting for teens and middle school children than a splash pad. Mr. Hunsaker showed some examples of other neighborhood park pools and features for teens.*

*Mr. Popovich asked the group for their opinion of the open air bath house. Most of the group did not like it and raised concerns about weather, bats, and the building's longevity.*

*Mr. Roth pointed out opportunities for further input and Mr. Hunsaker thanked everyone for their attention and input.*

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From: Mike and Kerri Weitzel <mailto:weitzel3@mac.com>

Sent: Tuesday, April 18, 2006 9:21 AM

To: crpr@crcog.net

**Subject: Park Forest Pool Renovation Suggestions**

To Whom It May Concern,

I recently heard that your office was going to have a meeting to discuss the renovations and compile suggestions from community members regarding the Park Forest Public Pool. As an avid pool goer, I do wish I could be present for the meeting, but I will not be able to attend.

I do have some suggestions and hope they are considered during the meeting.

1. The infant and toddler pool, although wonderful with it's mushroom that rains down on the kids, is really only fun for the older children. It would be nice if there was something a little less dramatic in size for young toddlers and infants to engage with.

2. I have used pools that have beach style entries with a very gentle slope. I realize that you could not do this with the large pool for swim competition reasons, but I think it would be wonderful to have that incorporated into the infant and toddler pool.

3. It would also be nice if there was a way that the infant and toddler pool was gated off in a way that patrons wanting to visit before 1 PM, could come and just use that pool with their young children who nap between 1 and 3 so they can avoid the large crowd that comes in the later afternoon.

4. There is such a large grass area available for resting your items and sunbathing. I had one too many experiences with older children throwing balls close to myself and my infant last year where the ball went wild and knocked into me or my child. I think providing a specific place for children to play in such a way could be arranged, so that parents like myself could sit as far away as possible in order to avoid such things happening to themselves, and children could be given a boundary to use since they

most often do not think about who is around them when they pick their own spot to play.

Thank you for taking my suggestions. I hope they are of interest and bring in some active discussion during the meeting.

Sincerely,  
Kerri Weitzel

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From: Mechteld Hillsley <mailto:Mechteld@engr.psu.edu>

Sent: Sunday, April 23, 2006 8:54 PM

To: [crpr@crcog.net](mailto:crpr@crcog.net)

Subject: park forest pool renovations

To Centre Regional Recreation Authority,

I am writing in response to the public meeting on Tuesday, April 25 about the Park Forest Pool renovations. I will be unable to attend but wanted to give my feedback. My children are on the swim team and we visit the pool regularly during the summer.

I love Park Forest Pool because it is a community pool. It has the feel of a smaller community pool, not a large public pool, where you can go with your family and swim with people you know. I do not want to loose that. I do not want addition of a slide or other such type of thing. This tends to make it too rowdy for family swimming. A big pool with slide would also not be desirable as a place to drop my kids for an afternoon of swimming when they get old enough to go alone. In addition, Welch pool already has a slide, and one such place in the community is enough.

I like the fact that the grassy sitting area is adjacent to the pool. As a mother I can sit on the grass and still see my children in the pool. This is something that is unavailable at the Welch pool (you have to be on the pavement to see the kids in the pool).

I don't see a need to enlarge the pool much. I would much rather see another small (size of Park Forest) community pool added in the community. If you insist on enlarging the pool, I would suggest making it like Science Park Pool w/ 8 lanes and a shallow 2-3 feet section for the younger kids. The shallow area is always crowded and the younger kids still can't stand in 3 feet. A 2-3 feet section added to the main pool would be a great addition. The young kids that hug the wall could hang out there and the deeper area is nearby for the older ones. This would also preserve the family/community atmosphere of this nice pool. Finally, a good improvement to the pool would be to fix the drainage in the grassy area so that puddles and mud don't form so much after rain storms. Please do not add a slide to this pool. The pool will loose its charm and I may stop bringing my family. Thank you for taking the time to read my input.

Sincerely,

Mechteld Hillsley, 114 Ashwood Place, Port Matilda, PA 16870 234-3674

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Just wanted to give you my thoughts on the pool renovation: Please consider parents trying to supervise young children (toddlers) and older kids. I know when we first moved back to SC, this was a real problem and kept me from going to the pool unless my husband was available. As it is now, the kiddie pool is too far away from the main pool. Also there is an age where the children are too grown up for the kiddie pool, but cannot stand up in the 4 ft end of the pool. Our neighborhood pool where we lived in Fairfax, VA had a better set-up. The main pool was L-shaped, and the small part of the L went from 2 or 2.5 ft and sloped down to 3.5 or 4 ft. Then the larger part of the L was the main part of the pool and was used for the swim team. The kiddie pool was close to the shallow part of the pool and was fenced in. From the kiddie pool, parents could easily observe children in the main pool, especially the shallow end. So 4-6 yr olds could be in the "big" pool, but could easily stand without a parent right beside them. If memory serves me correctly, the diving pool was attached to the top of the "L", in the opposite direction from the shallow end. Thanks for asking for public input! Brenda Cooper [rnbcooper@adelphia.net](mailto:rnbcooper@adelphia.net)

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Please accept these written suggestions to add to the upcoming discussion about the renewal of the Park Forest Community Swimming Pool. We've been family pass holders for this pool for many years and have the following ideas:

Addition of slide(s)

Additional comfortable lawn furniture

Keep covered pavilion area

Add a gently tapered walk-in area to the shallow end - perhaps off to the side of the shallow end. We are looking forward to the renewal.

With thanks,

Norman Spivey [fns2@psu.edu](mailto:fns2@psu.edu) 237-5936

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