

Pete Weldon

From: Michael Poole <mwpoole5@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 22, 2016 5:15 PM
To: Randy Knight
Cc: Forest Michael (michaelplanning@gmail.com); Clarissa Howard; Nice.Marina; MaryGail Coffee; City Commissioners; Shawn Shaffer (sshaffer@wppl.org)
Subject: Re: Follow up on comment made last night

Thanks Randy. I do not dispute that the Commission approved the MLK site location, and I did not disagree with your comments on this subject last night. Maybe my silence gave you that impression.

I share with you some of my observations from last night, with the hope of bringing some understanding and perspective to the frustrations I hear in the community. I am being contacted more now than before the election. I get contacted daily by residents asking what they can do to stop the construction of the library. I am asked what I am going to do, and why I have not started already.

Commentary last night, plus recent discussions with other residents, focuses on three major themes - location, event center, finances.

Location - Folks tell me they thought they were voting just for funding the new library, and not for a specific location since the referendum language did not state a location. This continuing discomfort and confusion with the finality of the MLK Park location, is fueled further by the Commission's vote against including the site in the bond referendum. This gave the impression to residents that the Commission and Library Trustees would be open to revisit the location after the vote.

A current commissioner told me last week they felt a level of deception that the City Attorney believes the referendum requires construction of the library only at MLK Park, unless changed by a bond validation suit. The commissioner felt equally deceived that the referendum is interpreted that the library and event center are required to be co-located. So if a commissioner feels that way, it is not hard to understand why the broader community, who is less informed, feels decisions were made without appropriate understanding by the residents.

Event Center - I am hearing the "last minute" inclusion of the civic / event center was a surprise. I have heard this from residents and library trustees. The complaint I receive is that the decision to demolish and rebuild the civic /event center came without any significant community participation. Typically, the Commission forms a task force of residents to study the needs, then the task force makes a recommendation to the Commission. Especially when spending the amount of capital dollars needed for a new event center. This was not done for the event center. And the Library Task Force did not study the need to improve the civic center.

Finances - Folks are concerned about the increase in taxes related to the bond, but also if the Library Trustees can raise the \$2.5 million. And as noted last night, until the programmatic design is completed, the operating costs remain undefined, and importantly who will pay the increased operating costs. There was no indication last night that the financial aspects of the project would be determined before the bonds were issued. While I know that the Library Trustees have the best of intentions, and I do not doubt their sincerity, the City is the backstop, and our taxes will be impacted if the Library Trustees cannot raise the funds. Folks remind me of the unfunded community financial promises of the Carlisle and Dog Park projects.

The Commission and the Library Trustees have the right to move forward without delay. I know the effort has been exhausting for many. I completely understand why the Commission and Library Trustees just want to move forward, and not return to what is seemingly "square one" by revisiting the location and the other issues. I get it.

Obviously, my hope is that the Commission and the Library Trustees will take a breath and let the "near majority" catch up.

Enjoy the weekend,

Michael

On Fri, Apr 22, 2016 at 2:17 PM, Randy Knight <Rknight@cityofwinterpark.org> wrote:

Michael and Forest,

I just wanted to follow up on the comment last night that the Commission had not approved MLK Park as the site of the Library/Events Center. Attached are excerpts of the minutes from the July 27 and October 26, 2015 meetings where that site was approved by the Commission. In July they selected that general site (north end of MLK) and asked ACi to do more work to show how it could fit. In October the commission formally approved that site with the approval of the general location contained in the final ACi report. That site was also extensively discussed with consensus on the location at the June 29th work session and July 13th meeting and I have attached those minutes.

Sincerely,



Randy Knight, CPA

City Manager

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