Smith, Colin

From: Valerie Carey [redacted]
Sent: Friday, January 03, 2014 2:32 PM
To: Kuras, Amy Beth
Subject: Re: Tennis courts at Windemere Park

Unfortunately I cannot attend a meeting at that time as I have a class that conflicts. That is why I have sent my comments to you and my councilperson Jane Lumm. Furthermore the online "polling" or "voting" only allows people to choose one of four locations - none of which I find appealing or satisfactory.

Valerie Carey
1245 Severn Court
Ward 2
Ann Arbor

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 3, 2014, at 8:16 AM, "Kuras, Amy Beth" <AKuras@a2gov.org> wrote:

> Hi Valerie, thanks for your input. There is a public meeting scheduled for January 15 at 7 p.m. at Gallup Park Livery to discuss Windemere Park. We will send all input received to the Park Advisory Commission for their consideration. Thanks, Amy
>
> **From:** Valerie Carey [redacted]
> **Sent:** Thursday, January 02, 2014 6:10 PM
> **To:** Lumm, Jane; Kuras, Amy Beth
> **Subject:** Fwd: Tennis courts at Windemere Park
>
> Dear Ms. Lumm & Ms. Kuras:
>
> I've attempted to post my "vote" on the new location of the tennis courts in Windemere Park at **www.a2gov.org/a2opencityhall**
> However I cannot figure out how to do this and I do not want to change cookies setting in browser. This so-called "voting" seems unfair as it 1) requires a computer, 2) seems to require a fair amount of computer savy to participate.
>
> Since I cannot register my thoughts at this website, I'll tell you what I think: I do NOT want the courts placed in the center of the park as this location will be disruptive of other activities in the park (formal and informal sports such as soccer, ballgames, kite flying, tag football, running and playing with dogs onleash), 2) will destroy the open vistas for folks living adjacent to and across from the park and for those of us who enjoy walking through the park. Why not simply save the taxpayers some money and NOT rebuild the tennis courts in Windemere Park. Tennis is not a major part of the activity in that park, so if it cannot be kept to an out-of-the-way location where it doesn't interfere with all the residents (children & adults) who want to enjoy the open space so they can play a variety of sports and have a terrific area to fly kites, let's just not have tennis courts there. Put them someplace else. How about putting the courts in Folkstone Park or the park on Larchmont? Taking a chunk out of the middle of our park would be to cut into the activities of the majority in order to please a minority who want to play a little tennis. Frankly,

the courts where they are lasted for over 20 years which seems like a reasonable length of time. Instead of patching them up, the alternative is to tear the existing courts up, and start over rebuilding in the same location. If done correctly, they should last another 20 years. The nice things about this location are: 1) doesn't infringe on the open, flat space where a variety of sports are played, 2) does not adjoin any homeowners property so it isn't a nuisance with stray tennis balls flying into folks' yards, 3) it's adjacent to the playground equipment so parents can play some tennis while keeping an eye on their children in the play area, 4) the courts are not adjacent to any highly trafficked street so, again, not stray tennis balls go flying out into the street or into cars (and they do come flying over the fence now...they just land in the park where they don't bother anyone.

There, I've said my piece. First preference is to NOT relocate the tennis courts elsewhere within Windemere Park; rebuild them where they are. Second preference, move them to a different park in the neighborhood. Third and least desirable preference, move them to near Windemere Dr. but keep them as close as possible to the corner of Windemere & Charter Place where they'll remain near the play area and away from people's homes and yards. To accomodate this space, there may need to be a downsized tennis area: one court instead of two. Not that many people play tennis at Windemere Park anyway.

Valerie Carey
1245 Severn Court
Begin forwarded message:

From: Valerie Carey [redacted]
Subject: **Tennis courts at Windemere Park**
Date: December 31, 2013 3:10:32 PM EST
To: Jane Lum <JLumm@a2gov.org>, akuras@a2gov.org
Bcc: Valerie Carey [redacted]

Dear Jane Lumm & Amy Kuras:

I live on Severn Ct & have lived there nearly 30 years - we are original owners of the house - and a daily user (walking) of Windemere Park. I've been reviewing past correspondence with various people - including Jane Lumm - re. the tennis courts. I will herein repeat pretty much what I've said in the past and stick by it. Tennis accounts for only a tiny fraction of how Windemere Park is used. I walk around the park - including walking past the tennis courts - every day at least 2x a day with my dog. In spring, summer, and autumn, I rarely see anyone playing tennis. When I do, it is usually a few kids being given instruction by an adult (sometimes a parent, sometimes not). Only one time last summer did i see a few adults playing and they apparently arrived by cars which were parked nearby so I don't know if they were even from this neighborhood. Still it is a city park, so anyone may use it. My point is that I walk there a lot at various times of day - in mornings, afternoons, early evening/pre-dinner, and after dinner - and I RARELY see anyone playing tennis. What I do see are people walking babies & toddlers, and walking dogs, adults walking and jogging, people sitting on the benches relaxing or chatting with neighbors, children playing in the playground area with and without adults, children playing in the park (soccer mainly...sometimes organized via Rec & Ed, sometimes informal, games of tag, kite flying, other informal playing). Puttig the tennis courts in the middle of the park is ignoring the fact that tennis accounts for very little of how the park is actually used, and the relocation to the middle of the

park will make these other uses not possible because the large open space area will be chopped in two by the tennis courts. Putting the courts in the location called "Option 2" is also WRONG: It would put the courts practically in the yards of the folks who live on that side of the park...when they bought their homes, they did not buy them figuring public tennis courts would be adjacent to their property! It would be unfair and wrong to burden them with having the courts built there after-the-fact and ruining their vista of open space which, I'm certain, is one of the features for which they chose to move into those homes.

One more thing: I'm leery of the Parks Dept.'s plan for "landscaping". If the current weed patch located next to the existing tennis courts is what the Department means by "landscaping" and "rain garden", I am vigorously opposed to it. Here's why: 1) it is unsightly, 2) many of the plants therein are invasive and weedy plants (I wish I'd written down the names of the plants I've seen in there, but at the time when I walked around in there I wasn't thinking to make notes and it has been about a year and a half since I informally surveyed the patch of ground), 3) this unkempt area provides a haven for invasive plant seeds from which they may be dispersed into neighboring yards & gardens, 4) this unkempt area provides a haven for vermin and ticks (a serious problem considering Lyme disease and other tick-carried diseases. There is no oversight to this area to see to it that it is planted with native and non-invasive plant species so it simply provides an area from which invasives may disperse, and in which ticks may shelter. Also, it's just plain unsightly. If a rain garden for soaking up runoff was the desired intent, a much better job could have been done in selecting species for visual and practical impact.

I'd rather see the tennis courts simply not replaced...remove the old ones if that's the Department's plan...and do not replace them since replacing them in the middle of the park will sacrifice the majority of uses (no more broad open area in which to play sports, fly kites, play informal children's games, run with your dog onleash, et al.) so that under-used tennis courts may be built. And alternatively building them at the Option 2 site practically in the backyard of neighbors on Wynnstone & Windemere Drives (the two houses adjacent to the park on that end) is just plane unfair to them and fails to take into account that they bought their homes with the intention of enjoying the pleasant openness of our peaceful neighborhood park. Most of the people who use our park enjoy it for 1) the open spaces in which to relax, fly kites, play soccer or other ball games or an informal game of tag, 2) a pleasant place to walk babies, children, pets, and 3) the playground equipment for young children. Very few use it for tennis playing, and since moving the courts to any of these proposed new locations will infringe on if not destroy the layout of the park for the majority of its users, perhaps the tennis courts should simply not be rebuilt (I repeat that very few people play tennis there anyway and at least some of them drive to the courts - I've seen them park and get in and out of their cars - so perhaps it would be better if they simply drove elsewhere to play tennis.

Sincerely and wishing you a happy new year!
Valerie Carey
1245 Severn Court

Smith, Colin

From: D Massell [mailto[redacted]]
Sent: Wednesday, December 04, 2013 11:57 PM
To: Bahl, Sumedh; Smith, Colin
Subject: Windemere Park Public Meeting

Dear Mr. Bahl and Mr. Smith,

As the end of the year draws close at hand, I was wondering whether you have determined a process to resolve the court location issue and a date planned for the public meeting. It has been a long road, and I know you and your team have worked hard to move forward. We don't want to lose that momentum! In the spirit of helping, I respectfully suggest the that PAC or staff make the following decisions up front to have a productive public meeting:

(1) Who is the "community" of stakeholders that will be invited to participate? Do stakeholders include any park user, or only residents? Which residents?

(2) How will options be presented? Will there be an open discussion of all options? Will there be a single vote on all options, or sequential votes deleting the "losing" options until there are two final choices? Will the City provide maps depicting these options, or post them out on the field to demonstrate actual locations?

(3) How will community input be gathered? Will it be by a show of hands or secret ballot at the public meeting? Will the City conduct a private poll of residents?

(4) How will community input be measured for the final choice? Will majorities determine the outcome? Will you ask for one vote per household, or per individual? Will youth votes be considered?

(5) Is there agreement that the winning choice at the public meeting will be brought before PAC? Will some PAC members commit to attending so they have direct evidence of the discussion?

Perhaps you have already made these decisions, and reached agreement with PAC. We would love to move quickly towards the public meeting so that another year does not get lost on a contract for the tennis courts. Please let me know if you will be setting a date soon, and if there is any way I can help.

Thank you both for your assistance.

Best regards,

Diane Massell

19 November 2013

Memo to: Parks Advisory Commission Members
From: Jane Lumm, 2nd Ward Councilmember
cc: Community Services Area Administrator Sumedh Bahl, Parks and Recreation Manager Colin Smith, Landscape Architect Amy Kuras, Earhart Knolls Homeowners Assn. Board of Directors, Earhart Village Homes Assn. Board President Rod Sorge
Subject: Windemere Park Tennis Courts

Thank you all for your further study and reconsideration of the May 2012 decision regarding placement of the planned reconstructed tennis courts within Windemere Park. On behalf of our many residents who enjoy Windemere Park, its tennis court amenities and other active and passive uses, I am writing to express strong support and encouragement of the relocation recommendation, and the Earhart Knolls Homeowners Association's "Petition and Support to Relocate Windemere Park Tennis Courts for Maximum Free Space and Play Areas."

I understand that the decision that resulted in the recommendation to place the tennis courts in accordance with the Option 4 plan was preceded by and the result of two public meetings (in July and Oct. 2012), and a subsequent email survey. Those outreach efforts are appreciated and were intended to determine a consensus recommendation. Despite the best of intentions, consensus was not achieved. Over the course of these many months, and, with the benefit of numerous subsequent meetings with staff and interested neighbors, and conversations with a broad cross section of Earhart Knolls and Glacier Hills residents, I have concluded that this decision and its impact on the park is more nuanced, and that the park neighbors and users are now speaking with a more unified view and perspective. My hope is that by sharing what I've gleaned from the significant neighborhood input that has been provided me, I can further your understanding of the consensus now represented by the neighborhood petition. We don't always have an opportunity to revisit or improve upon a previous decision, but that opportunity, as helpfully detailed and articulated by the Earhart Knolls Homeowners and Earhart Village Homes Associations, is now presented PAC. I very much hope that this new information, the neighborhood petition, Option 1 / Option 4 doodle poll, Homeowners' case statement and support of the neighboring Earhart Village Home Assn., will result in your reconsideration and recommendation of Option #1, as the best, most desirable and optimal choice.

My observations and comments are based upon conversations and exchanges with a broad cross-section of Earhart Knolls and Glacier Hills residents. When asked about the status of the court replacement project, a question I frequently fielded in my travels throughout the neighborhood, I shared that the City would replace the courts in the Spring, and that the remaining/unresolved Q was where the courts would be built – Option # 1 or Option # 4. Here's what I heard and what I learned:

- Option #4 is not the preferred choice of the vast majority of the neighbors, the neighbors who live in closest proximity to the park, and the neighbors who do not have an adjacent homeowner's "eye" on the park.
- Option #4 will more negatively impact the other park and rec activities. I've been watching Windemere Park on and off throughout the Fall and understand why, when you see first-hand all

the wonderful recreation activities (programmed and spontaneous) that take place in the park on an ongoing basis (acknowledging what Amy has said about these activities continuing), the decision and the impact on the park IS more nuanced.

- Option #4 is the least desirable because it has the greatest impact on the park's open space – a feature that the residents would like to continue to enjoy and protect
- The courts should be replaced, but if located in the "middle" (Option #4), perhaps replacement is not the best option (sentiment expressed primarily by a # of residents who "ring" the park)
- The courts should absolutely be replaced, but prefer not to relocate in the "middle" (sentiment expressed strongly by residents who "ring" the park, and shared by residents who live on nearby streets
- Option #1 moves the courts to a location that has less impact on the open space, and is preferred by a greater # of residents with the exception of a few.

In addition to these opinions, I concluded that our NE Area Ann Arbor residents want to see this decision favorably resolved and the courts built. Hence, the initiative taken by the Earhart Knolls Homeowners Association to reach out their neighbors to conduct a simple survey to reassess the prior recommendation and deliver a representative and consensed recommendation. As expressed in the doodle poll and stated by the Earhart Knolls Board, and given the strongly held opinions on this location question, it is clear that a mutually agreeable solution and recommendation is achievable.

Our residents sincerely appreciate all your efforts to resolve this matter in a way that best addresses all the concerns that have been raised. This final and quick reassessment represents a more considered survey of residents who've had the benefit of months of reflection, a better understanding of the pro's and con's of the prior relocation decision, and the desire of a neighborhood to support the most optimal outcome for Windemere Park and its many active park users. I appreciate that our many Windemere Park neighbors took this initiative to "clear the air" on this matter before you, are now presenting you their case for recommending relocating the courts at the preferred Option #1 location, and are enthusiastic about the recommendation that is before you. I also am grateful they undertook an additional survey to further corrorborate the anecdotal opinions I heard expressed by the many residents who invested the time to share their concerns with me.

Thank you very much for your time, and for reconsidering your decision in light of this new information and important neighborhood feedback.

November 19th, 2013

Dear Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, Council Members and Departmental Staff,

I am concerned about the continual revisiting of a decision reached regarding the placement of the tennis courts in Windemere park and the current petition. I urge the Commission to stick with the original compromise made at the October public meeting or not have tennis courts altogether at this park.

I live at one end of the park (for the past 25 years) where one of the options (#1) was first discussed for placement during a first public meeting walk around of the park area. After borings were taken in different areas of the park, sketches of Options 1, 2 and 3 were sent out only to a selected number of people (my husband who was present at the walkaround never got an email of these photos.) At a large public meeting in October, Options 1, 2, and 3, were discussed. ***All 3 options initially proposed to residents would preserve as much green space as possible.*** **Options 2 and 3 were opposed by the neighbors on Windemere living directly across the park and adjacent to the park on the east side. As a compromise, a decision was reached and agreed upon at this public meeting for placement of the courts halfway in between Options 1 and the Option directly across it (option 2 or 3).** The compromise was designated Option 4.

Subsequently, there have been meetings and polls organized by vocal neighbors to alter this decision. In this latest effort (11/3/2013), my husband forwards me an doodle poll email from this group, even though I was in attendance at the October meeting and my neighbors and park had my email. **The poll was far from scientific---the introduction was very biased in favor of option 1, did not include consideration of ALL options (#1,2, 3, and 4), sampling questionable and did not allow for one vote per house.** ***Using this data to make an informed decision would not be appropriate.*** **T**hree anonymous comments were also made to this poll; one only spoke to location and in favor of the compromised solution: 'In the current location, the noise from the courts already wakes us on Sunday morning. The noise includes cursing at the top of the lungs, whoops, long, loud conversation. Option #4 has the courts somewhat farther away from our bedroom windows, so we prefer it. If you really don't care about the location, but do care about your neighbors' sleep, please vote for Option #4."

I recognize we cannot please everyone. As you consider all issues, please also imagine how you might respond if this was your own home. Option 1 is very close to my and my neighbor's house on Wynnstonne and will likely result in more noise, possible balls in our lawns and increased foot traffic by our backyards. It is also not as cost effective as other options as relayed to us initially by parks department. The *weathering* of the courts in this location is also an issue. I have included several photos taken this past Sunday (Nov 17) at noon, after the rain but before the big rains at night. You will see deep puddles close to where Option 1 is proposed and none elsewhere. In addition to placement and weathering of the courts, there is no assurance what will be done with the dugout space of the tennis courts. I propose that the dug up areas, irrespective of whatever option be made into a green area bee and kept as another open space.

Thank you for listening, and your thoughtful consideration to these concerns.

Rita Benn, PhD 3755 Charter Place [redacted]