



Commission on Disability

ACTION CALENDAR

January 15, 2008

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Commission on Disability

Submitted by: Paul Church, Secretary, Commission on Disability

Subject: Warm Water Pool at the Berkeley High School Milvia Street Site

RECOMMENDATION

Place a bond measure on the November 2008 ballot for the construction of a new warm water pool and hire all necessary consultants to insure passage of the bond.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the recently completed Warm Water Pool Study, it is estimated the cost of construction for a new warm water pool will be approximately \$15 million. A bond of this size would cost property owners an average \$5.59 per \$100,000 of assessed value over a thirty-year period.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Berkeley Unified School District is currently planning the demolition of the Old Gym building. If and when this building is demolished, the City will no longer have a therapeutic warm water pool accessible to senior and disabled residents of the City. A recently completed report titled "Berkeley Warm Water Pool Study" lays out the design and feasibility of building a new warm pool on the current parking lot located at the corner of Milvia Street and Bancroft Avenue.

It is imperative the City keep its warm water pool. This subject has been discussed extensively since before the year 2000, and it is now time to act decisively to build a new pool.

BACKGROUND

The Commission on Disability has been following this issue since before the passage of Measure R, and has been actively involved with the proposal to build a new warm pool since last spring. It has conducted multiple public meetings and has heard from numerous Berkeley residents on the need for not only a warm pool but for new or refurbished pools for everybody. Despite the passage of a bond in the year 2000 to pay for the remodel of the existing warm water pool, the remodeling has never been undertaken and now the pool is threatened for demolition by the school district wishing to reclaim the land.

Throughout the recent meetings, numerous people spoke on the need for a single, stand alone warm pool versus a larger community pool complex. The Commission carefully listened to all recommendations and determined that a single pool is the only feasible alternative at this time.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The need and use of the warm pool has never been in dispute. This was affirmed in 2000 when the voters passed Measure R intended to refurbish the existing pool. The pool is a true gem for the City of Berkeley and must be retained. Consultants have been hired in the past to help successfully pass bond measures, and should be again on this issue if that is what is needed.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

A larger community pool complex consisting of two or three individual pools meeting all of the community needs was considered and rejected at this time. The community pool is still in the conceptual stage and has no drawings or cost estimates available. The warm pool could be turned into a reality quickly and easily from this point forward, thus receiving the commission's support.

CITY MANAGER

The City Manager is recommending that this matter be referred to staff for possible ballot measure discussion for the November 2008 general election.

CONTACT PERSON

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