

**REGULAR MEETING AND JOINT STUDY SESSION WITH PARKS AND RECREATION
COMMITTEE OF THE FOSTER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

M I N U T E S

APRIL 6, 2023

1. CALL TO ORDER

At 7:00 p.m. by Chair Jagtiani

Pursuant to Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20, as amended through Order N-08-21, the meeting was held as a hybrid meeting with the option to attend by teleconference and/or video conference or in person.

2. ROLL CALL

Planning Commission Present: Commissioners Haddad, Venkat, and Chair Jagtiani

Parks and Recreation Committee: Committee Members Bindal, Corpuz, Delmonico, Duncan, Ryzak, Tiwari, and Chair Baer

Absent: Commissioner Bronitsky

Consultants: Jonathan Hartman, Principal Architect, Group 4; Dawn Merkes, Principal Architect, Group 4; and Sebastian Lopez-Wilson, Job Captain, Group 4; and Marco Esposito, SWA

Staff Present: Sofia Mangalam, Community Development Director; Derek Schweigart, Parks and Recreation Director; Ray Towne, Interim Public Works Director; Laura Galli, Engineering Manager; and Denise Bazzano, Assistant City Attorney

9. STUDY SESSION

1. TO DISCUSS SITE STRATEGIES, CONCEPT OPTIONS, AND SCHEMATIC DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CITY OF FOSTER CITY RECREATION CENTER REBUILD PROJECT – UP2023-0003

ACTION: Commissioner Haddad motioned for item 9.1 to be moved to the top of the agenda, Commissioner Venkat seconded, and action was approved by roll call vote of 3-0-0-1 (Absent: Bronitsky)

ACTION: Chair Baer motioned for item 9.1 to be moved to the top of the agenda, Committee member Ryzak seconded, and action was approved by roll call vote of 7-0-0-0

Project Update:

Director Schweigart and Dawn Merkes updated the committee on the ongoing community outreach (with over 1000 responses at public events and online surveys) and the multiple technical meetings with city staff and design consultants which have resulted in the current site and building design options.

Site Design Update:

Marco Esposito from SWA presented two updated site and parking options. Both reuse and restripe the existing parking lot between the VIBE teen center and the current recreation center, while adding new parking bays either along Shell Blvd or adjacent to the new building respectively. He explained how these designs include preferred design features and respond to feedback gathered from input from the community, the Project Task Force, and the discussions from the first Joint Study Session. They include design amenities such as waterfront terraces, space for markets and fairs, and social areas that can serve as community gathering places. The designs consider factors such as wind protection of outdoor spaces, connection and relationship to existing park amenities, and proximity of accessible parking for events.

Building Design Update:

Dawn Merkes and Jonathan Hartman from Group 4 presented two updated one story and two-story building options. They explained how these designs respond to feedback from the community, the Project Task Force, and the discussions from the first Joint Study Session. These include the top picked design values of indoor/outdoor, nature inspired, and warm and inviting. They presented the use of each space, and how they relate to the other program and site elements in the design to create successful connections to the park and lagoon.

Questions:

The design team took questions from the Joint Study Session:

- Committee Member Duncan inquired where the rose garden will be in each option.
 - Marco Esposito replied that the red dots in the landscape plans show the rose garden, along the arrival side of the building options between the parking and the building.
- Committee Member Ryzak commented that from the beginning, there has been a hope for the idea of people walking into an entrance that looks like a main entrance and to have something dramatic happen with the connection to the lagoon.
 - Dawn Merkes replied that both options accommodate this. She explained that the arrival sequence begins at the car. The one-story option has the drop-off and entrance oriented toward the lagoon. The lagoon is the main focal point as you approach the building and the main view out from the lobby. The two-story option has a double-height lobby, with large amounts of glass looking directly out to the lagoon. Both options give a grand entrance to the parking lot, and excellent views from within the lobby.
- Committee Member Corpuz inquired about the difference in building area between the two options.

- Dawn Merkes reported that both options are around 39,000 square feet, however the two-story option is slightly larger, because it includes vertical circulation elements such as stairs and an elevator.
- Commissioner Venkat asked if the existing artwork on the site will have places in the new design.
 - Dawn Merkes confirmed that a gallery is included in the program and hallways will include art rails.
 - Marco Esposito added that at this time the design team does not fully understand the inventory of all the site elements (trees, children's art, etc.), but where possible will incorporate existing art and site features.
- Commissioner Venkat asked if there will be any restrooms for people who are using the different exterior spaces after hours.
 - Dawn Merkes responded that this was not included in the original project budget, but is on the list of alternates/options that will be presented to the City Council for their consideration.
- Committee Member Duncan noted that the outdoor amenity along the lagoon is identified as a social terrace. She inquired about how this is envisioned and if this will include parking for boats.
 - Director Schweigart explained that the design team is showing concepts for the exterior spaces and are in the process of developing them. Additionally, Parks and Recreation staff will be bringing a proposal to the City Council on April 17th to include the design of the waterfront from the amphitheater to the boat launch in this project. This would include the design of the waterfront as continuous with the current building and site design. He noted that this scope will require an additional CIP for documentation and construction.
- Commissioner Haddad asked why wind is not being considered as a source of clean energy for this project.
 - Dawn Merkes explained that the project does not currently have the budget for wind generation. She added that current options for wind generation are typically better for larger scale projects and come with maintenance concerns.
- Chair Baer asked if there is a difference in cost between the two options, understanding that the two-story option is a larger building. He expressed a preference for the smaller footprint of the two-story option for greater site opportunities.
 - Dawn Merkes replied that the team will be able to answer this question in more detail after receiving the cost estimates next week. One of the potential cost offsets is that the two-story building may have a smaller foundation which may offset the cost of the additional square footage.
- Commissioner Venkat asked if the two-story option is more energy efficient.
 - Dawn Merkes replied that both options have the same envelope and opportunities for PVs, so they should be considered equal at this point from the perspective of energy efficiency.
- Commissioner Haddad asked if this facility will be required to be an essential facility, with the understanding that this will have a large budget and systems impact.

- Dawn Merkes replied that the design team conducted a technical meeting to discuss the building's role within the County's emergency response plan. The team understands that the County is not planning on using the new facility as an emergency shelter. The team will be including this as an alternate/option for the City Council to consider.
- Chair Jagtiani asked if there are any limitations between the two options on the amenities that will be available for the community.
 - Dawn Merkes replied that the two-story option offers more park space, because of the smaller footprint, has a second-story deck, and more spaces with lagoon views due to the second floor.
- Chair Jagtiani asked if there is any difference in parking counts between the two options.
 - Dawn Merkes replied that the two options have been designed to have the same number of parking spaces.
- Committee Member Tiwari commented that there has been some mention of the amount of parking along Shell being different between the two options.
 - Marco Esposito replied that in parking option 1 the removed senior parking entrance adds some spaces on shell, but the driveway in parking option two does not allow for this.
- Committee Member Corpuz inquired how do the parking counts relate to the existing parking.
 - Marco Esposito replied that between the retained existing parking and proposed parking we will be increasing parking by 10-20 spaces total. This is added with the new drives. The current lot can be re-striped with slightly smaller spaces to get more spots.
 - Dawn Merkes elaborated that both parking options meet the municipal code requirements, however Parks and Rec Staff has been conducting actual usage counts on the three lots for the past 10 days and will continue their observations through this weekend. This information will help the design team understand how the three lots are being used and will help inform us of the design for the parking.
- Chair Jagtiani commented that during major events there is a big crunch for parking. He also noted that some people currently use the library parking lot.
 - Dawn Merkes replied that the library is close enough to be counted as "shared" by this project and noted that the City could provide signage to help direct people to it during peak hours of use at the center. A parking management plan can be developed to help address large event parking needs.
- Committee Member Bindal asked if there are differences between the events spaces in the two building options.
 - Dawn Merkes replied that the program of spaces is the same between the two options.

Breakout Session:

The Joint Study Session moved on to a breakout session where the Committee members and Commissioners reviewed physical presentation materials for the parking and building

options brought by the design consultants and asked questions of the design team. After this period of question, comment, and discussion, the Joint Study Session returned to their seats and continued with formal comments.

Site Design Comments:

The Joint Study Session members provided individual comments on the site and parking design options.

- Committee Member Bindal commented that it was great to see the options and thanked the staff and design team. He commented that it is not easy to digest all the input. He expressed that he was glad to have more detailed information about the options, that it was more than what had been shared in the first meeting. He expressed that Parking Option 1 is his personal preference, citing that the view from Shell allows the building to blend into the park more.
- Committee Member Duncan commented that Option 1 with existing bays and new drop off seems to be less costly, and more efficient. She noted that it reuses more of the current parking and allows for more multipurpose green space in the park.
- Committee Member Tiwari commented that Option 1 seems simpler and would be less chaotic in times of high traffic, with greater preservation of green space.
- Committee Member Corpuz identified Option 1 as his preference. He commented that the parking design has a clear destination from the traffic signal and is less confusing. He added that this option allows for a better view of the recreation center from Shell.
- Chair Baer commented that Parking Option 2 gives the most flexibility, and that a two-story option for the building would still be visible. He added that this layout gives greater flows from Shell for large events and a better opportunity for food trucks.
- Commissioner Venkat expressed her preference for Option 1, citing that it has a better flow, has one entrance instead of multiple, and is more flexible.
- Commissioner Haddad commented that in general he believes Option 1 is better.
- Chair Jagtiani commented that Option 1 is a clear winner. He expressed that he personally prefers this option for the stated reasons. He added that he does not want the building to look like a strip mall with parking along Shell and prefers having a consolidated parking layout rather than two areas.

Building Design Comments:

The Joint Study Session members provided individual comments on the building design options.

- Commissioner Venkat expressed her preference for the two-story option. She noted that it will have a smaller footprint to preserve more parking space and will make it easier for people with physical disabilities to get from one side of the building to another vs the one-story.
- Commissioner Haddad commented that the one-story option does not seem feasible as it covers pretty much the entire side of the park and is very close to the amphitheater. He added that if the one-story option could move to the other side

of the storm drain, it would be better. He commented that if the current siting is to remain, the two-story option is better.

- Chair Baer commented that the two-story option provides the best utilization of the park and is better on all points. He added that it leaves us with more usable space, and that he thinks it looks much better in the renderings. He added that the one-story option looks like it will have more wind issues. He noted that the project is still waiting on cost information, but he feels more comfortable now that there would not be increased cost related to this design.
- Committee Member Corpuz stated that he prefers the two-story concept, but recommended introducing the “sails” concept into the design. He commented that the smaller footprint gives more park space, and better views. He added that he likes the “sails” design concept as a nod to the community.
- Committee Member Tiwari commented that he thinks the two-story option will be more efficient.
- Committee Member Duncan expressed her preference for the one-story option. She recognized the excellent work from the Parks and Rec Department, City Staff, Planning Commission, Group 4, and community members. She went on to specifically thank the City’s team for engaging with seniors. She commented that the design values for the site that the community selected reflect her own values and expressed that the community will benefit from social and waterfront terraces, and food trucks. She added that the building design values identified all get her support. She expressed that she is happy to see both options address energy efficiency and sustainability. She added that she likes how both locate the senior spaces close to the lobby and hopes that seniors will get a similar amount of space as they currently do. She expressed her opinion that the one-story option reflects the water-oriented aspect of the City and its residents. She added that the overhangs provide lots of shelter and shade, and that the rounded edge of the “sail” is more attractive. She said that she believes this will be less costly to build and maintain with no stairs and elevator, and that if the City were to build a one-story building perhaps a second level could be added later.
- Committee Member Bindal expressed his vote for the two-story option. He noted that it gives more space close to the water. He added that he is an outdoor person, and this option gives more space for people like him to socialize. He suggested that the team should “enhance” the aesthetics of the two-story option to be more aligned with the one-story option.
- Chair Jagtiani expressed his preference for the two-story option. He noted that outdoor space is more valuable, and that during events people spend more time outdoors than indoors, so the greater exterior space is preferred. He expressed that he is optimistic that this option could be cheaper for the reasons given.

6. NEW PUBLIC HEARING

1. TO REVIEW PROJECTS IN THE PROPOSED FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) TO DETERMINE CONSISTENCY WITH THE GOALS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS OF THE FOSTER CITY GENERAL PLAN AND/OR FOR INCLUSION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECTS IN THE FY 2023-24 AND FIVE-YEAR 2023-28 CIP, RESPECTIVELY

ACTION: Commissioner Venkat motioned for item 6.1 to be moved up of the agenda, Commissioner Haddad seconded, and action was approved by roll call vote of 3-0-0-1 (Absent: Bronitsky)

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Venkat to approve Resolution to recommend to City Council approval of the projects being considered in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024 and/or Five-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) are consistent with the Foster City General Plan and should be accepted for inclusion in the FY 2023-2024 and Five Year CIP, respectively and find that the action is exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) and 15262 of the CEQA guidelines, seconded by Commissioner Haddad, to Adopt Resolution No. P-02-23, carried by roll call vote, passed 3-0-0-1 (Absent: Bronitsky)

3. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

1. None

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. MINUTES OF MARCH 2, 2023 PLANNING COMMISSION AND PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE JOINT STUDY SESSION
2. MINUTES OF MARCH 16, 2023 REGULAR MEETING

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Haddad, seconded by Commissioner Venkat to approve the Minutes of March 2, 2023 Planning Commission and Parks and Recreation Committee Joint Study Session and March 16, 2023 Regular Meeting, carried by roll call vote, passed 3-0-0-1 (Absent: Bronitsky)

5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING

1. None

7. OLD BUSINESS

1. None

8. NEW BUSINESS

1. PLANNING COMMISSION REORGANIZATION

ACTION: Commissioner Haddad moved to appoint Chair Jagtiani, Commissioner Venkat seconded, and action was approved by roll call vote of 3-0-0-1 (Absent: Bronitsky)

ACTION: Commissioner Venkat moved to appoint Vice Chair Haddad, Chair Jagtiani seconded, and action was approved by roll call vote of 3-0-0-1 (Absent: Bronitsky)

2. CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENT OF ONE PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBER TO THE RECREATION CENTER REPLACEMENT PROJECT TASK FORCE

ACTION: Commissioner Venkat moved to continue to a date uncertain, Commissioner Haddad seconded, and action was approved by roll call vote of 3-0-0-1 (Absent: Bronitsky)

10. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR REPORT

1. Director Mangalam congratulated Chair Jagtiani and Vice Chair Haddad. Director Mangalam made an announcement, the City is now accepting applications to fill a vacancy on Planning Commission, a four-year term starting from June 1, 2023 and applications are due on April 27th.

11. STATEMENTS AND REQUESTS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

1. Commissioner Venkat thanked the staff, Parks and Recreation consultants and Interim Public Works Director, Ray Towne for their staff reports. Commissioner Venkat brought up autism month and reminded us that mental health is important and provided contact information to call 988, a suicide and crisis phone line that provides 24/7 support if needed.
2. Chair Jagtiani thanked the staff, consultants, City Council, Interim Public Works Director, Ray Towne, committees, and fellow Commissioners.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 9:16 pm to April 19, 2023 Special Study Session.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Planning Commission of the City of Foster City at a Special Study Session thereof held on April 19, 2023 by the following vote:

AYES, COMMISSIONERS: Haddad, Venkat, and Chair Jagtiani

NOES, COMMISSIONERS:

ABSTAIN, COMMISSIONERS: Bronitsky

ABSENT, COMMISSIONERS:

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Ravi Jagtiani
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RAVI JAGTIANI, CHAIR

ATTEST:

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SOFIA MANGALAM, SECRETARY