



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

DATE: July 12, 2010
TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Director of Public Works
SUBJECT: HISTORY OF SOCCER FIELD USE IN HAHAMONGNA
WATERSHED PARK

On March 23, 2010, the Hahamongna Watershed Park Advisory Committee recommended their support to seek further direction from the City Council for reconsideration of soccer fields as a part of the Hahamongna Watershed Park Master Plan adopted in 2003. The letter from the HWPAC to the Council is included as Exhibit A.

Staff has assembled the following history regarding soccer fields in Hahamongna to assist the City Council in reviewing the HWPAC request to review on this subject. Exhibit B illustrates the adopted master plan for Hahamongna, with the athletic fields highlighted.

HISTORY:

The prospect of athletic fields in Hahamongna is not a new topic of discussion. Proposals for such recreational activity extend back prior to the City's oversight of the area:

1986 – '91 In January 1987 the Devil's Gate Multi-Use Project Advisory Committee was established to further develop and design this plan. Preliminary economic, biological, and feasibility studies were conducted by outside consultants.

The Devil's Gate Joint Power Planning Authority (JPPA), made up of appointees representing Pasadena, La Cañada-Flintridge, Native Americans and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy held a series of public meetings during an 18-month period. It also oversaw the development of the Preliminary Plan by Takata Associates which included the consideration of four 'meadows' with open space/play fields in addition to the Oak Grove field. The JPPA held three public workshops as part of the planning process, developed governance

and funding recommendations, and obtained \$1.86 million in County Parks bond money through the November 1992 election.

- Dec 1992 The Devil's Gate Multi-Use Project Preliminary Park Plan was approved by the Pasadena City Council. This plan proposed upgrading the existing Oak Grove field and made no recommendation for additional fields.
- 1993 The area was re-named Hahamongna Watershed Park
- Oct 1993 The Pasadena City Council established a Creation Task Force to develop the legal structure for the Hahamongna Operating Company (HOC) which would implement, manage, and operate the project. The transfer of the operation and maintenance responsibility of the Oak Grove Park portion was returned to the City of Pasadena.
- Aug 1996 The Pasadena City Council disbanded the Hahamongna Operating Company Board and transferred all responsibilities of the Hahamongna Watershed Park to the Department of Public Works.
- Nov 1996 Hahamongna Watershed Park was allocated \$1 million for capital improvements as a result of the 1996 Los Angeles County Park Bond Act.
- Jan 1997 Pasadena City Council established the Hahamongna Watershed Park Advisory Committee (HWPAC) which was comprised of all members of the City's Recreation and Parks Commission with two additional members representing the Northwest Commission and two members representing the Utility Advisory Commission.
- May 1997 The HWPAC resurrected the approved 1992 Preliminary Park Plan and hosted a series of community meetings to gain input.
- Dec 1997 The HWPAC determined that the Council approved 1992 Preliminary Park Plan provided a good basis for the future of the park. They developed a list of "Park Elements" which represented refinement to that plan based on community consensus and input at that time. The Park Elements list included two athletic fields; the existing Oak Grove field and the conversion of Johnson Field on the east, to a public field.
- Nov 1998 to
June 2003 the landscape architecture firm of Takata Associates was brought on board to develop the final Master Plan for Hahamongna Watershed Park. During the planning process led by the Takata team, a number of community meetings were held in which alternatives for the project

were presented. The community was split between no playing fields vs. incorporating as many fields as the park could accommodate, including options for up to seven new fields. The process resulted in a compromise and what the HWPAC at the time (see Exhibit C: HWPAC meeting minutes from May 1999) considered the best possible balance between all the competing uses, which was two fields on the eastside and two fields on the west side of the park.

1/24 and
2/7/2000

Staff presented a Conceptual Master Plan to City Council for approval that included four multi-purpose fields: the existing Oak Grove field and three additional fields as described above. City Council conceptually approved the staff recommendation and in addition asked for the consideration of a plan that that would utilize nine holes of the 18 hole disc golf course as an additional (or fifth) soccer field(s) and to evaluate these in the draft MEIR. (See Exhibit F)

Sept. 2003

Staff recommended the adoption of the Hahamongna Watershed Park as presented. The staff recommendation to Council proposed a total of four athletic fields: the existing Oak Grove field and the proposal of three new fields. Exhibit D illustrates the staff recommendation for the west side of Hahamongna, consisting of the existing Oak Grove and Sycamore Grove fields. Exhibit E illustrates the staff recommendation for the east side of the park, consisting of the conversion of Johnson field to a public field and the addition of a new field.

The plan was adopted and the MEIR was certified. The final adopted plan for Hahamongna includes the Oak Grove and Sycamore Grove fields and the addition of a third field recommended by Council, on the west side of Hahamongna (in the location of the lake, formerly recommended by staff and illustrated on Exhibit D). There are no athletic fields on the east side of Hahamongna included in the adopted master plan. It should be noted that the certified master EIR for the HWP master plan evaluated the four multi-purposed fields in the locations described above and as shown on Exhibits D and E; the location of the third field as recommended by Council and included in the adopted HWP master plan, was not evaluated in the master EIR.

Nov 2004

Staff submitted a grant application requesting \$1 million in funding for the Proposition 12 Youth Soccer Grant Program for the Sycamore Grove Field project in Hahamongna. The HWPAC recommended its support for the grant application to the City Council and the City Council adopted a Resolution for the City's application

for these grant funds.

Dec 2005 City was notified of the \$1 million award for the Sycamore Grove Multi-purpose field project. This grant has an expiration date of June 30, 2012 with a likely extension to June 30, 2013.

Nov 2007 The Green Space, Recreation and Parks Element and Master Plan were adopted by City Council. These were the result of a three year effort to determine the community's goals and objectives for open space, parks, and recreation facilities and programs. One of the key recommendations of the documents are to address deficits in sports fields and recreational facilities through improving existing facilities, acquiring additional facilities, and pursuing joint use of school facilities

Current Status

Since November 2007, staff has commissioned preliminary design documents, including site plan alternatives, cost estimates, preliminary grading plans, and section-elevation drawings for the soccer field and associated parking lot and draft biological surveys and mapping of the project site. Additionally, LA County Department of Public Works has prepared a topographic survey and conducted soil borings and testing for soil suitability analysis. It should also be noted that portions of the work accomplished above will likely need to be re-done due to the changed conditions in the basin as a result of the sediment and debris that has collected after the Station fire.

Next Steps

Staff has embarked and will continue to work on the following next steps: Finalize the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Pasadena and Los Angeles County Department of Public Works for the anticipated work in the Devil's Gate Basin, prepare detailed design development drawings and construction documents, conduct project-level CEQA analysis and prepare the corresponding documentation, and continue a community outreach plan to involve interested parties in the design process. City funds totaling \$129,435 have been expended to date for this project, as well as funding by Los Angeles County Department of Public Works.

In addition, staff member Rosa Laveaga, Arroyo Seco Project Supervisor, provides the following response to the following several points in the letter from the HWPAC to the City Council (Exhibit A):

- "The proposed Sycamore Grove Field, now being planned by city staff, would be constructed in the stream-zone area between the current Oak

Grove field on the west side and the former Johnson Field on the east side of the Hahamongna Basin.”

It would be more correct to say the subject field is outside of the stream zone, but on the western edge of the flood basin.

- “Although the proposed field would be built on compacted fill to raise it from 1040 feet elevation to 1050 feet, it would nevertheless be subjected to occasional flooding since it would still be within the inundation area of the Devil’s Gate Basin.”

Based on historical storm records, it is highly unlikely that the inundation level of the basin would be higher than the elevation of 1046, when the known spillway elevation of the dam is at 1040.5. Should the highly unlikely occurrence of flooding of the proposed Sycamore Grove Field occur, it would also occur on the Oak Grove field, but would not remain inundated for more than one day.

- “...it is characterized by environmentally precious riparian and alluvial scrub habitat....”

It would be more correct to say that 80% of the site for the proposed field is considered by biologists to be ‘developed’ and ‘ruderal’ with 20% of the site in Southern Willow Scrub which is planned for mitigation. The habitat within this plant community is of poor quality due to past mining operations.

The Director of Human Services and Recreation provided information to the Hahamongna Watershed Park Advisory Committee on the demands, availability, and usage of sports fields in Pasadena (Exhibit G-1 and G-2). This information will be presented to the City Council as part of the background information on this item.



MARTIN PASTUCHA
Director

Concurrence by:



MICHAEL J. BECK
City Manager

Attached Exhibits include:

- Exhibit A: 3/23/10 Letter from HWPAC
- Exhibit B: Adopted HWP Master Plan Illustration
- Exhibit C: 5/13/1999 HWPAC meeting minutes
- Exhibit D: Westside Park Recommendations – Draft HWP Master Plan
- Exhibit E: Eastside Park Recommendations – Draft HWP Master Plan
- Exhibit F: Council Minutes of 2/7/2000
- Exhibit G-1: List of City Sports Fields
- Exhibit G-2: PUSD - Summer 2009 Field Permits