

Fox Point Municipal Pool Citizens Advisory Committee

Report to Fox Point Village Board

With references to documents located at <https://www.villageoffoxpoint.com/415/Pool-Committee>

February 7, 2020

Introduction

Since opening in 1968, the Fox Point Municipal Pool has served several purposes in the community, becoming a legacy establishment. The pool continues to be an important Village recreational and educational amenity, offering opportunities for summer recreation including swim lessons, swim team, dive team and water ballet, a place of employment, and a gathering place for Village residents and seasonal members from nearby communities.

Committee Background

The Fox Point Municipal Pool Citizens Advisory Committee was formed by Village Board resolution in August 2016 to identify alternatives for the future disposition of the Municipal Pool (i.e., restoration, removal, replacement, relocation, reprogramming) and to identify a potential existing or future appropriate entity to conduct fundraising efforts for a new municipal pool.

The Committee was charged with assisting with, not deciding on, the future disposition of the Municipal Pool. The Committee recommends the Comprehensive Plan, that is under development by the Village of Fox Point, be the overall guide for determining the location and size of a new Municipal Pool.

The Committee, working closely with Village staff and consultants, conducted surveys, analyzed reports and discussed the options available to the Village -- with both the existing pool and with a new pool. This report, in conjunction with the documents found on the Village website and referenced in this report, encompasses the Committee's recommendation and the 2019 Ayres Aquatic Facility Study¹ which describes the pool locations, design concepts and cost estimates for consideration by the Village Board.

Project Research

¹ <https://www.villageoffoxpoint.com/DocumentCenter/View/3067/Ayres---Final-Reportpdf>

Village residents clearly value having a municipal pool. Through multiple engagements with stakeholders at public information meetings and design charrettes, residents stated their strong interest in having a municipal pool that serves the community and pool members. This was further validated by the 2019 survey that resulted in 85.4% of respondents indicating that they strongly agree or agree that “Fox Point should continue to feature a Village pool.”²

The Committee does not recommend full removal of the existing pool with no replacement. However, as stated in the November 6, 2017 Committee report to the Village Board, major restoration of the existing pool is not a viable option given that the pool has reached or even surpassed its useful life. Given the strong desire for a pool on behalf of the residents of the Village, we recommend that the current pool be replaced by a new facility.

The specifications in a new facility should consider demographics and an assessment of market forces. Some of these considerations are, but not limited to, pool users residing in Fox Point as compared to outside communities, a higher abundance of pools and aquatic centers in the marketplace, decreasing availability of trained lifeguards and increasing operating costs of a pool. Additionally, the Board should consider the viability of combining the pool with other Village amenities that will eliminate unnecessary duplication of Village-owned facilities. Additionally, the Board should consider the financial implications of relocating the pool to Longacre Park. This is an option that could partially offset the costs of a multi-purpose park and recreation facility.

Committee Recommendation

Based on the data collected from the survey, comments shared at public meetings, and the Ayres report, the Committee believes the purpose or mission of a new Village pool is to be:

- a valued community asset
- available to all residents of Fox Point
- part of a multi-purpose facility and gathering space for recreation and community events and activities
- an aquatic teaching facility

² <https://www.villageoffoxpoint.com/DocumentCenter/View/3787/Fox-Point-2019-Municipal-Pool-Survey-Reportpdf>

Therefore, this Committee recommends the concept of a central, “community heart”³ in the Village, located at north Longacre Park, with new pool construction, a reliably open skating rink, and a community center to be part of that development.

If the Village Board, through the development of the Comprehensive Plan, decides to not develop a full venue “community heart” project at the Longacre Park, data supports the current pool location also being a viable alternative for new pool construction. Regardless of which location is chosen for the construction of a new pool, the Pool Committee recommends that the Village Board make a prompt and expeditious decision. The existing pool is more than 50 years old and it has outlasted its useful life.

Fundraising

Should private fundraising be required, the Pool Committee recommends the creation of a non-profit, 501(c)(3) charitable organization (ex: Friends of the Fox Point Pool). Such an organization will be able to solicit private, tax-deductible donations to fund pool construction. The organization can also investigate and solicit donations to create an endowment for ongoing operational and maintenance expenses. The Committee has initial commitments from volunteers to spearhead these efforts and recognizes that efforts will be more successful when the Board gives more specific direction as to the preferred pool option. The Pool Committee recommends that at least one initial meeting occur between committees, to share background information and knowledge, and to provide a source of continuity and transition.

Conclusion

The information gathered since the inception of the Committee contains useful information and data that the Committee encourages the Village Board to use in deciding next steps. The decision on how to proceed is now placed before the Village Board. Thus, the Committee considers its work complete.

³ Almost half of respondents, 43%, agree the Village should group new amenities and create a “Community Heart”. However, nearly a third are neutral. Page 9.
<https://www.villageoffoxpoint.com/DocumentCenter/View/3947/Survey-Results?bidId=>