



**PDOP STAFF FOCUS GROUP A – MEETING NOTES**

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**Park District of Oak Park  
Ridgeland Common Master Planning**

**Date/Time:** Tuesday, December 4, 2007, 1:30 PM  
**Location:** Hedges Administrative Center, 218 Madison Street  
**Attendance:** Park District Staff

Liz Maxwell  
Allison Morvay  
Jennifer Berni  
Paul Hruby  
Chris Leiner  
Bobbi Nance  
Chad Drufke  
Ron Calloway

Park District Citizen Committee Representatives

Tracy Brooker  
John Messina  
Dick McKinlay

Park District of Oak Park (PDOP) Staff

Commissioner Christine Graves  
Gary Balling – Present just for the Introduction

Bonestroo Team Members

Jim Maland, Bonestroo  
Jeff King – Ballard\*King  
Steve Halberg, Bonestroo  
Dirk Danker, Nagle Hartray

**Agenda:**

Introduction - Gary Balling and Jim Maland  
Overview of Process - Jeff King  
Formal Discussion by Focus Group B Team Members – moderated  
by Jeff King

**Meeting Notes**

**December 4, 2007**

*Introduction*

Gary Balling, PDOP, provided a general introduction to all Focus Group members outlining the purpose, scope and timeline of the master planning study. An emphasis was placed on the importance of developing solutions that

maximized partnerships within and around the community in order to help minimize redundancy of facilities and provide the most equitable financial expenditure of community dollars. Specific reference to three potential scenarios for development of the site to include a major remodeling of the existing facilities, a total new facility on the existing site and an ultimate solution which would include the partnerships to enhance the site to the west to include the vacated Scoville Avenue right-of-way along with the block of property immediately to the west of Scoville currently owned by OPRF High School. Gary emphasized that the project is just in the beginning stages and he provided an overview of the initial public kickoff meeting held on the evening of December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Gary turned the meeting over to the Bonestroo Team and then left the room to allow complete and honest discussion to occur about the park district facilities.

Jim introduced the Bonestroo Team and then stressed the importance of community involvement throughout the master planning process. An overview of the agenda for the next Public Meeting, which is to be held on February 25<sup>th</sup>, was provided and is to include a review of the public and focus group input, results of the market analysis being prepared by the Bonestroo Team, preliminary programs for the three different solution scenarios outlined above along with some general bubble diagram level solution drawings for each of the scenarios and associated programs. Jim briefly outlined the market analysis tasks and then turned the meeting over to Jeff King for the overview of the focus group process and rules.

#### *Overview*

Jeff King provided more detailed description of the market analysis scope including the needs assessment, partnership process, alternative service provider analysis, and finally the community input process. Jeff then reviewed the rules of the focus group discussion and reminded everyone that this forum was not a debate of conflicting ideals but simply a download of all personal input and opinions regarding the Ridgeland Common Facility.

#### *Formal Group Discussion*

Introduction of Group A – PDOP Staff Team Members (see above roster)

#### **The following comments were provided during the formal discussion of Group A – PDOP Staff Interests**

#### **Question Number One: What You Like Best about Ridgeland Common?**

- 1) Rustic character of rinks architecture feel
- 2) Ice Rink
- 3) History and reputation keep people coming back.
- 4) Large draws for ice show
- 5) Pool, ice rink are unique, yet tradition
- 6) Skating keeps younger sibling following older back

- 7) World's greatest ice surface
- 8) Community aspect, users from O.P., facility use by community
- 9) Families keep coming back – generation after generation
- 10) Other rinks are like businesses while Ridgeland Common is like community
- 11) Hockey program – Paul is teaching grandchildren of original students
- 12) “Community USA”
- 13) Versatility of facility
- 14) People want to be there
- 15) Draw as community center
- 16) Totally different people with different affiliations that all come to the same place.
- 17) People want to be there!
- 18) Young people asking “How old do they have to be to work there?”
- 19) It is run as a community space
- 20) In demand because of the lights and fences
- 21) Open outdoor lighted space available for a variety of uses
- 22) Field space
- 23) Outdoor space
- 24) Softball fields – urban fields in true middle of city
- 25) Even though it's an old building, things are in the location they need to be
- 26) The entry and spaces are open
- 27) Ability to monitor – large glass areas allow visual monitoring of the pool from indoors
- 28) Three doors that take you right out onto the field – transition right out of rink onto fields.

**Question Number Two: What Do You Like Least about Ridgeland Common?**

- 1) Entry lighting inside building
- 2) Roof structure / ceiling dated
- 3) Too many nooks and crannies
- 4) Air quality while running equipment – can bring bad air into facilities, inadequate exhaust to handle engines running inside
- 5) Problems with piping
- 6) Chemical handling / system – chemicals should be stored in another place
- 7) Filtration / Basement / Chemical storage
- 8) Lighting for softball / baseball fields is outdated
- 9) Fencing is poor – an eyesore
- 10) Infields – need to be re-graded
- 11) Trees over-hang playing field – they need to be trimmed
- 12) Holes in outfield
- 13) Dog Park
- 14) Outdoor pool gets cool in the evening

- 15) Lobby is a problem due to size (lower level difficult to navigate through elevation transition because of skates)
- 16) Friday night skating (120 kids) – limit size by lobby. Need space for staging during re-surfacing
- 17) Soccer arena for battle of bands??
- 18) Facility is not multi-purpose, too specialized
- 19) Poor Condition – Always reacting to repairs and addressing problems
- 20) Building has been around a long time
- 21) More parking is needed
- 22) Loading zone needed – no place to drop off people
- 23) Facility configuration – too many single purpose spaces
- 24) Areas are too small
- 25) Lack of office space – trip over co-workers
- 26) Timing of change over pool to ice
- 27) Heat
- 28) Size of ice sheet is too small
- 29) 6 months of ice difficult to program
- 30) Locker rooms size is too small
- 31) Spectator's bleachers do not have adequate space and there are poor sight lines
- 32) Wasted space under bleachers
- 33) Concession
- 34) Players bench next to penalty bench
- 35) Staging for skate exchange and skate sharpening
- 36) Traffic flow in lobby is a problem
- 37) Conflict of turnover from one program to the next
- 38) Concessions stand not accessible to pool
- 39) Adult sun deck
- 40) Cashier to registration – relationship
- 41) Security staff – no zones to secure – safety
- 42) Security – public session OK but not good in other settings
- 43) Someone was held-up in building a number of years ago
- 44) Lock down zones
- 45) No staff meeting space / no privacy
- 46) No staff area for professionals, pool guards/staff
- 47) Office space
- 48) No place for coordination – no ceilings in offices
- 49) Need for support function/storage
- 50) No food storage areas
- 51) Concession stand – no storage area
- 52) Not any extra space
- 53) No ADA access to indoor playground
- 54) No staging area for kids
- 55) Traffic conflict with Zamboni and public traffic
- 56) Figure skating can't use Comstock because too busy
- 57) Not enough parking

- 58) Not enough room for transition times, can't get through lobby
- 59) Need separation between skate rental and concession
- 60) Bathrooms
- 61) Rink is too cold – no heat
- 62) Hard for skating instructors to teach for long periods of time because of cold
- 63) Roof leaks – creates hazards on ice
- 64) No secure place for instructors to place money, etc.
- 65) Hockey locker rooms also in instructors space
- 66) No place to work with kids
- 67) No meeting space
- 68) Locker room leaks and locker room smells
- 69) Access under bleachers
- 70) High level classes are difficult because of limited space
- 71) Doors to fields cause operational issues – kids can easily leave building
- 72) No pool storage for class materials
- 73) No pool staff area for guards/ teachers
- 74) Pool area too small
- 75) No area for individual camps
- 76) RC is a program pool
- 77) Need facility locker / staff area
- 78) Facility locker room and first aid needed
- 79) Need staff work area
- 80) Locker rooms – need family locker room / locker area
- 81) Need deck space
- 82) High dive board is dangerous

**Question Number Three: What Would You Like to See at Ridgeland Common Building?**

- 1) Two pools (indoor and outdoor)
- 2) Regular ice rink with studio rink
- 3) Need warm-up space
- 4) Need weight room
- 5) Family Fitness Center – only indoor pool on Lake Street, no pool @ tennis club
- 6) Dry land facility could be used
- 7) Needs pool (indoor) – work with HS
- 8) Ice rink
- 9) Teen room
- 10) Large space
- 11) Stage
- 12) Need bigger rooms
- 13) Additional facilities at RC
- 14) Many programs restricted / limited by room size
- 15) Need multi-purpose room
- 16) Make RC bigger without losing field space

- 17) Field house in cooperation with OPRF HS
- 18) Field house with sports fields
- 19) Fitness center / weight training
- 20) Parking garage enlarged
- 21) Indoor pool, indoor sport surfaces
- 22) Multi-purpose sportsplex
- 23) Need gymnasiums
- 24) Soccer big in this town – provide indoor fields
- 25) Basketball Courts / pools / soccer / ice/ track
- 26) Weight training / soccer
- 27) Dog park causes a rat problem
- 28) Players jump fence to get balls and are uncomfortable with dogs
- 29) Could potentially get \$60/hr for a quality synthetic soccer field
- 30) Multi-plex
- 31) 1<sup>st</sup> floor indoor pool / splash area
- 32) Egress well lit – lots of natural light
- 33) 2<sup>nd</sup> floor – track with offices
- 34) 3<sup>rd</sup> floor – offices meeting rooms
- 35) Open – wide open egress for pedestrian traffic
- 36) Much larger facility
- 37) Infrastructure should be central
- 38) Mechanical room accessible, easy to services
- 39) Indoor / outdoor pool – year round swim lessons
- 40) More lap swimming could be provided
- 41) Big rink / studio rink
- 42) Larger locker rooms
- 43) Office space
- 44) Soccer field
- 45) Year round ice – hockey / figure skating
- 46) Synchronized skating – not many places to go nearby, big demand in the area
- 47) Fitness / conditioning / stretching room
- 48) Multi-purpose rooms
- 49) Heated spectator area – on second level
- 50) Need a pool – but dream is a rink
- 51) Wide open space to get to different functions
- 52) Separation of ice skate rental and concession
- 53) Pro shop
- 54) Outdoor pool – more attractions
- 55) No high dive
- 56) Currently have little activities in pool - need added activities in pool
- 57) Pool deck space is limited – need more
- 58) Don't want indoor pool but probably could use one (HS pools outdated)
- 59) Fenwick pool is packed
- 60) H.S. pools are old and outdated – no spectators
- 61) Lap swimming is a big thing

- 62) Teaching pool – 3' depth warm water lesson pool
- 63) Need spectator space for swim meets
- 64) Need senior fitness pool / teaching area
- 65) Regulation ice sheet (year round) + studio rink (partial year Nov to April)
- 66) Hard to get instructors without year round rink
- 67) Fitness facility
- 68) Multi-purpose rooms (big spaces for 20-30)
- 69) High ceilings
- 70) Indoor track & multipurpose spaces

**Question Number Four: What Type of Space Would You Like to See**

**Outside?**

- 1) Good lighting
- 2) Areas for camps
- 3) Dog conflict / proximity to patrons (a safety issue)
- 4) Ball fields – multi-use field design (soccer, etc.) – not just softball
- 5) West end of ball field has protrusions from utility department (irrigation, manhole covers, valves covers, etc.)
- 6) More multi-use
- 7) Sled hill is a hazard next to railroad
- 8) Artificial turf surface– no rainouts, less maintenance
- 9) Two softball fields – multi-purpose use (soccer, etc.) – like H.S.
- 10) Could rent out fields
- 11) Outdoor concession stand
- 12) Bathrooms
- 13) Garage
- 14) Fencing
- 15) Have building closer to parking lot @ the HS
- 16) Turf surface improvements
- 17) Field drainage – takes several hours after rain to get it operational
- 18) Don't like dog park
- 19) Sled hill – get rid of it
- 20) Big Room for 300 people and divisible for smaller groups / multi-functional
- 21) Night activities
- 22) Fields for adults
- 23) Fields - good drainage, good irrigation, good lighting
- 24) Multi-purpose
- 25) Bad experience with Dog Park – dogs have brought rats - 7 am Sunday - 60-70 people out there and could use more security
- 26) Synthetic turf
- 27) Concession and bathroom stand
- 28) Eliminate sled hill
- 29) Reconfigure ball fields and restrooms
- 30) Skating – family skate – Parents, grand parents, kids → Free open skate
- 31) Light and sound for public skating and ice show

32) No sand or hot tubs in pool area!!

END