



City Council

Discussion with Olympia School District Regarding a Potential Secondary School Colocation at Yelm Highway Community Park

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Title

Discussion with Olympia School District Regarding a Potential Secondary School Colocation at Yelm Highway Community Park

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

On December 2, 2021, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee voted (7-1) to not recommend colocation with a school at the Yelm Highway Community Park site.

City Manager Recommendation:

Discuss the potential of entering into a partnership with the Olympia School District to locate a secondary school at the Yelm Highway Community Park.

Report

Issue:

Whether to discussing potentially entering into a partnership with the Olympia School District to locate a secondary school at the Yelm Highway Community Park.

Staff Contact:

Paul Simmons, Parks, Arts and Recreation Director, 360.753.8462
Laura Keehan, Parks Planning & Design Manager, 360.570.5855

Presenter(s):

Paul Simmons, Parks, Arts and Recreation Director
Patrick Murphy, Olympia School District Superintendent
Jennifer Priddy, Olympia School District Assistant Superintendent
Andy Mitton, Berger Partnership Principal
Steph Brucart Hammer, Berger Partnership Project Manager
Maria Ruth, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee Chair
Laura Keehan, Parks Planning & Design Manager

Background and Analysis:

This item was moved from the 5:30 p.m. Study Session to the 7:00 p.m. City Council Meeting to

continue discussion.

In late 2018, Olympia Parks, Arts and Recreation Department (OPARD) finalized the purchase of 83 acres located at 3323 Yelm Highway for a future community park. The property is located next to a previously purchased 3.54-acre park parcel also on Yelm Highway.

The Yelm Highway Park Master Planning project was delayed in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Shortly thereafter, OPARD was approached by the Olympia School District (School District) with a request to consider allowing the School District to utilize a 20-acre portion of the park site for a future secondary school to be constructed in ten years or more. The School District would either purchase the property outright or trade an as-yet-to-be-identified parcel for the 20-acres.

In a joint public meeting on November 16, 2020, OPARD and the School District described the concept and answered questions from the community. Following that meeting an online public survey was posted to the project's Engage Olympia webpage and was open through December 6, 2020. The PRAC met on December 17, 2020, to review the survey results and designated a subcommittee to study the co-location proposal. At their January 21, 2021, meeting PRAC discussed eight concerns associated with the proposed co-location of a secondary school at the park site. A motion passed (4-3) to not recommend continuing to explore a partnership with the Olympia School District to locate a secondary school at the Yelm Highway Community Park site based on the eight concerns presented by the PRAC subcommittee.

Based on their familiarity with the site, Berger Partnership was hired directly by the School District to perform an analysis of the concerns raised by PRAC. The School District and Berger Partnership prepared a response to PRAC's eight concerns and presented the information to PRAC at their December 2, 2021, meeting. PRAC voted (7-1) to not recommend to Council that a secondary school be co-located at the Yelm Highway Community Park site.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Hundreds of community members have been involved in the ongoing Yelm Highway Community Park Master Plan process. Soccer players and neighbors from The Hamptons and Indian Summer neighborhoods have shown particular interest in this site.

Options:

1. Discuss pursuing a partnership with the Olympia School District to locate a secondary school at the Yelm Highway Community Park site.
2. Do not discuss pursuing a partnership with the Olympia School District to locate a secondary school at the Yelm Highway Community Park site.
3. Discuss this issue further at a future date.

Financial Impact:

Partnership with the Olympia School District at the site could result in a cash purchase and/or land swap.

Attachments:

Secondary School Study Concern Analysis
Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee Letter

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Project Webpage