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4401-A Connecticut Ave, N.W.
Box 244, Washington, D.C. 20008
commissioners@anc3f.com
www.anc3f.com
202-670-7ANC
Twitter: @ANC3F

Resolution on the Hearst Park and Pool Improvement Project - Requesting a Steering Committee and Appropriate Updates

WHEREAS, the Hearst Recreation Center (Hearst Park) is approximately a four-acre park located at 37th Street, Idaho Avenue, and Quebec Street, NW, (and Hearst Elementary, Hearst Playground, and Hearst Recreation Center Cottage at the northern boundary), within ANC3F's boundary;

WHEREAS, two public surveys revealed support for a variety of amenities at the Hearst Recreation Center (and improvements to the existing Hearst Playground) including the location of a swimming pool (Pool);

WHEREAS, Mayor Bowser's fiscal year (FY) 2018 proposed budget for "Hearst Park Pool" (AMD-WD3PL) includes \$6 million for a swimming pool in FY2020 (that is inexplicably delayed from FY2019);

WHEREAS, the Department of General Service's (DGS's) website includes a Design Start Date (Park and Pool) of April 2016 and a Design Completion Date of Winter 2016, a Construction Start Date of Winter 2017 and a Construction Completion Date for the Park of Fall 2017, and a Construction Start Date for the Pool of Fall 2018 and a Construction Completion Date for the Pool Spring 2019;

WHEREAS, Mayor Bowser's FY 2018 proposed budget for Hearst Park Pool includes milestone data of a design start date of March 3, 2017 and a design completion date of September 9, 2017, and a construction start date of July 7, 2017 and a construction completion date of May 6, 2019;

WHEREAS, on September 20, 2016, ANC 3F passed a Resolution Requesting Formal Involvement of DOEE in the Design of the Hearst Recreation Center Park and Pool Project and Hydrology and Geologic Study (see attached), such resolution included a request for monthly status reports that have yet to be provided by the District's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and DGS;

WHEREAS, community concerns about the Hearst Park and Pool Improvement project include (1) its impact on existing recreational activities at Hearst Park; (2) environmental considerations, including damage or destruction of protected trees; (3) civil engineering matters including, consistent with ANC3F's aforementioned resolution, whether the landfill underlying the soccer field and tennis courts is sufficiently dense to accommodate the long-term viability of a swimming pool; the size and location of the pool and related infrastructure; the number and location of tennis courts; the size and location of the soccer field, auxiliary fields, paths and stairs; and the location and types of lighting and fencing to be installed; and (4) the overall impact on the immediate neighborhood from parking and additional traffic;

WHEREAS, significant water runoff issues already exist at Hearst Recreation Center and affect nearby areas and the District's Department of Energy & Environment (DOEE) has stated the legal obligations to

address stormwater runoff at Hearst Recreation Center in the most likely construction scenarios regardless of the installation of a Pool, and DOEE has identified numerous potential projects in and around the Hearst Recreation Center;

WHEREAS, DGS and DPR conducted a community meeting in February 2017, that included a discussion of planned next steps with regard to geologic and hydrologic study, a study of the heritage trees and how to address the potential impacts of construction as well as site selection of park amenities given the tree locations, and that such studies have yet to be provided to the community;

WHEREAS, a variety of recreational opportunities are currently present at Hearst Recreation Center and the addition of a Pool will require a careful balancing of interests and needs;

WHEREAS, a variety of soccer programs, ages, and associations currently use the lighted artificial turf field adjacent to the Hearst Recreation Center playground as well as the mal-maintained grass soccer field on the lower section of the Hearst Recreation Center; the grass soccer field is often unusable due to rain events and is not fully used during the winter months due to mud and the lack of grass;

WHEREAS, a variety of opportunities could be addressed that are adjacent to the Hearst Recreation Center and include (1) the installation of a garden or other suitable community asset where the current concrete pillars are located between the Hearst Elementary gym and the Hearst Recreation Center Cottage (these are left over from the prior Hearst Elementary renovation and pose a children's safety hazard; (2) the Hearst Recreation Center Cottage is overused and undersized and thus the addition of a Pool House adjacent to the Pool could also be utilized for Cottage recreational programming; (3) the Idaho Avenue right-of-way could be enhanced as a green buffer and be used to address stormwater concerns; and (4) the existing Hearst Recreation Center playground is heavily used and the installation of any shade structures would enable safe summer usage.

WHEREAS, Mayor Bowser's administration has prioritized the development of an efficient and effective 21st century government;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, ANC 3F supports the establishment of a Pool at the Hearst Recreation Center, provided that the following conditions are sufficiently considered:

1. That DPR and DGS not make any determinations regarding the renovation of the Hearst Recreation Center until the results of the hydrology, geology and heritage tree studies are complete and communicated to the public;
2. That the mayor create a Hearst Park Steering Committee, comprised of representatives from District government, including the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), Department of General Services (DGS), Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE), Urban Forestry Administration (UFA), Department of Transportation (DDOT), local community organizations and ANC3F, to address the concerns and opportunities noted above;
3. That DGS and DPR commit to providing overall assessment, planning and design updates 1) monthly to the community via the DGS website for the Hearst Park and Pool Improvement Project and 2) as requested in person at ANC 3F meetings;


4. That DPR examine additional programming opportunities associated with the Hearst Park and Pool Improvement Project, such as day care and summer programming, as well as additional improvements to the playground, recreation cottage and space between the gym and recreation cottage.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC3F will provide further advice and recommendations about a Pool as part of the Hearst Park and Improvement Project after examining the results of the assessments and updates noted above, and will reconsider this matter at its October 2017 meeting.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC3F calls on the Council to consider fiscal year 2017 through fiscal year 2019 budgets, specifically the restoration of pool funds in the fiscal year 2019 budget, in order to move forward in an economically efficient manner that affords the least amount of inconvenience to the community while achieving construction efficiencies (and avoids disturbing the Hearst Recreation Center more than once) and other opportunities to address environment concerns in or near the Hearst Recreation Center and adjacent opportunities noted above, while avoiding extensions or delays of the budget to later fiscal years;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ANC3F authorizes Commissioners David Dickinson (ANC3F01) and Pat Jakopchek (ANC3F07) to speak on behalf of ANC3F on this matter.

ANC 3F APPROVED this resolution at its meeting on April 18, 2017, which was properly noticed and at which a quorum was present, by a vote of 7 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstaining.



Malachy Nugent
Chair, ANC 3F