

Lehner, Catalina L.

From: Lehner, Catalina L.
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2019 11:28 AM
To: 'Roger Umber'; Henry, Dora L.
Cc: ILENA ESTRELLA
Subject: RE: Project #2108-1760 Letter

Hello Roger,

We received your letter. However, the file format is some sort of picture and it cannot be printed for the record (see below).

Could you please resend it as an attachment? Thank you.

-Catalina

From: Roger Umber [<mailto:rlumber@gmail.com>]
Sent: Monday, January 07, 2019 9:35 AM
To: Lehner, Catalina L.; Henry, Dora L.
Cc: ILENA ESTRELLA
Subject: Project #2108-1760 Letter

12520 Piru SE
Albuquerque, NM 87123
January 5, 2018

Environmental Planning Commission
Catalina Lehner, Senior Planner
P.O. Box 1293
Albuquerque, NM 87103
clehner@cabq.gov, dhenry@cabq.gov

Ref: Project #1011083 at 13200 Wenonah Ave., SE in Singing Arrow Park
EPC Public Hearing on Thursday, January 10, 2019

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Environmental Planning Commission,

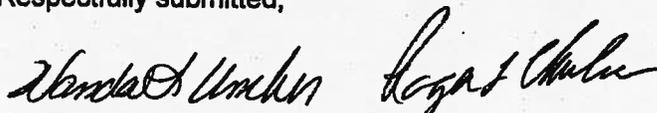
From 1993 through 2013, the City invested thousands of dollars in various professional planning documents which speak to the Singing Arrow Community Center, Park, and Associated Archeological Site. These documents **consistently recommend a single community center** recreational center in the Park and speak to the need to integrate the various elements of the Park—open space, community center, park area, and the archaeological site. In fact, the 1997 Master Park Plan did just that. In addition, the Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan speaks to the need to highlight the archaeological site as a major East Gateway attraction. While the new Singing Arrow Community Center is not a Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan Project, the public guidelines should likely be followed given that the archeological site is a major attraction and component of that plan. Attached are excerpts from the above referenced plans.

The sole justification presented by the City for the new and additional community center is a 2013 Needs Assessment, apparently ordered by the City Councilor, and the only copy ever provided on City websites or referred to is labeled DRAFT for the Singing Arroyo Community Center, which presents serious credibility issues. The report specifically states in its purpose that it is designed to justify a new community center. Renovation of the existing facility was not addressed. The only statement referring to the existing community is "the facility is old and in need of repair or replacement. The roof sometimes leaks. Its facilities are substandard compared to newer site built community and senior centers such as Holiday Park and Manzano Mesa." Yet the City now maintains that the facility is adequate to be used as a child development center for vulnerable 2-5 year old children.

The proposed services for the new center could be provided in a remodel of the existing Community Center which is what the voters voted for in 2011 and 2013. Additionally, the City is now proposing to funnel another \$500,000 into an archaeological survey and interpretive center in the Park—even though it is not clear where it would go.

Construction of a \$5.5 million facility based on a single "draft" needs assessment with conclusions contrary to expressed voter wishes and decades of professional planning documents represents is a travesty. At a minimum, a master plan that includes the Singing Arrow Park, Open Space, and existing Singing Arrow Community Center should be completed prior to any additional construction in the park. Please DISAPPROVE this project or at least require a Master Plan prior to approval.

Respectfully submitted,



Wanda L. Umber & Roger L. Umber
505-275-1790
wlumber@gmail.com

City Planning Documents Related to this Project

Text in **Bold Underline** refer to the specific City Document Quoted. Most are readily available on City websites.

- 1993: The **Singing Arrow Neighborhood Plan** recognized the need for a Community Center, stating that “residents in the Singing Arrow area have identified a need for a facility which can be used for neighborhood meetings and activities such as a community center constructed in conjunction with development of the archaeological site.
- 1997: **Singing Arrow Neighborhood Park Master Plan completed by DWL Architects & Planners, Inc. of New Mexico and the City of Albuquerque**, in the section labeled

MISSION/GOALS FOR THE FUTURE states:

- The City’s “East Gateway” Concept can be realized by utilizing park identification entry markers to identify the park, adjacent archaeological site, and to give identify to the Gateway Concept. [Not Completed]
- Integrate Park and Archeological Site by being responsive to opportunities to draw on the history and presence of the adjacent archeological site to provide a unique sense of history, place, and character to the park, area, and City. The park should be developed with a partnering attitude with the archeological site and to enhance and strengthen future improvements within the site to possibly include educational interpretive display, excavations, and/or a Visitor Center structure. [Some excavation completed, markers and other development not completed. Perhaps the upcoming funding will accomplish some of this?]
- An Activity Building with Interior, Multipurpose Activity Spaces and Exterio, Activity Courtyards

The new building site will be adequate in area to provide for the following:

- Exterior, shaded, activity courtyard for group gatherings, barbecues, dances, etc. This area, as well as all Park areas, should be accessible to the handicapped.
- Exterior play area for young children with appropriate playground equipment, and visual supervision capabilities from the Activity Building
- Landscaping around the Activity Building to enhance and complement the building and provide shade with trees and other planning to prevent soil erosion and generally soften the environment. Landscaping should be low maintenance and adapted to the Albuquerque climate for low water consumption and tolerance to the local climatic conditions.
- An Activity Building with Multipurpose Activity Spaces
 - Multipurpose activity room/rooms with ping pong, foosball, pool table, small kitchen, administration, multipurpose classroom, restrooms, equipment/storage and mechanical/janitorial spaces. [Initial space constructed did not conform to these guidelines]
 - Parking...
- Existing Site Improvements on the West side of the site should remain basically as presently developed, with minor modifications and upgrades as follows. Currently there are basketball goals on the cul-de-sac at the en of Piru Boulevard. These should be removed and *new basketball courts* placed at the northwest area of the park and south of Singing Arrow Avenue. Plans should anticipate further overflow parking in the same general location. In addition, the existing archeological display and shade structure should be repaired with additional vandal prevention enhancements. Consideration should be given to converting the use of these structures when the archeological site visitor center is added.

- *The Archeological Site which lies in the interior area formed by the two legs of the "L"-shaped Park.* This site has been placed on the National Historic Register for Historic Sites. The site is fenced and presently has been partially excavated at two locations. The potential exists, depending on funding for future development of this site with interpretive trails, excavated sites, and interpretive reconstructed sites and/or buildings. Should this type of development occur, the opportunity exists for a Visitor Center facing onto the Singing Arrow Neighborhood Park trail system. This connection could offer the opportunity of enhancing the educational aspects of the history of the site to Park visitors and tourists.
- *New Walking and Bike Trails* to connect the Entry/Access and Activity Building with Rachel Road. The trail shall be 10' wide with asphalt pavement for emergency vehicle access and an addition 5' to remain clear on each side for emergency vehicle clearances and for future modifications. The trail shall provide a visual and physical southern edge to the long leg of the "L"-shaped park. The trail shall offer an opportunity for a landscaped buffer zone between the Park and the adjacent archeological site to the south. The trail will provide a link for bicyclists from the access point to the northeast which is adjacent to Burger King to the existing trail system at the west and southwest side of the Park to Piru Boulevard.
- *New Landscaped Development* north of the proposed new trail. This area encompassed the entire undeveloped long leg of the Park "L." The area should be developed with open, turfed practice playing fields (for noncompetitive sports activities) with peripheral areas landscaped with more native, low water consumption planting.
- *Protect all Existing Landscaping and Vegetation* as the various phases of the Master Plan are developed and realized.
- *Pursue Upgrading of the existing bike trail* west of Burger King to be used as the emergency vehicle land from Wenonah Avenue and Tramway Boulevard to the housing areas to the west.
- *Pursue Acquisition of the existing parking lot* used for Four Hills Shopping Center overflow for future "East Gateway" parking.
- *Site Lighting* should be installed both for safety reasons and to provide an appropriate level of lighting for acceptable park activities. Site lighting design shall be undertaken in detail as each phase of the park is design and planned in more detail.
- **2010: East Gateway Sector Plan** which replaced individual Neighborhood Plans stated "To function as a vibrant community hub, Singing Arrow Community Center must be enlarged. The Plan recommends a study of community needs to determine how they might be addressed at an *expanded Singing Arrow facility*. The study should consider: classes and programs for local children and adults, indoor and outdoor recreation, a commodities distribution program, and transportation services for children. The needs assessment should consider building expansion, modular building retention and long-term replacement of the existing facilities. The 2013 **Amendment** to the **East Gateway Sector Plan** continues to addresses expansion.
- **2013 GO Bond Application from Family & Community Services** requested \$250,000 for the maintenance and rehabilitation of community facilities at Singing Arrow. It supports and promotes educational, recreational, and social opportunities for city residents to include youth, adult and seniors. The wear and tear necessitates consistent maintenance at high cost. The center needs to be renovated. The alternative is to continue ownership of an older building and continually increasing maintenance and repair costs. [This project was given a department ranking of 5 out of 7 by the Department.]

- **2013 East Gateway Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan** calls for Enhancements and improvements to public parks and facilities, including but not limited to preservation and presentation of area archaeological resources with interpretive exhibits and improved recreation facilities. Other recommendations include:
 - It is recommended that the City construct a park-and-ride facility near the intersection of Central Avenue and Tramway Boulevard at the terminus of the proposed BRT system. Another possible location is near the intersection of Central Avenue and Juan Tabo Boulevard, a key connection point for northsouth trips.
 - Siting services such as a child-care facility near park-and-ride facilities may also be a benefit over the long term. Because the transit-oriented lifestyle has not yet taken hold in Albuquerque, this type of co-location is not common, making riding the bus difficult for families with children. However, it is likely that if convenience retail and employment centers were located close to a parkand-ride facility, child-care facilities located near those facilities would make sense and be more likely to occur as the East Gateway area continues to redevelop.
 - Design and construct iconic signs. All designs should draw on the Route 66 theme and entice travelers to explore nearby attractions, such as Rancho de Carnuel, the National Museum of Nuclear Science and the history and architecture related to motor travel. A gateway “welcome” sign at the east edge of the City could signal travelers’ arrival to Albuquerque, and Route 66 way-finding signs at Tramway and other East Gateway freeway exits (e.g. - Juan Tabo, Eubank) could entice them to exit I-40 and explore Route 66.
 - The following guidelines were provided for Public Projects. Although this project is not a MRDP project, it seems sensible that given the archeological site is a prominent feature of this plan, any projects surrounding the archeological site should adhere to the guidelines:
 PUBLIC PROJECTS: The MRA can be involved in the improvement of public infrastructure in the MR Area in several ways. To be considered for MRA funding, a public infrastructure or development project must implement adopted City policies and goals for an area in question, and must meet a t least four of the following criteria:
 1. The project will improve the appearance and safety of the area, including, but not limited to, projects which:
 - Increase the visibility and interest in the corridor’s Route 66 history.
 - Guide visitors to local attractions.
 - Rehabilitate existing public or utility facilities in the area.
 - Locate employees or visitors where they can serve as “eyes on the street.”
 2. The redevelopment helps relieve symptoms of blight described in the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code, to include:
 - Removal of deteriorated structures.
 - Improving faulty or outdated street layout and design.
 3. The project will improve and support multi-modal transportation (including walkability, disabled access and transit access) in the area.
 4. The project will help meet needs of the East Gateway community by providing recreational, educational or other public services.
 5. The project is directly associated with catalyzing private redevelopment of adjacent properties that provide commercial services to the community.
 6. The project will increase the value of abutting properties.
 7. The proposed project will directly support private redevelopment that helps create high wage employment opportunities for residents of the area by paying employees at a rate that is at least 80% of Albuquerque Area Median Income per the U.S. Census Bureau.

8. The project will improve public infrastructure that benefits the health, safety and general welfare of the community, such as sanitary sewer mains or roadway facilities.

2013 Needs Assessment: The document, posted on the City's website, which seems to be the sole justification for this project, is labeled Singing Arroyo Community Center Needs Assessment-Final Draft October 2013. The introduction specifically states: "In 2013, District 9 City Council Don Harris identified a need to assess the availability of public and private services for constituents in the Singing arrow area and determine whether a new community center was needed."

Paragraph B. Report Purpose

The purpose of this report is twofold: 1) to document the needs of the community to be directly served by a new Singing Arrow Community Center and 2) to identify potential properties that meet the City's criteria for siting a community or multigenerational center. [There was no consideration given to expanding the existing Community Center.]