

City Council
Date: 7/10/07
REGULAR
Item:
Motion

ITEM: Consider authorizing discussions with the St. Croix Valley Community Family Center regarding a future location in Lake Elmo

SUBMITTED BY: Susan Hoyt, City Administrator

SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED: The city council is being asked to consider authorizing the administrator to proceed with discussions with the St. Croix Valley Community Family Center (referred to as the family center) to be part of the community campus designated in the Village master plan that was accepted by the city council in April. The Family Center serves a variety of young children, families and adult learners. The Courage St. Croix, the YMCA and the Stillwater School District are planned users of this facility. The Family Center appears in the detailed concept plan of the Village. To turn this plan into reality, it is time to consider formally endorsing the concept to the Family Center at the \$1 a year lease as requested by the Integrated Planning Team (IPT) and to authorize the administrator to proceed with discussions on how to provide the \$1 a year lease for the facility. The discussions would include exploring a variety of options with the Family Center and the property owner of the site, Lake Elmo Development, to find a mechanism to provide free or nearly free land for the facility. The financial plan for providing this lease might directly involve the property owner as the landlord or, as discussed before, involve the city as the future owner of the property upon which a privately constructed facility would be built for the Family Center. The authorization to proceed with these discussions is intended to demonstrate support for the concept, but it does not commit the city to any future agreement or action. The authorization to discuss this "\$ 1 a year lease concept" with the Family Center could be subject to a number of conditions to these discussions including:

- a. the city will not incur costs for the infrastructure
- b. the city will not incur any construction costs for the facility
- c. the city will not contribute to any operating costs of the facility
- d. the city will not contribute to the programming costs within the facility unless defined as direct program beneficiaries (This is separate from individual /family memberships/use fees.)
- e. the city will require that the site plan and the building receive design input early in the building and development process for its design, its connectivity and its relationship with other proposed land uses and open space
- f. the city will discuss opportunities for Lake Elmo community use of the facility
- g. the city will explore more than a variety of options as they emerge on how to make the "\$ a year land lease" concept (or free land) a reality rather than defining a specific solution to meet this goal.
- h. the city will maintain a respectful and open dialogue during these discussions with the partners and expects the same
- i. the city understands that information gathered at a later time may impact the feasibility of any options being explored
- j. the city administrator does not have the authority to agree to a financial arrangement with the property owner or the partners without city council approval

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Family Center continues to consider the Village in Lake Elmo as a future location.

Information is being gathered by the principal team (School District, Courage St. Croix and the YMCA) to bring to the Integrated Planning Team at a meeting on August 2, 2007. This information will include:

- an estimated cost for the Family Center facility
- a report on how the Baytown hazardous waste site is being mitigated and how potential polluted soil will be managed in the area of Hagbergs
- a report on the development timing and how this potentially impacts the Family Center construction schedule
 - o The site needs development approvals including comprehensive plan, zoning and platting.
 - o The site needs infrastructure to the facility including roads, water, surface water management and sewer.
 - o The primary challenge to timing of the facility is the availability of sewer from the south to this site. Given the construction schedule of sewer to 30th Street in 2008, sewer north of 30th street is unlikely to be available until 2009. The Family Center could construct a temporary wastewater storage facility in order to proceed with construction earlier than the 2009 date.
- a commitment from Lake Elmo to discuss the possibility of an annual lease for the land for the facility for a \$1 a year

OPTIONS

1. Explore financial options. Authorize the city administrator to proceed with preliminary discussions exploring options with the Family Center partners to work toward a "\$1 per year lease" arrangement in Lake Elmo in the area of the community campus in the Village master plan. Subject to the following directions from the city council to the administrator as identified in the summary statement at the beginning of the report.
2. Decide not to explore financial options. Direct the administrator to communicate that Lake Elmo is interested in having the facility be part of the community campus but that the city is not interested in exploring a "\$1 a year lease concept" for this Family Center and future health and wellness facility.
3. Remain ambiguous about financial discussions. Direct the administrator to continue to participate in the IPT and Family Center information gathering – site development meetings – and state Lake Elmo's interest in the realizing the Family Center and health and wellness facility in the Village. However, do not move to direct the administrator to explore financing models to accomplish "the \$1 a year lease concept" or to indicate that there is no interest.

RECOMMENDATION

The city council identified the Family Center and associated health and wellness facility (YMCA) on the master plan. To begin to implement this plan, it will be useful to have the city council endorse conversations about how the Family Center facility might locate in Lake Elmo with a "\$1 a year least option" (free land) because the Family Center has been up front about stating its reliance on this factor in its locational decision making. The IPT team has been open about the

desire to get 'almost' free land for the Family Center in Lake Elmo. To make this project happen, it will be important for the IPT to know that the city of Lake Elmo is formally on board to explore (not committing to or finalizing) this concept at this time so it can proceed accordingly rather than return to a review of other sites for the facility. If it is the intent of the city council to proceed with this concept beyond the master plan, it is timely to consider a motion authorizing the city administrator to explore options that will accomplish the goal of a "\$1 a year lease" (free land). This demonstrates a commitment to making the community campus a reality and reflects the city's openness to a partnership with the Family Center.

SUGGESTED MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION

Move to authorize the city administrator to proceed with preliminary discussions exploring options with the Family Center partners to work toward a "\$1 per year lease" arrangement in Lake Elmo in the area of the community campus in the Village master plan. Subject to the following directions from the city council to the administrator:

- a. the city will not incur costs for the infrastructure*
- b. the city will not incur any construction costs for the facility*
- c. the city will not contribute to any operating costs of the facility*
- d. the city will not contribute to the programming costs within the facility unless defined as direct program beneficiaries (This is separate from individual /family memberships/use fees.)*
- e. the city will require that the site plan and the building receive design input early in the building and development process for its design, its connectivity and its relationship with other proposed land uses and open space*
- f. the city will discuss opportunities for Lake Elmo community use of the facility*
- g. the city will explore more than a variety of options as they emerge on how to make the "\$ a year land lease" concept (or free land) a reality rather than defining the specific solution to meet this goal.*
- h. the city will maintain a respectful and open dialogue during these discussions with the partners and expects the same*
- i. the city administrator does not have the authority to agree to a financial arrangement with the property owner or the partners without city council approval*

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- Introduction Susan Hoyt, City Administrator
- Report Susan Hoyt, City Administrator
- Questions from the council
To the staff Mayor and Council members
- Questions from the public to the council, if any
(3 minute maximum) Mayor facilitates
- Call for a motion Mayor facilitates
(required to allow for discussion; does not indicate approval of the action in the motion)
- Discussion Mayor facilitates for council members
- Action City Council

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1 Powerpoint on Family Center and partnerships
- 2 January 9, 2007 – Questions and Answers on the Family Center