



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Urcha Dunbar-Crespo, Acting Purchasing Officer *Urcha n. Dunbar-Crespo*

DATE: October 22, 2014

SUBJECT: Walter E. Long Golf Course Development, RFQS TVN0102

The purpose of this memo is to forward correspondence from the Black Improvement Association received by the Purchasing Office regarding item #23 on the October 23, 2014 Council agenda for the development of a golf course at the Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. The attached letter was received by Sara Hensley of PARB and then forwarded to the Authorized Contact for the solicitation.

Attachment:

Black Improvement Association

Cc: Elaine Hart, Chief Financial Officer
Greg Canally, Deputy Chief Financial Officer
Dale Glover, PARB
Jane Rivera, PARB
Jeff Francell, PARB

Black Improvement Association

P.O. Box 140244

Austin, Texas 78714



Mayor and Council,

10/21/2014

We appreciate you for your service and would like to take some time to discuss the current plans for land owned by the city of Austin which is landlocked by the neighborhoods of Colony Park/Lakeside and also the **Parks and Recreation** project at **Decker Lake**.

In 2011, NHCD applied for and received a \$3 million Challenge Grant from HUD. Through this planning process, neighbors had hoped the grant would bring necessary economic development/affordable housing for residents who had been promised amenities when the land was annexed in 1973. However, those promises to date have yet to be fulfilled. Currently, there are concerns over the lack of affordability in the Master Plan, led by the **Colony Park Neighborhood Association**; along with the **city of Austin**; **Farr and Associates**; **Urban Design Group**; and others.

In the narrative below, we will detail our specific concerns with the **20%** recommended by the CPNA and also the **25%** recommended by NHCD and Farr/Urban Design Group will not go far enough and will possibly dislocate many residents who currently reside in the neighborhoods.

Problem One:

As stated by the **CPNA** core team in a letter dated 08/12/14, they discussed the need to clearly define what affordable housing is; to **which we agree**. As stated, there are many misconceptions about what affordability is due to different income perspectives. It was also stated by **CPNA** that the model used at Mueller by **NHCD** for affordable housing was zero-80% of the **Median Family Income (MFI)**. CPNA also stated in the same letter that their focus was on **workforce housing** that they defined as **120%-160% MFI** and **affordable housing** defined as **30%-120% MFI**.

There is a lack of clarity with the CPNA plan. According to the same letter, census tract 22.02 MFI was \$33,069 and Austin/Travis County from \$68,000-\$72,000 MFI. If we allocate 20% of the total units for affordable housing between 30%-120% MFI; that will mean that the income level at a minimum would be between \$20,400-\$81,600 (\$68,000 MFI) and maximum of \$21,600-\$86,400 (\$72,000 MFI) for a total of approximately 600 units out of more than 3,000 units over a 20-30 year build-out. (i.e. \$21,000-\$41,999 = 200 units; \$42,000-\$61,999 = 200 units; \$62,000-\$86,400 = 200 units).

We assume the other 80% in the CPNA plan would be workforce housing with incomes ranging from \$86,000-\$115,000 (120%-160% MFI), which would call for at least 2400 units of the proposed development on a 20-30 year build out.

- **This plan doesn't speak enough to low wage workers (\$15,000-\$20,400) who work every day and are very deserving of a place to call home. We can also find many current city employees who wouldn't be able to afford to live in the current Master Plan. The plan also doesn't speak to our seniors, current or future; of this community, whose income levels (will) average far less than the above-referenced numbers. When the grant was initially accepted by HUD it called for 40% of the units to be designated affordable. We ask the city staff to look at a better mixture of income and affordability levels.**

Problem Two:

The Master Plan lacks a definitive art and culture initiative to ensure that current residents will have a place in the new community.

- **We ask that city staffs look at incorporating community approved arts and culture projects in public places on city-owned land during current and future master planning processes.**

Problem Three:

With the proposed Decker Lake Golf Course (PARD Project), we have come to the conclusion that currently, we share the concerns of the Parks Board; which came to a unanimous vote to delay the project until further community engagement had been done. Since the last Parks Board meeting (9/23), the CPNA has changed its stance and now supports the development project, according to staff (10/14 staff briefing). How could a whole community's stance change on community engagement in a matter of weeks without any known engagement? The Colony

Park Core Team has not informed neighborhood residents about any plans for this property via (i.e. Social Media, Website, Flyers, Informational, Door Hangers, Mouth to Mouth, Phone Call, etc).

- **We ask that this be postponed until the next council can be situated and make an informed decision based upon community engagement best practices.**

Problem Four:

The council has unanimously supported a rail proposition that will further burden citizens of Colony Park and yet currently can't help Capital Metro find \$300,000 for a Flex Bus Route, nor a solution to get better transportation options for area residents. (amended 10/22/2014)

We ask that the Mayor and Council take our concerns into consideration. We have a working relationship with the youth, adults and seniors in our current community due to our commitment to this community. We are a grassroots organization created for the residents of Austin to have a true voice that will stand in the gap for the poor; hold the line for the weak; and serve as a reminder for the forgotten.

Best Regards,

Brandon 2X Reed, Khalifah

Black Improvement Association