Hancock Neighborhood Association Meeting

Discussing Hancock Golf Course Next Steps

February 29, 2020, 1 p.m.

Community members were invited by the Hancock Neighborhood Association to hear from the Austin Parks and Recreation Department about proposed next steps for Hancock Golf Course after the National Golf Foundation study recommendations.

After the presentation, community members were invited to place comments on boards with questions around the room. The following pages are images of the boards followed by the transcribed comments for each board.

Visit <u>https://www.austintexas.gov/department/hancock-golf-course-planning</u> for more information.

Hancock Golf and Rec Cente

How do you currently use the space where Hancock Golf Course and Rec Center are?



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Mixed use Golf field (Pitch & Putt)...open space (lower area)

Community gathering space

We have our kid in the tiny tots program and the sports program. He loves it! We love it!

Walk around Trail...I see lots of people using the western part as an off – lease dog park in the evenings- not technically allowed but it happens & works out

Trails, kids program, golf, picnics, community center programming

Enjoy watching the sunsets, going for walks

Trails, kids program, soccer field

I would use this place more if the practice facilities were improved

Community gatherings meetings

The green space is a source of well - being in the middle of urban setting

Practice short game, some putting Classes in Rec Center, enjoy open space OCC Meeting

Frequently use trails around it

Bird watching

Frequent use of ping pong & pool tables

Daily yoga walk & run, bird watching, neighbors

I golf here! Need to publicize! People do not know who great the conditions are here at the Course

Danced, yoga, walk

I golf here. I could more here with better conditions

Yoga and walk

I play golf here. I practice chipping/ putting

A Driving range would be great! There is no place to hit Woods within 10 miles

Community meetings, walks, stargazing, bird watching, Easter egg hunt

What does Historic Designation do to protect space as golf course?

Golf weekly, yoga

Golf after work/quick 9 holes

Walk, run, walk around the edge and wish I could access more of the green space

I play golf regularly here. Easy to get here after work. Good idea to promote the accessibility

Daily dog walk

Golf...

I play golf & jog here weekly Golf, (20 years) playground (4x/week) Rec center is awesome – what a City asset!

Walk dogs, beauty of it from my home

Appreciate

What do you appreciate most about this space?



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Love the Golf Course as a Public Good!

No Fence

Historic Beautiful Flood control for neighbors Affordable golf for young & old

The history of the location the building!

Central ATX Park – like perimeter trail

The easy pace of Play. Continue green space

No Fence around it! (except driving range)

Trail, community Rec Center, the ability to quickly play golf w/dog and family affordably and in in non – pretentious environment

It's history as a unique and quiet golf course

Open to the Public.

Luminous and hot chocolate during the Holidays

Unfettered public access

Accessibility, affordability, cultural heritage, hilly terrain, makes gorgeous sunsets & challenging holes

The natural beauty, trees, green space, and birds/animals

Christmas, luminous trails

Maintained green space

The variety of use including golf and community programs and usage

The beautiful sunrises in the morning. Rainbows over the green spaces of the golf course

Playgrounds rec regions

I love the trails and greenspace, playground

Love the play station! Fewer carts during the week means better tuft quality

The community center and its programs: they offer real benefit for the community, especially for birds

The walking trail

Lungs of the City, great for open green space, essential for drainage, neighborhood flooding

Greenspaces, rec center, kids programs

Historic, golf & mixed activities

Open green space Ping pong It's beautiful Waller creek and its wildlife Trees... Quiet, green An open space to see the stars in the middle of the City The closest "Park" to where I live, I can walk here, I walk the trail would love to be able to access more of the space Greenspace, nature, trees, historic building, the whole space is an asset to the community & should be accessible to all Very close to my house, more casual golf. Easy to walk Green, open, oaks, birds, neighbors I love the building, and the feeling of wide open space in the middle of a major City Historic community center, the building Car bans, green space which is going away Green space for golf in in Central Austin A greenspace in the midst of increasing development/urbanization...a place for rain to soak in, a

place for wildlife to live

Current Concerns

What are your primary concerns about the current use of this space?



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Have all funding opportunities been explored? Water catchment & solar panels on buildings?

While short, current design is not great for beginners. 4th green is secure, 6th hole too tough, 7th hole tee shot trees over – hanging, 9th hole hill too steep

I love the running trail

What happens with the 1899 layout

Park option should be explored not rejected out - of - hand

Golf course is not worth the greens fee compared to other City options

Not accessible to non – golfers

Building infill by the back door

Do not trust the City to protect our Green space

Why not raise fees \$5/round to break even?

Fencing off the golf space for safety concerns would effectively cut it off from the neighborhood, not desirable.

No range, slow greens, funky tee boxes

That we spend the Capex to try and increase revenue but the development programs still fall short. Operationally still losing money

That it is not appreciated for what a special golf course it is.

That it may one day be developed as the other 9 holes

One audience use as a golf course versus multi – use to serve many.

I would like this space to be a park for everyone.

Interested in true consideration of the passive park option. This is something neighbors are interested in at least exploring. Please don't dismiss this idea out - of - hand.

I support golf at Hancock in either the current or proposed version

No Privatization!

It will be taken over by developers

My son attends after school & camps here along with hundreds of other youth who cannot go beyond the immediate 50 feet from the building because of the golf course designation & no golfers in sight use the space.

Current 9th hole is awful and unsafe.

Adding netting on Red River St will degrade the beauty of the Hancock Golf Course

Adding night time use of golf facilities could require extensive lighting that would ruin nature and neighborhoods.

Underutilized now.

Should not be thought of as a profit center should be utilized as a public service cost similar to parks

How can more public input be had for a passive park

Future Concerns

What are your primary concerns about the future use of this space?



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Maintain trees and nature. The birds love it here!

Will the RFP include plans for water when the course floods during rain?

What happens to the existing historic clubhouse?

What becomes of current use of clubhouse as community center?

Private entity should not make \$ off of us. This should stay accessible.

No lights on a driving range if that occurs.

Include in 6 acres lawn that is flexible (including occasional croquet)

As a weekly golfer here I would like it to remain a 9 hole course – no driving range the course is actually in great condition – no one know about it

Will the footprint of the space be changed in any way?

Love the idea of a practice facility. I would buy a membership & be here

4 days a week

What restrictions would the City /Vendor place on access to the community center?

I am in favor of maintaining golf at Hancock in some form. I believe that the

Community could also be better served by careful use of some of the space for non – golf purposes (dog park, walking trail, etc.)

That is will cease to be the special golf course that it is.

It is important to keep this Vista (green space in perpetuity! Especially as Austin

Grows)

No netting on course

Support passive park green space

Consider Non-profit running course.

No extreme night time lighting

I am concerned that the city will allow this green space to be taken over by

Developers

Keep green space in perpetuity, keep public access + all kids + community

programs

Privatization is taking over every aspect of our lives as the wealth is sucked ever Upward

I am concerned about the way this presentation assumed – the presenter even said – no one here wants the space to be a passive park. I realize some attendees had strong feelings about keeping golf, but the show of hands revealed many attendees do want the passive park option to be considered.

Parking for golfers would spill into neighborhoods

We need greenspace for children, family & everybody in perpetuity – it is a public health concern – do not remove green space access

where will parking be if a facility format takes place

Do not change the Course

A meaningful portion of the Green/Shady space should be accessible to non – golfers

Why is a public good only viable when a business can make profit here?

Not turning it over to for-profit use as its primary purpose

Don't trust the City to leave our green space alone

Who actually cares about golf? Public Park

There's limited open green space in this park of Austin. Don't develop this space.

Needs to keep the community centered programming especially children's programs! Tiny tots school, sports for kids, etc.

Restricted access to public green space

Learning academy should include amenities for non – golfers (food, drinks)

Keep it as natural as possible - being close to nature makes humans better

I would prefer a fun par 30-31 course over a par 3 course w/range. Make a nice short game area for practice.

Must be multi – use and accessible to all while honoring the history of the space

Needs to stay open for non-golfers and maintain green space for walkers

That it will change

I have lived for 6.5 years and accepted that it is a course and that the way I can use this space is by walking the perimeter. But when invited to think about the future I would love it to be a park open to all neighbors and be able to use more that the perimeter trail, as we think about climate change and reducing our reliance on vehicles, having true parks within walking distance becomes even more important. I think this space could better serve that goal as what was today called a "passive park". Usage for golf provides a service for the whole city. Conversion ton an open park benefits only the immediate area.

We do not trust the City! Don't mess this space up!

Accessible, Open/Green space, Forever!

No privatization

Eventual Development (I think it should stay green)

Avoid barriers and netting

Keep open space, get historic design for Golf course, keep " " " historic, protect from development

I would love to see more park space accessible to more people

Process seems pre – determined by certain interests

Land would get sold and developed

No development except for golfing and park services

I prefer either part golf/ part passive park, or all passive park

Going with a for profit company will make the space even more costly and exclusive against the goals & purpose of the neighborhoods & Parks dept.

Honor History of Golf

In what ways can PARD honor the history of golf in this space?



In what ways can PARD honor the history of golf in this space? Make sure it always stays a greenspace Enhance golf education component Remove driving range for proposal To protect this green space/golf course forever investigate historical status!!!! We must preserve this greenspace Make it a teaching facility Make it a teaching facility to grow the next generation of golfers Get and keep historic designation for the gold course No dog park...keep golf, have golf for geezers, maintain green space Invest with it, and honor it for what it is Disc golf as an update The history of golf is a history of people with nothing better to do. Not a priority By not trying to make money off it Keep it golf centric and family friendly The golf is no longer competitive, have to leave the space for the common good and do a park. Keep it and share it Keep open, keep public, keep forever! Keep it a section dedicated to putting or pitch –putt while opening up the majority of space to non – golfers Keep it a PARD Public Golf Course Historically should stay a golf course in some capacity Retain golf purpose & activity Training and development mission has real potential for success

Additional Comments to Share

Please post any comments you have that can help improve the program.

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NO REQ REF.	Why not hire professional management to run tancock, increase programs	PROPOSED CONSPT GREATLY LESSENS GOLF COURSE RANGE + SURELY ADOS FONCE TO DENVING RANGE.	* FRIENDS OR 14ANCOCK FUNDRAISING TO OFFSET COSTS & MAINTHIN COURSE AS-1S I dunt support the idea	Plager from allower weed a good practice area and would note the tep for a good treat great services anticity located	I WOULD LIKE TO CONSIDER OPTIONS OPARK
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Get U.T. to Partner Money (\$) allow students to play, say 1/2 m\$ year

I would prefer to convert to passive park

I like the passive park option far better than the golf concession concept.

Parks shouldn't have to be profitable.

Look to conservancy model for funds.

What about supplementing with HOT funds?

Concerned that this is a done deal!

Have you considered Public – Private Partnership model?

Share the beautiful green space with non – golfers

As a Regular Golfer here I do like the aspect of getting more green use out of it. Perhaps redesign a few tee Boxes to increase park space

The process seems predetermined

Would hate to lose the course (except for #6)

Prefer request for information instead to request for proposal

Consider different fee structure to lower debt & costs

No private contracts

It's beautiful trails nature funky

I like the dedication of part of the space to community park use, but it should be more – at least half and half.

If we are taking a "headcount" I would like to express my interest in keeping it a golf course as green space.

What is overall revenue of Golf Enterprise Fund & why can't this be evened out? If you have some moneymakers like Greystone, why can't that offset courses like Hancock that provide a clear community benefit?

Neighborhood donations to pay for current golf course

I feel like there are many other options to tap into before such a drastic step. Why is it suddenly so urgent given it has been non – profitable to so long 120-160k is not anywhere near insurmountable that could be made up through at least looking at other options such as local fundraisers tapping into community organizations for fundraising/funding. Increasing green fees, etc. Seems like it would be in the best interest of the city community to try these relatively simple and accessible options to overcome such a relatively small revenue deficit.

Neighborhood donations to pay for current golf course.

<u>Outside the box idea</u>: Many Canadian golf clubs fund operations by adding a curling facility. Austin's Curling Club is largest in TX & looking for new home. Such a facility would support food operations, staff, Pro Shop. Plus it could add additional meeting space for community & kids programs. There are grants or subsidies for building curling facilities. Also it would attract competitors around the country, major amateur competitions & potential tourism. This overall could subsidize all golf programs & keep things affordable.

Also – if the 2wk Jr Golf Program is so successful and sold out why can't that be extended or run in 2 sessions to generate additional revenue?

Is the City of Austin Changing Land from Dedicated Parkland?

If it costs 200k to maintain as park – how much does it cost as <u>a Golf Course</u> what is Budget Expenditure now?

Do a fund raiser to get the \$ for improvements.

Do RFQ RFI!

Save Hancock Golf Course

Do all parks have to "cover their costs"? Of course not

Interested in consideration of a passive park option that more neighbors can use without getting in their cars to drive to a park.

We can raise the money to support Hancock Golf Course as it stands, food trucks, music concerts, etc. etc.

A Park!

For me personally, the idea presented would be wonderful.

Why not hire professional management to run Hancock, increase programs

Doesn't seem the city has tried very hard to raise funds, and concur this doesn't need to be profitable.

I have two golf balls in my yard now. One in front on Beaker. I detest golf & have always wished this lovely spot were a park we could walk safely thru.

Hancock Golf Course and Community Center is The Heart of Central Austin.

Pools, basketball, tennis, etc. are not expected to be profitable. Parks are not a profit center & shouldn't be.

Get a donation to fix & maintain.

I would prefer a Park

Proposed concept greatly lessens golf course range & surely adds fence to driving range!

Can we add a small dog park?

The course is in good shape (good job George) considering the situation not Augusta but good...does not need 700 – 900k upgrades

Include revenue from golf camps in Hancock system. Increase fees & more money

It would be nice to have concessions onsite for the community to enjoy.

Make the land multi – use

*Friends of Hancock Fundraising to offset costs & maintain course as – is.

I don't support the idea that HGC should be required to breakeven the loss is small and it serves to support the other courses through new golfer development and keeping off Muni

HGC is a valuable piece of the City Golf portfolio, serving a unique slice of the population

Audubon Park in NO, La closes the course before sunset and it becomes more of a general park, new commenter – I love this park

Increase Green fees \$5. Increase Membership Golf ATX \$100

Golfers don't know how great this is - fairways & greens are in better shape than Lions

Course can accommodate non – golfers by closing course early on evenings or certain days. St Andrews is a public park on Sundays w/no golf.

Players from all over need a good practice area and would make the trip for a good facility, especially centrally located.

Why not have some leased food truck space to increase traffic and raise \$

Need to communicate & include Wilshire woods neighborhood. It's within walking distance

I would personally like a park

Analyze income and funding for successful 9 hole courses in Austin Centex region.

Once again a broken process...should be RFI before RFP

I would like to consider options 1. Park 2. City Before moving ahead with 3rd party

Would like to add trails within the golf course. Maybe solar lighting for evening usage.