

AQUATICS MASTER PLAN March 29 & 30, 2011 Kick-off Workshops

Participant Comments and Ideas

Written Comments and Small Group Discussion Notetaker Comments

Introduction

The Columbia Association sponsored two kick-off workshops for the Aquatics Master Plan in March 2011. The workshops were held from 7 to 8:30 PM on March 29 at the Other Barn and March 30 at Hawthorn Center. The two workshops allowed for participants to attend the workshop most convenient for them. The design and content of both workshops was the same.

The workshops included a presentation on the history, capital cost, use, visitation and current state of aquatic facilities in Columbia as well as information on demographic change. The presentation also explained the reason for undertaking an aquatics master plan at this time, its goals, timeframe and ways in which the public can be involved. Following the presentation, participants took part in small group discussions each led by a facilitator and assisted by a note taker. Each small group was asked the same set of questions three specific questions followed by a more open ended question to gather the participants' other comments related to aquatics. The following includes the comments that participants wrote on their comment sheets. These are followed by comments that were recorded by the note takers at each discussion table.

Written Participant Comments on Comment Sheets

Question 1: Based on what you know and have learned tonight about demographic and other trends, how do you think our aquatic facilities should change in the next 10-20 years?

- Plan for aging pop(ulation); communication - publicity; close low activity pool (or make it free)
- Plan for a variety of people (aging, women only) while making CA pools attractive to the community

- Going to need more indoor moderate temperature pools to meet increased demand as we grow older
- Maintain all pools but redirect some of the "splashier" elements to the under-utilized pools; closing pools would create transportation problems for residents; residents in lower income neighborhoods with low attendance may need more swimming lessons
- Cover some of the pools; involve schools in PE
- I feel this question is a bit vague to address
- This depends on whether the master plan includes county participation. I believe that CA should make a significant effort to partner with the county on future planning.
- Must be flexible - trends may change; currently, try to accommodate adult-usage but be able w/o (without) expending high funds to swing back
- Continue to service and encourage youth/families but give more consideration to the increased aging population and their needs as a priority
- Use by older swimmers
- Question too broad; Do not close pools - keep something of Jim Rouse' vision; in any changes you make, remember the needs of the senior population as we age in place and have chosen to use CA facilities to keep our health!
- Increase environmentally safe friendly chemicals - bromine, saltwater pool; programs specifically reaching out to demographic population in areas -older adults - minority children (ex: African-American); specifically reach out to demographic groups (by age, ethnicity)
- 50 meter year-round facility (perhaps replace SWC); waterpark/recreation facility (could be in same location); close/reduce availability at under-utilized facilities
- Upgrade select pools; add 50-meter pool; single-sex pools; outreach to under-represented groups; pools open all summer long;
- Increase indoor swimming capacity (50 meter pool/aquatics center, another indoor lap pool, enclose an outdoor pool)
- 50 meter pool; more lessons & outreach for minority children; upgrade bathrooms;
- Need pool time in a pool with secluded access and pool for single-sex swimming; this need comes from Muslim women, part of the growing diversity in our county;
- 50 meter pool; beach entry pool in each village; keep pools open all season; open the boat docks;
- Too broad -can't answer; make changes that include the needs of old adults, seniors who have lived here for many years and chosen to age in place.
- They could have a swim team work at Talbot Springs; Plan for age; If pools don't have a lot of people show up you could shut them down;
- Aging population; BRAC; Close some pools; , Swim Team vs. other (including older) users - leverage both, minimize conflict/incompatibility;
- Indoor state of the art aquatic facility that has water activities and health club for "older" individuals and "younger" 10-25 users. Downtown development will "force" need (for) 1st class aquatic center
- More warm water or maintaining status quo at Wilde Lake for an aging population, more info on indoor pools is needed;

Kick-off Workshop Summary - Attachment 1

April 11, 2011

- Considering the changing demography particularly relating to graying of Columbia I would like to see the pool facilities and programs targeting the older individual; at the same time, be flexible enough not to exclude children;
- More adult themed pools; better lap lane accessibility; but still encourage/teach all kids to swim; consider covering and/or heating some pools;
- Older adult theme;
- Designate some lower use pools for adults only to serve a growing aging population. Upgrade other low-use pools to make them more attractive;
- 50 people a day - Jeffers Hill; cover under use pools; let after school programs use them; give kids lessons etc.;
- Expand the Columbia Swim Center which is bursting at its seams or move some specialized activities such as scuba, private adult lessons, the clippers, to other facilities which may have to be created;
- We need better indoor swimming facilities; swim center built in 1967 has outgrown itself several times over; have a few of the outdoor pools open at 9am instead of 10:30am;
- Level the playing field as older pools get upgraded, pool time for just women separate from men and vice-versa to meet needs of some interest groups; Help low income residents learn to swim;
- I like the 50 meter by 25 yd. pool idea (which I've heard suggested before); I support an opportunity for men and women to swim separately at specific times; draw in more minority kids, teach swimming;
- Plan for aging population and then a turn over to younger families; more publicity of all aquatic programs;
- Plan for downtown development (10-15K new residents); demographics showing seniors now, may show young people in 10-20 years;
- New Hot-water therapy pool;
- Consistent temp at Swim Center (and not cold); for less used OP – use by non-residents(membership); convert 1 for swim team;
- More therapy classes, aquatic classes, esp. evening, ; larger locker rooms, maybe segregate kids and adults;
- We need to go with the trends of our neighborhoods
- New hot water therapy pool; for therapy pool now add a lane for DW running;
- Separate facilities for laps and water aerobics;
- Only 24% of Columbians population is under 17 years; it seems as if 75% of pool usage is geared toward them – you need to gear activities towards people over 20 and advertise to them – have monthly membership for seniors who aren't in town year round;
- Consider the increasing number of people over 65 who need and want swim year round have swim team use less used pools;
- Consider the increasing number of people over 65 who need and want swim year round have swim teams use the less used pools;
- 50 meter pool;

- Cater to and leverage older residents; Easier to access; train as lifeguards; Create specialty pools: lanes, kids, fitness
- Indoor 50-meter pool; George Mason University has a gorgeous facility with a moving platform that changes length of pool, it also uses a non-chlorine system;
- Closing underperforming pool;
- The aquatics facilities should change in offering more programs or services during the summer most pools are big enough to hold 2 elders fitness classes or child fitness class once a week and have people swim laps and exercise; winter/summer indoor water parks;
- Provide more opportunities for seniors to exercise and swim in the indoor pools, in my case the Swim Center, since I live in Town Center;
- More indoor/winter swimming facilities; Winter indoor swimming options for recreational swimming for children; more robust year-round water park;
- 50 meter yard pool; more waterpark areas; lien; low usage pools change some to adult-only or lap swimming only; change facilities to meet needs of group i.e. water temp should be geared toward group not 1 group (?)
- 50 m indoor pool; make program pool training only (i.e. no aerobics); low-use outdoor pools / > lap only;

Question 2: In your opinion, what factors or characteristics influence you the most to use certain pools (indoor and outdoor) rather than others? And conversely, what influences you not to use certain pools?

- Availability, guarded, lanes, cleanliness, ligh(t)ing
- Well-guarded pools, proximity, open days
- 1-open hours, 2-water temp, swim in STFo & SWFi at beginning and end of season & when RB isn't open
- Water temp (sometimes too cold); cleanliness of pool a factor in not returning; hours - > when they open in the morning; sense of community is very important; does not exist at Lifetime Fitness, where I've been going; higher demand for swimming as people age
- I swim indoors to avoid the sun; to be able to swim year-round, and because the water is warm;
- I like facilities which are under used. I use Longfellow because I can walk (to the pool).
- (Use)proximity, times of classes, attractiveness; not use- screaming children, no shade, too far away;
- To use IP: DWF, H2O not too warm, but not freezing; friendly staff; (@SC); socializing; to use OP: atmosphere, (nice facility; clean attractive), kids if I want fun, fewer kids if I want quiet time; not to use IP: distance, h2o freezing (e.g. SCC); not to use OP: distance;
- Used year around so uses SWC all year (use by handicapped managed well)
- 1-Temp, prefer higher temp@ indoor pool; 2-usage, I go to the least crowded pools; 3-Senior swims both indoors and outdoors;

Kick-off Workshop Summary - Attachment 1

April 11, 2011

- Prefer less chlorine; promote use of pools for healing from injury surgery, etc., - hot water therapy pool, - also opportunity for deep water running in cooler pool (ex: supreme) for runners, triathletes who benefit from anti-inflammation effects of cooler water;
- Location; beach entry for kids;
- Seeing my friends; which pool is open, sometimes my closest pool is not; I try to avoid pools with a lot of unruly teens;
- Location; lap swim hours; water temp (on the warm side);
- I prefer warmer water; Also tend to use SF (doesn't ID which, SwFi or StFo) because I see friends and neighbors there; for some times which ones have deep water for lap lane
- Swim at my neighborhood pool because it is the closest; swim (...) at SSC because it is always available, always open; the program pool at Wilde Lake is not always available
- Crowds, other peers, amenities, time of day, time of week, distance;
- 1- How busy it is, I prefer less crowded, fewer children; 2-Water temp - I like warm water; 3-proximity to my house, less of a drive; 4-Senior swim is very important to me and I will go to that pool;
- Lighting, safer/more protected pools are better (Dickenson); Pools that are in a walking distance will be more popular to that person/family; if the pool is in good shape then people will tend to come and use it.
- Priority: Appearance (e.g. "new" vs. "tired")-distance- safety, secondary: features, amenities;
- "Access" to Pool - time open, activities used; Time not physical access - when pools open SSC open most time activities as at Swim Center, too fragmented
- Availability of lap lanes & water temp; GOOD guards enforcing rules; accessibility - Talbott Springs stairs & cold
- Indoor because of shade in the summer, quieter pool, (attraction/attractiveness?) of the pool
- Plus: lap lane accessibility, and quality at lap lane experience; some shade available; negative: too rowdy, no shade;
- Chance to get a lap lane; attractiveness of the pool area
- Designate some lower use pools for adults only to serve a growing aging population. Upgrade other low-use pools to make them more attractive; refurbish low-use pools; develop programs keyed to the area in which the pools is located;
- 84-85 degrees; fellowship; sense of community; have arthritis -good for health; convenience, hours, price;
- Indoor pool- Columbia Swim Center; Reasons: lower cost than package plan which would strain my budget; location is good for me and a water temp at 83 is reasonable;
- Water temp; hours of operation; lap hours; sense of community/camaraderie at the facilities;
- Warmer water; water deep enough to tread water (deep water run); close to home; not too crowded; convenient showering area, not too crowded;

Kick-off Workshop Summary - Attachment 1

April 11, 2011

- We go to the SSC because it's the closest to our home and the pool is the biggest CA indoor pool, with 8 lanes; We normally use the pool at 7am on Sundays to avoid crowding but are very unhappy when the pool is invaded by triathletes or huge groups;
- To use certain pools - amenities, availability of lap lanes, cleanliness; to not use pools; would be the same;
- Nearby pool; know the people there;
- Consistent temp at SWC (and not cold); H2O temp; instructors for classes
- Water temp; classes, instructors;
- Low attended where I won't be bothered while swimming laps
- H2O temp/hot therapy pool;
- More adult activities;
- Crowded; water aerobics;
- Warm pool temperature is good no children is good, not crowded is good, friendly workers is good, how about a shuttle for older people to get them to pool, cleanliness;
- Temp of water; more private showers; more senior swim time to swim;
- Temp of water; more private showers; more senior swim time to swim;
- Chlorine; water temps; cleanliness; facilities; food;
- Demographics don't seem to be as important as amenities/facility;
- Cleanliness of locker/bath rooms, amount of chlorine in water, availability of or lack of hot tub; water temp (indoor), bike-ability, food vendor;
- Poor design re: pkg – TS is the worst in this respect; lots of room – green space; cleanliness;
- Proximity to home; programs offered and water temp; and vice-versa;
- The lifeguards and service at Clemens is what attracts us. They work well with families with special needs. Also close by unlike Swansfield or Clary's. Clean.
- Proximity to the pool, water temp, indoor for year-round use, and early morning hours of operation;
- Proximity to home; SSC way too cold; SWFI too crowded in shallow area; seems dangerous for my younger children;
- I live outside Columbia and started to use certain pools because my kids were on CA Summer Swim Team, then they worked at a particular pool. Still go to that pool because comfortable there. Also attend outdoor water aerobics;
- Attend with kids low attendance pools because more quiet; water temp determines where to go; SWC, SSC good for laps; RH(Columbia Gym) & Main Pool too hot; like SWFI & HW need more of water park to draw to spread out attendance; stay away from high usage pools;
- I prefer not taking my young children to the crowded pools; I use DK – beach entry is great and it's not too crowded. For the indoor pools I prefer colder temps for my lap swimming;

Question 3: For outdoor pools with low visitation, what changes would you recommend?

- Advertise, close, promote for gatherings, rationing
- Lower fees for non-CA residents at under-used pools, use underused pools for group rentals
- Define "low-visitation" - mostly they are the smaller pools that have shorter hours,
- RB didn't open until June 23 last year and closed a week before Labor Day
- Creative programs to attract users (mini-concerts? cookouts?); upgrade the facilities; find out reasons why people don't use the pool;
- Shift some of the organized activities to these pools
- They should be attractive;
- Look at the demographics around a pool & market/provide for that group, or establish themed pool in low visitation pools, or close one or a few of pools w/other pools very close by to serve the local population
- Make more attractive for older swimmers, kids grow up;
- Make one pool adult-only; make some amenities more attractive to young people: better (higher) diving boards as one example; get some better furniture and umbrellas; get some better furniture and umbrellas
- Minority programs to reach demographic populations who don't currently use pools in their neighborhoods; reach out to promote pools to schools, community centers, etc.; invest in appearances;
- Special programming(seniors, lessons, laps only); close 4-6 lower utilization pools
- Single-sex pools at certain times; early morning lap swim; upgrade statistics on Hopewell conversion - what was the utilization; targeted neighborhood deals; seasonal enclosure;
- Enclose them to increase indoor swimming capacity
- More lessons & outreach and more convenient times; special groups (gender specific); make some semi-closed; upgrade to attract patrons; some bathrooms are pretty grim;
- Upgrade them; treat them equally;
- 1-work harder to get neighborhood to join; 2-maybe close some, I'm really not sure; 3-maybe make a pool for 1-5 year olds;
- Advertisement; Lower certain fees, ex. Senior Discount for under-used pools; Non-CA members pay less to use underused pools; have birthdays at under-used pools;
- Talbott- close? or Promote?; Improve - new slide, amenities; use for rental (e.g. party) offer discount for under used pools;
- The transition for neighborhood pools to outdoor pools needs to progress to swim center; reduce # of pools and raise quality; Use savings from closing pools to reinvest into fewer higher quality pools;
- Figure out why they are low attendance; maybe makes one an Adult-only pool, amenities (cost) not needed
- Perhaps - focus on "open pool" and move away from "neighborhood pool"; more than pools?

- Add additional programming to suit neighborhood; theme some pools; cover/heat some pools;
- Have more lessons to kids; maybe change hours; find out through community meetings why people don't come; cover dedicated pool, give to Clippers and let them cover it;
- Create incentives for outdoor pools in lower income areas by offering swim lessons and recreational activities rather than closing pools, be creative!
- Need to find out why they are underutilized; cover some of the pools and open them up for PE facilities for schools or after school activities; also by covering some pools maybe one or two could be dedicated to swim teams thereby making the indoor facilities better able to accommodate more people for lap swimming, rec swimming or classes;
- Fee schedule sliding, lower for underused pools;
- Use them for special groups, such as gender-specific groups as sought by Dar al-Taqua;
- Senior discounts; lower the fees; publicize- ex. for lap lanes availability; Use them for special events - promote this or special usages; have aquatic exercise classes for all ages; transfer some indoor classes for usage outside; increase amenities
- lower prices; less red tape -(no resident card, etc.); provide swim lessons; make sure there is sodas, food:
- Add activities i.e. family activities; beach front entries;
- Shade, beach entrance, mushrooms, parking;
- To close pool outdoor/ make more indoor therapy pool; make pool available for rental for family reunions;
- Make sure heated; may need to specialize;
- Good looking lifeguards, warmer temperature, give out gold stars or reward for coming to the pool, campers are bad, hot tubs are good, better than saunas,
- Be sure water is warm enough; set aside time for seniors – earlier in the day;
- Extended hours for laps; bar-be-que space; party nights for adults, kids, families; make one a therapy pool – heat it!
- Make some lap swim with amended hours so people can swim before work; possible closure of some pools;
- Convert to year-round; Close; and change to gym or child use pools; convert them to lap pools open more hours;
- Do not use the outdoor pools;
- Convert to heated/year-round; close and transfer resources to pools with higher usage;
- Special Birthday Parties
- Change to adult only; lap swimming only ; more waterpark updates; concentrate camps into one pool; close low use area pools more than one day; (RB, FR & BW);
- Lap only pools; more adult only hours;

Question 4: Other Comments?

- Very good presentation - thanks

Kick-off Workshop Summary - Attachment 1

April 11, 2011

- Need an i-phone app to check on availability of pools & lap lanes; need bigger signs where pools is as many are not visible when driving by - signs indicated pools are too discreet
- Thanks for organizing these workshops
- Don't close so many pools early (Aug) in the season. Keep the Senior swims through August; Bring back the senior discount for package plan, many of us belong but don't use many facilities so why not cut us a price break like you offered before
- Don't close any pools; be creative in how to use them; increase outreach to non-white communities in Columbia
- Would like to know usage numbers from Hopewell - what was the usage before & after the upgrade? Twitter feed on pool status; maybe online status or (streaming) usage;
- There is an imbalance between outdoor pools (too many) and indoor pools (too few) as the population using CA facilities ages; swimming is one exercise that won't stress joints; But swimming as an exercise benefits only if done year round. Hence the need to increase indoor capacity;
- The 50 meter by 25 yd. pool allows space for laps, aerobics, swim team practice, lessons and recreational swimming all at once.
- How old is the Golf Course? How many use it (then?) how much does it cost? Is it fair to compare relative costs and number of users?
- Don't close pools; think about increased downtown population for lower usage pools; at some point aging population will peter out for younger families and you will again have increased usage; Are staffs at outdoor pools assigned based on per day usage? Sometimes there seems to be excess staff. Is there a way to be more cost effective?
- What is the problem that requires a change? Maybe we could come up with a better solution if we knew the problem?
- Allow CA lien paying resident access to low use CA pools without joining package plan
- Seniors who spend a lot of time away from Columbia should have to pay a year's membership fee; this item has been in the discussion phase for over five years – even before Maggie Brown; who is looking at a solution to this problem; have singles nights at the pools probably for certain ages;
- (Increase) programs; specialty pools; bring in more non-Columbia residents;
- Activities to bring locals to pools;
- Modernize older pools, turn into specialty pools; Bigger hot tubs, activities @ pool to bring community; sell different kinds of memberships (per use passes); Reach out to triathlon community ; offer cheaper membership to non-residents;
- The swim center is a major part of our lives. We are there 3 times a week unless we are out of town. There often seems to be competition between lap swim and classes, this is unfortunate. I have a fear that our senior members who do classes may be overwhelmed.
- Pools should stay clean; friendly staff; more child friendly indoor/outdoor facilities;

Table Discussions – Notes Recorded by Notetakers

March 29, 2011 at the Other Barn

Question 1: Based on what you know and have learned tonight about demographic and other trends, how do you think our aquatics facilities should change in the next 10-20 years?

Table 1:

- First and foremost would like more solid demographics and time to analyze the data.
- Does the popularity of one pool drive the non-attendance at others (comparative data year-to-year when a pool is updated or significantly altered, i.e. Hopewell)
- Compare attendance numbers and population to school population demographics in the neighborhood
- Before considering the closing of low attendance pools – why are the attendance numbers down? Age of neighboring population? Poor condition of pools? Do the transient neighbors in high rental areas know of CA and the pools? (Marketing)
- Find programs that would serve neighborhood needs and boost attendance.

Table 2:

- Demographics had not been discussed in the presentation.
- What is the age distribution of Columbia Aquatics facilities users?
- The information of demographics and shifts over time in those demographics is in the handout titled “Columbia Association Aquatics Master Plan, March 2011 Kick-off Workshops, Demographic and Pool Attendance Trends” which was given to each participant.
- Need to pay more attention to older folks with services at pools such as Tai Chi, Yoga, etc.
- And not just new services but more focus
- This is a higher priority than it was 20 years ago due to an aging population
- Focus more on the 50+ folks than on the swim team
- More attention to seniors
- Focus at the Steven’s Forest pool is more on seniors – why not add that focus at other pools?
- Encourage all children to learn to swim and encourage more children to swim
- More lap lanes are needed as, at some pools, the lap lanes are crowded with children
- Have pools with more focus on seniors with services such as evening swims for seniors
- Pools than are quieter since they have fewer children
- Use currently underused pools for activities for seniors; but, in doing this, one must be flexible as the constituency demographics must change

- Pool set-ups such as that at the Swansfield pool are so kid friendly that they may not attract adults
- Some years ago CA tried to get the county involved with CA cooperatively in the area of aquatics
- The county has had a free ride from CA for years in the area of aquatics
- Determine if the county is now interested in involvement, e.g., building facilities, high schools pools, etc.

Table 3 (Question 1 & 3):

- Not enough information to make comments on future
- Need to know why these pools are so under attended- income, lack of advertising, etc.
- Very underutilize pools should be closed and allocate the money for their up keep to other pools and programs (only 1 person at the table suggested this, everyone else was against this)
- Shifting programs/activities to underutilized pools to increase usage
- Most underutilized pools are smaller and older
- CA is here to provide services to the community so CA needs to find out who are the 50 people using the underutilized pools
 - Maybe they do not have the transportation to go to other pools
- Are underutilized pools in lower income areas?
 - Is it a question of cost/income that attendance is low
- Biggest change that needs to happen is NOT to close pools
- Latino & Black communities do not know how to swim
 - CA should find out if low attendance is due to this fact and promote swim lessons at those underutilized pools
- BARC initiative- CA needs to gather more information about outside elements that will affect the CA community in the future
- Better indoor swimming facilities
 - Swim Center cannot house all the usage now, facility is falling apart
- Cover underutilized pools and work with Ho Co public schools to expand children after-school activities/programs to help combat childhood obesity
- Sponsor Swim Team
 - Cover one of the underutilized pools and turn it over to the Swim Team for them to fund and use instead of taking over the Swim Center
- Take a look at pool hours
 - Currently it's a complicated schedule
- Hold mini-concerts/BBQ/Village Parties with local artists at the underutilized pools as an event venue

Table 4:

- Important to gather data at swimmers at indoor pools
- Want to know statistics of what it costs to operate each pool

Kick-off Workshop Summary - Attachment 1

April 11, 2011

- Columbia needs a long course, 50 meter pool. This is an Olympic size pool. Model after the...
 - Arundel Olympic Swim Center.
 - Look at aging Swim Center as possible location for this size pool
 - Partner with County to establish High School competitive swimming teams
 - Need a pool of this size with both training and competition space.
- Want to know how much CA is willing to invest in the Swim Center
- Goal should not be to maximize attendance at underutilized pools. Some like to go to pools that are not as crowded.
- Need to know why people don't go to pools and don't purchase memberships. CA needs to do a
 - Better job marketing their memberships, outreach to apartments/condos.
 - Need to look at neighborhood demographics more closely.
- Water temperature is important both to those who like it warm and those who like it cold.
- Collect data on pool users
- Lack of indoor lap lanes. Currently the Athletic Club (therapy pool) has only 1 lap lane, not sufficient.
- Aging is not sedentary. Warm water does not mean swimmers are sedentary.

Table 5:

- Update all the facilities
- Build a 50 meter by 25 yard indoor pool that would be open year round
- All pools open the entire summer season – no early closings
- Early morning swimming for some outdoor pools
- Build more indoor pools
- Have more information available about different CA swimming programs
- Have more programs geared toward the underprivileged
- Have more programs gender originated, women-only swimming sessions

Table 6:

- Plan for aging population
- 10-15k increase in population expected in downtown Columbia due to BRAC
- Additional revenue from Clippers Swim Team by reducing waiting list
- Different needs for older swimmers (i.e. pool temperatures)
- Need more data regarding usage & users for indoor and outdoor pools
- Look into pool closings
- More promotion, publicity & marketing – need to get the information out regarding the pools
- Needs by Muslim community (i.e. separate swim times/areas for women)

Question 2: In your opinion, what factors or characteristics influence you the most to use certain pools (indoor and outdoor) rather than others? And conversely, what influences you not to use certain pools?

Table 1:

- Pool too crowded drives swimmer to another 2nd choice pool; parking, crowded grassy area, crowded lap lanes
- Typically a frequent user in colder months, triathlete will seek out natural bodies of water during the summer for training
- Arrangement of pool amenities for optimum use (Swansfield 1st choice vs. Hopewell 2nd because slide and board can be used at once.)
- Location of pool; distance of pool from home or office. ~ 5-mile distance seems to be the driving cut-off for OP; walking distance;
- Temperature of Indoor Pools a strong concern, particularly SWC members
- Ambiance of the pool (shade, quiet, or conversely lively if grandchildren are in company) including condition of facility and chairs/tables;
- Events being offered; senior swim, aqua fitness classes,
- Schedule of pool; either weekly shutdown or end of summer closings

Table 2:

- For indoor pools the answer to that question depends on for what one is using the pool
- For outdoor pools one wants a quieter pool (fewer children), close, and inviting (with trees and shade for instance)
- Lap lane accessibility is important
- Lack of children scuffling and jumping in the lap lanes
- Locust Park pool, for instance, is not attractive, but is safe
- For indoor pools
 - Look for pools for deep water fitness which is good for those with arthritis and better for older users
 - Want temperature to be warm, but not too warm
 - Want pools where friends go
- For outdoor pools one either wants those with more activity or one may want a quieter pool (less activity)
- Longfellow Pool is close, underused, quiet, and has lap lanes. It also has some shade. Faulkner Ridge also meets these criteria
- Like to walk to pool, not drive
- Faulkner Ridge is close but depressing
- Longfellow is closer but crowded
- Pools such as Clary's Forest with beach access are good to take grandchildren to
- One is more inclined to use attractive pools
- More people will come if the pools are made more attractive such as by doing something about camouflaging the chain-link fences

Kick-off Workshop Summary - Attachment 1

April 11, 2011

- A pool that looks nice attracts folks

Table 3:

- Water temp & hours they are open
 - Prefer 84-85
 - Happy with pools that are open at 10:30am for lap swimming
- Swimming for health especially those with major health issues
- Sense of community, knowing other people that go to the same pool, encouragement from other members
- Recreation
- Pools not clean enough (i.e. dirty tiles)
- Feels that CA focuses on just athletes instead of a sense of recreation and the need for those that can only use swimming as a form of exercise and cannot run or lift weights
- Social outlet
- Doctor recommended
- Cost is reasonable for just a Swim Center membership but not for a full membership
- Likes the Swim Center staff
- Swim Center only membership isn't advertised enough

Table 4:

- Influences not to use:
 - Lack of lane availability
 - Lack of enforcement of policies by lifeguards
 - Lack of accessibility i.e. Talbott Springs Pool
 - Disrespectful clientele, children/adults not adhering to policies
 - Proximity
 - Overcrowded Pools
 - Shade over water. Some pools have shade during the day, others are all sun.
 - Water temperature
- Influences to use:
 - Fun pools, splash pads
 - Hot tubs, food concessions, nice bathhouses, outdoor showers (good for families)
 - Water Temperature
 - Water Aerobics
 - Proximity
 - Pools that offer something for everyone
 - Seeking pools where you WILL NOT run into people you know.

Table 5:

- Heated pool – both in and outdoor pools

- Demographic is a major reason for the usage of certain pools
- Features of a pool
- Time of day and day of the week

Table 6:

- Variation in management between pools – need better guarding and maintenance
- Facilities/Amenities – Kids, water park, mood, venue
- Differences in lighting – brighter is better
- Access to scheduled activities – program pool is underused

Question 3 For Outdoor Pools that have low visitation, what changes would you recommend?

Table 1:

- Improve “curb appeal” make more attractive physically with newer furniture, amenities
- Adult-only pool times via staggered hours
- Increase after sunset adult-only events
- Create events and programs and schedule only at the pools with lower attendance
- Get information posted at the pools and out into the community about the programs

Table 2:

- According to the presentation, nothing has changed in 10 years i.e., low attendance pools then are still low attendance pools
- There must be some income factor that, even with the availability of subsidized memberships, causes low attendance at some pools
- Some residents face hard economic realities
- Some pools, such as Faulkner Ridge and Bryant Woods, are in older neighborhoods, with more diverse populations, and a lower income base
- Some of the lower attendance pools are in neighborhoods with a higher proportion of apartments inhabited by younger adults who do not see the need for pool membership
- Some of the lower attendance pools may be in areas where the population may not be fluent in English and so may need special focus to attract participation
- According to the presentation, CA already changed the focus of the original Columbia vision of having an outdoor pool in every neighborhood. Why not then close some of the underused pools?
- Why not advertise in the areas with underused pools in order to attract more people?
- Why not turn pools with lower attendance to other purposes such as classes; or why not make them “themed” pools?
- Need to make pools more responsive to neighborhood demographics and changes in neighborhood demographics

Kick-off Workshop Summary - Attachment 1

April 11, 2011

- The Talbot Springs Pool is so close to the Steven's Forest Pool – about a mile. Some time ago CA had planned to put a cover over the former pool, but this was not implemented.
- For pools with low attendance add classes
- For pools in close proximity define separate uses for each pool

Table 3 (Question 1 & 3):

- Not enough information to make comments on future
- Need to know why these pools are so under attended- income, lack of advertising, etc.
- Very underutilize pools should be closed and allocate the money for their up keep to other pools and programs (only 1 person at the table suggested this, everyone else was against this)
- Shifting programs/activities to underutilized pools to increase usage
- Most underutilized pools are smaller and older
- CA is here to provide services to the community so CA needs to find out who are the 50 people using the underutilized pools
- Maybe they do not have the transportation to go to other pools
- Are underutilized pools in lower income areas?
 - Is it a question of cost/income that attendance is low
- Biggest change that needs to happen is NOT to close pools
- Latino & Black communities do not know how to swim
 - CA should find out if low attendance is due to this fact and promote swim lessons at those underutilized pools
- BARC initiative- CA needs to gather more information about outside elements that will affect the CA community in the future
- Better indoor swimming facilities
 - Swim Center cannot house all the usage now, facility is falling apart
- Cover underutilized pools and work with Ho Co public schools to expand children after-school activities/programs to help combat childhood obesity
- Sponsor Swim Team
 - Cover one of the underutilized pools and turn it over to the Swim Team for them to fund and use instead of taking over the Swim Center
- Take a look at pool hours
 - Currently it's a complicated schedule
- Hold mini-concerts/BBQ/Village Parties with local artists at the underutilized pools as an event venue

Table 4:

- Offer reduced rate swim lessons (pilot this summer at Talbott Springs Pool)
- Use for camps, rent out for corporate swims, rent out for parties
- Do number of camp swimmers factor into pool usage

- Reduced rate per swim/season for underutilized pools
- Come up with creative ways to increase usage
- Have summer family swim events at underutilized pools.
 - Swimming and cookout
 - Theme swim events
 - Scout troop events
 - School events

Table 5:

- Closing of these pools
- Make some of these pools indoor facilities
- Lower the pool membership for that particular pool
- Develop swimming programs for those pools – reduce swimming lessons

Table 6:

- Advertise, promote, publicize
- Lower fees
- Pricing lower for non-CA residents for underutilized pools
- Promote underutilized pools for parties, and transfer programs such as aqua-aerobics, swim lessons to these pools
- Ration & close some pools, further limit outdoor pool schedules – invest savings in improving other facilities

Question 4: Other Comments?

Table 1:

- Chemicals in the pools need to move to more environmentally friendly products
- Who are non-resident users being identified in demographics (non CPRA? Rentals? Guests?)
- OP are not high on this group's list of concerns –hope to be more involved when discussion revolves around programming(keeping senior swim), pool temperature at Swim Center
- Consider Additional Groups:
 - Teenagers 14-18
 - Young Adults 18-25 / 26-35
 - Parents of young children 0-5 & 6-12
 - Middle School / High School (not on Clippers)
 - Minority populations,
 - Handicapped Lap Swimmer

Table 2: (N/A)

Table 3: (N/A)

Table 4:

- For those who pay per swim....the price is the same regardless of which pool. So, if you are paying you may go to the pool that offers the most “bang for your buck”. Maybe have a
- Different rate for the new pools (Hopewell/Swansfield, heated pool/Stevens Forest, and beach entry pools and have a lowest rate for underutilized pools.
- Every pool should have a suggestion box or other means to communicate with CA. Phone #'s of who to call etc.

Table 5: (N/A)

Table 6: (N/A)

March 30th 2011 at Hawthorn Center

Question 1: Based on what you know and have learned tonight about demographic and other trends, how do you think our aquatics facilities should change in the next 10-20 years?

Table 1:

- Trend data not surprising; Families age or move out, as the elders move new younger families move back in; Cyclical over a generational trend
- Hesitate on closing pools, other neighborhoods will increase (in young families) again, RH will age, but will always be only pool in area;
- The OP is a draw for returning adult children moving back to Columbia;
- Change pool for needs as the neighborhood demographics change;
- Enclose one or more outdoor pools;
- Close the SWC, raze and rebuild a more robust, state of the art multi-use aquatic center (50 meter, multiple pools, etc.) (there or centrally); during the razed period cover several OP

Table 2:

- Build 50 meter pool. Would allow for:
 - ‘Meets’ that CA currently can’t host
 - Appropriate location for High School swim teams
 - Better location for deep water fitness classes, etc.
 - George Mason’s 50 meter pool has ‘platform’ that allows that pool to be divided for different uses
- Modernize older pools:

- Hot tubs
- Better/closer parking & easier access via walkways at Talbot Springs pool
- More lanes for lap swimmers as population ages (tension between kids, lesson attendees & lap swimmers – need more space)
- Too many outdoor pools and not enough indoor pool space
- Need to consider possible benefits of some/more specialized pools, i.e.:
- Kids only (parents drive to other villages to go to pools that have amenities for kids)
- Lap swimming only
- Adult only
- Have a children's pool in every village and then look at how to develop the other pools
- Office of Human Rights says it's illegal to have 'adult only' pools - then how about hours set aside for 'adult only' use? If 'adult only' could be done, is it advisable? yes
- Add grills and extended hours on Friday and Saturday nights – pool parties
- Question about staffing – if the reason outdoor pools close early (end of summer) is because of all the lifeguards returning to school, explore idea of training volunteers so that the outdoor pools can stay open farther into the fall

Table 3:

- Provide shuttle service for seniors to the pool
- Outreach to some groups to see if there is a population of younger people surrounding that location.
- Consider people over 60 plus
- Move the Adult oriented pools to a different location
- The pools should stay open late in the evenings so that the work group can attend.
- People are concerned about the temperature of the pool especially the 60 plus age group.
- Open up the swim center year round.
- A senior swim time or a separate pool for adults.
- A quieter location for adults (no kids)
- More indoor pools to swim year around
- CA does a lot of outreach to get everyone involved but it doesn't include statistics of low income people coming in.
- Do we actually need more outdoor pools? Indoor pools are a must!

Table 4:

- Build a 50 yard/meter pool
- Make low use outdoor pools lap only or adult only
- Move away from "one size fits all" and make each pool unique in some way. Add diversity to draw people
- Allow lien paying residents to use low use pools in some way without becoming a Package Plan member

- Prefer no snack bars at the pools

Table 5:

- More space for those who use athletic club (hot water)- classes are very full
- More challenging arthritis and DWF
- Larger locker rooms (too small at SWC)
- Adult area in locker rooms
- Non-residents restricted to lower use pools
- Tiered pricing system for outdoor pools

Question 2: In your opinion, what factors or characteristics influence you the most to use certain pools (indoor and outdoor) rather than others? And conversely, what influences you not to use certain pools?

Table 1:

- Open lanes – seeks out low attendance;
- Location = walking distance, convenience
- Warmer water, would like more therapy pools, as classes, (Chesapeake Therapy) pushes un-assisted therapy patients out;
- Hours of operation; likes later hours at SWC
- Temperature
- For children / adults with mobility issues beach entry is key

Table 2:

- Supreme Sports pool is too cold & has too much chlorine
- Put in better filter systems so you need less chemicals
- Chlorine smell occurs when chemicals are out of balance
- CA should move to saline systems instead of using chlorine
- Ho Co Health Dept. could make recommendations
- Locker room upkeep and general cleanliness needs more attention:
 - Children in (dirty) diapers should not be allowed in main pools
 - Columbia Gym locker room very clean
 - Supreme Sports locker room is ok
 - Swim Center locker room is bad – hair on floor, etc.
- Prefer to use outdoor pools in summer, if weather is ok
- Want to have lots of green area to be able to spread out
 - Not to be on top of each other
- One pool in each village should have a food vendor
- Consider a survey that would see how far people drive to get to the better CA pools

Table 3:

- Temperature of the water
- Transportation
- Less programs/activities for the Senior Group
- Would appreciate classes on 'Senior Stroke Improvement' or 'Water Ballet'
- Aerobics
- Do not like to use crowded pools
- Private showers
- Cleanliness
- Prefer indoor pools
- Extended swim time for outdoor pools
- Advertising and activities geared towards the senior group
- Friendliness – the staff should be trained to take our names

Table 4:

- Don't use high use outdoor pools. Kids are still young and can better watch them at the lower use pools
- Dickenson pool - We like the beach entrance and it is easy to watch the kids there
- Do not use crowded pools – it is uncomfortable to go to the high use pools
- Swansfield's water park is a draw
- I use some outdoor pools BECAUSE they are less crowded.
- Adults are more likely to pick a pool with less kids
- Do not want to be in a crowded pool
- In the past, used some pools because the kids followed their swim coach or the kids worked at certain pools
- Location
- Never go to Columbia Gym to swim laps because the water is too warm. Always go to Supreme because the water temperature is cooler.

Table 5:

- Water temperature
- Classes
- Instructors
- Time constraints
- Challenge of the class

Question 3: For Outdoor Pools that have low visitation, what changes would you recommend?

Table 1:

- Theme some pools, using current low-attendance location, including adult friendly purposed
- LP has low attendance but area has high youth population, why not attracting swimmers? Cost? Knowledge (marketing & promotion)
- Lower price for visitation i.e. 5-pool plan revival;
- Decrease barrier to residents
- Swim up bar! (While we're at the wishing stage . . .)

Table 2:

- Partner with Ho Co to look at how to get schools to be able to use the pools more
- Update items:
 - Some locker rooms/showers are tiny
 - Some pools are older, worn out & not as clean
- Non-residents should not have to pay 2 times regular rate
- Some believe that local Talbot Springs residents would not mind 'non-CA' folks using the Talbot Springs pool at regular rates
- Have different types of memberships for non-residents, pool only membership
- More swim clinics – some people drive an hour away to go to certain clinics
- Triathletes use pools in early am or in evening, reach out to this group:
 - Have outdoor pool(s) open early 5am to 9am & then close till normal schedule
 - Some outdoor pool(s) open 4pm to 8pm for triathletes &/or lap swimmers only
 - Could have 9am to 4pm for swim instructions at these pools
 - Set up some swim instruction sessions, or clinics, for adults only
 - Use videotaping as part of instruction to help people learn proper strokes
- Create sense of community at these pools by adding other activities early in season:
 - Singles parties
 - Balloons, clowns, etc., to draw in families

Table 3:

- Different hours
- More activities
- Temperature of the pool
- We don't attend because of kids – adult only pools
- Change the Senior Swim timings – earlier or late in the day (11am and 4pm)
- More pools were built because the membership was low; close some of the pools that are not crowded.
- Advertise and develop more activities/ classes to attract people specially the senior group.

Table 4:

- Close them down for more than one day a week
- If there are 4 pools in one general area, open only two of them each day, not all four
- Some pools were built when the goal was to have a pool in each neighborhood. Could close some of the those that are not crowded
- Use for camps
- Keep high use pools open all week - do not have a closed day; Close low use pools more than one day
- Won't go to pools if I know that Camps are there. Could they combine camp usage at a few pools?
- Develop specialty pools – laps only, adults, open a pool later into the night
- Make pools multi-use—develop new ideas to draw people in. Business model may have changed; look at pool usage in a different way; find creative uses for the pools

Table 5:

- Play structures (i.e. mushrooms, play structures) for families
- More variety (volleyball, horseshoes)
- Shut them down if they are not needed
- Beach front entrances
- Convert to a recreation center – multipurpose venue
- Use low visitation pool for rentals only
- Turn underutilized pool into therapy pool
- Spend the money to convert low use pool for swim team

Question 4: Comments?

Table 1:

- Transportation for elders in residences with limited tpx options makes our changing class or event time's non-options. (very bad sentence . . .)

Table 2: (N/A)

Table 3:

- The pages on the handouts should be numbered.
- The workshops should be held during the day because the seniors can't drive at night.
- What percentage of Aquatic's budget totals CA budget?
- Seniors who are away at times still have to pay. Please have options or provide a solution to support discounted payments.

Kick-off Workshop Summary - Attachment 1

April 11, 2011

- Aquatics Master Plan Focus Groups have no teenagers who are attendees. We should include teenagers who come in but are not involved in activities e.g. teenagers who are not Clippers.

Table 4:

- At the Swim Center, members who use the pools for different purposes have disagreements about the temperature of the water. The aerobics classes want the water warmer while the lap swimmers and especially the swim teams need it cooler.
- A similar issue arises at the AC Therapy Pool. Some people feel the temperature is not warm enough, some that it is too warm. What activities is it targeted for? Look at programming and usage and base temperatures on that. Be consistent.

Table 5: (N/A)