

AQUATICS MASTER PLAN March 29 & 30, 2011 Kick-off Workshops Post Workshop Survey Results

Introduction

Following the March 29 and 30, 2011 Aquatics Master Plan kick-off workshops, Columbia Association contacted workshop participants and asked them to complete a survey to gain insight into how the participants perceived and valued the workshops. Twenty-seven of the 59 participants who provided emails addresses responded to the survey. This represents a very good 46% response rate. Overall, the views expressed in the survey of workshop participants were very positive.

Comments on Questions 6 and 10 that requested written comments include thoughts on a wide variety of topics. Three areas with multiple comments were:

- Develop different uses or themes for different pools
- Older adults expressed that they want to be considered in any plans that are made
- Build a 50 meter pool

Actual survey results received as of April 8, 2011 are recorded below.

Question 1: Which night did you attend the Aquatics Master Plan meeting?

Tuesday March 29 at the Other Barn in Oakland Mills	56.0% (14)
Wednesday March 30 at Hawthorne Community Center	44.0% (11)

Question 2: Did you find the workshop to be of value overall?

Yes	100.0% (27)
No	0.0%

Question 3: Were the goals of the Aquatics Master Plan clearly explained at the workshop?



Kick-off Workshop Summary - Attachment 2

April 11, 2011

Yes	92.6% (25)
No	7.4% (2)

Question 4: Did you find that the initial presentation introducing you to the Aquatics Master Plan provided adequate background on the project and its current status?

Yes	92.3% (24)
No	7.7% (3)

Question 5: Would you be willing to attend another Aquatics Master Plan workshop or focus group and provide us with additional information on this project?

Yes	96.3% (26)
No	3.7% (1)

Question 6: If you did attend another Aquatics Master Plan workshop or focus group, what thoughts and information would you like to share with us? What questions would you like to discuss?

- I think we really need to deal with the fact the people new to Columbia cannot be expected to "get" the Columbia membership concept unless CA interacts in a better, and possibly new .My family has always found the whole process complicated and expensive. No one has really made the case for benefits or affordability, or fun. What about the poor, the minority, the non-english speaking members of our community? What about people without cars, who have no choice about what pool to use?
- It occurred to me that pools follow schools. So to answer the question of demographics, what is Howard County's vision regarding the building, closing or consolidation of elementary schools? And given what we know now would we have located the pools any differently? What were the demographic projections in 1968 and how accurate were they?
- I'm mainly concerned with dedicating pools to their appropriate uses (i.e., the program pool at the swim center should be mainly for training, the supreme sports club pool should be mainly for lap swimming, etc.). If they are dedicated to particular uses, they could be maintained at the appropriate temps for that use. I would also like to see a 50m pool in Columbia sometime in the future.
- Some of the presentation was too complicated.Liked that important CA people were present. Feel that money is going to be the overriding decision-maker. Need to interest the over 17 year old age groups in using the pool through activities and advertising. Seniors need to be given an equal share of time and activities especially at the Wilde lake Pool where most seniors attend and live close to. Why can't CA give a monthly rate to seniors who have had a Package Plan membership for over 30 years and who are out-of-town most of the time, snowbirds, etc. Some people dominated the group



discussion. The room itself didn't hold sound well and made it difficult to hear anyone in the small groups.

- Possibility of having single-sex times for one pool with secluded access and secluded swimming.
- How to develop more choices with CA Package Plans. Cheaper plans with limited access to facilities.
- Let's support the swim team, certainly. But not at the expense of your other member/swimmers. For instance, lowering pool water temperature for team use is not compatible with member/swimmer use. This is especially true for older patrons -- and they are a significant part of your loyal customer base. Non-critical factors might be subject to compromise, but this is not one of them. Water temp is a critical factor for many, especially older swimmers. Let's find other ways to accommodate both groups.
- Better explanation of the correlation of income demographics with pool usage which pools are used for lessons
- My husband and I are older users of the facilities. I have a great fear that due to the competitive nature of some of the younger users (triathletes, swim teams), our needs may be overlooked.
- I did not answer #4 above as I felt that the initial presentation did not provide adequate background. What was lacking was a MISSION STATEMENT such as the one included in the packet distributed at the meeting and written by the Columbia Aquatics Association. My response to #4 above would be neither YES nor NO but SOMEWHAT. The "Demographic and Pool Attendance Trends" described a statistical analysis of the outdoor pools. Perhaps this report commissioned by C.A. to provide a rationale for closing some of the lesser used outdoor pools. I would appreciate seeing a similar report for the indoor pools as clearly they are of equal or even greater importance to the swimming community. Some of the statistical data on the indoor pools exists as Mr. Goldman referenced it in his power point address.
- I would like to discuss issues related to seniors and the use of water as an excellent way to exercise. We should discuss what times seniors want to swim and what exercise classes they would want to join. Daytime programs are best for seniors to attend. I live at Vantage House, a retirement community in Columbia's Town Center. It would be to CA's and to Vantage House's to hold that meeting at Vantage House. Anyone would be welcomed and I would be happy to help arrange for that meeting. Another reason to have the session here is that people who consider becoming residents here say they want a swimming pool here. Now Vantage House provides transportation for us to swim at Wilde Lake Swim Center.
- I'd like to participate in a focus group for triathletes/master swimmers. I'm on the board of directors for Mid Maryland Triathlon Club. Also, it's very important the the CA Aquatics dept. focus a bit more on reaching out to more diverse communities in Columbia, and develop programs more focused to their experiences, needs, and abilities.

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- refurbishing the older pools expanding opportunities for all children to learn to swim expanding hours/days of outdoor pools particularly at the beginning and end of the season maintaining a consistent temperature at the indoor pools
- Expanding masters swimming program....possibly adding T/Th AM practice space...

Question 7: Do you feel that the ground rules set for this meeting (Participate, no judging, use appropriate language, no interrupting, and raise your hand) were adequate?

Yes	96.2% (25)
No	3.8% (1)

Question 8: Did the facilitators provide adequate structure to the discussions while allowing participants to fully express their thoughts?

Yes	100.0% (26)
No	0.0%

Question 9: Do you believe that your group had adequate time for discussion about the three questions and that each person had an opportunity to fully express their thoughts and ideas?

Yes	69.2% (18)
No	30.8% (8)

Question 10: What further thoughts do you have on the Aquatics Master Plan?

- Focusing on the ground rules was a little weird - all were adults in the room, and interested in making progress on the topic.
- looking forward to fleshing out of ideas discussed at the meeting especially the "senior" activities
- Involving the community for ideas is a great step.....while many pools are under-utilized, I think it is important to keep the facilities open and find a way to better utilize the pool as opposed to closing the facility to turn it into a different type of recreational area.
- Just want to explain that we had two extremely dominant personalities at our table and the facilitator was completely unable to reign them in. ugh
- Is the county involved in any way? Are state and county monies going to help?
- None as of this time.
- Pool temperature at Wilde Lake needs to be 78 or higher and room needs to be ventilated not smothering. Relaxing music there instead of the lifeguards choice might be better for participants. Seniors access to the Wilde Lake Pool is imperative. The temperature should be lowered or the time shortened when seniors can swim there.

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- 50m pool
- Pools should have different themes. Also more organized activities for adults like at resorts. Hawaiian night, Beach Boys night, Parrothead night. With tropical drinks and music. That type of thing.
- I liked separate facilities for different activities.
- I came in 10 minutes late...Was the Master Plan discussed in full during those 10 minutes??? I did not come away from the meeting having any clue of the master plan. I learned alot about the demographics of who attends what outdoor pool, and I found out the chronology of when certain pools were built....But, the Master Plan???? We all spent a great deal of time answering the 3 questions, but to me that was not the master plan... or was it???
- If a thorough analysis indicates that a pool should be shut down -- including the costs of shutdown -- then I would support elimination of such a facility. Situational factors can change quite alot over time. Bringing aging facilities back up to standards can be unrealistically expensive. There are times when it's better to level the lot, and then rebuild afresh (if appropriate) there, or at a different location.
- I love the water and feel I get great benefit from it. I am a nurse at Howard County General and am a great proponent of water exercise in all forms. I preach to many of my patients, almost anyone, no matter what their degree of fitness can find a form of exercise they can do in the water. I would see the plan expanding swim facilities in Columbia, and increasing their outreach to the community. I swim at the Swim Center three times per week. After the meeting on Wed. I decided that I needed to check out some of the outdoor pools this summer.
- Äs a personal observation, I have been swimming at the Columbia Swim Center for the past ten years and during that time I have noted an increase in the number of lap swimmers as well as an increase in the number of non-lap swimmers who participate in various programs offered. A comment made at the round table discussion expressed the view that: "The Swim Center is bursting at the seams," and I concur. .The trend on an increase in pool use will continue in the future based on the Michael Phelps phenomena, the medical community's emphasis on swimming to promote good health, and control obesity, the safety factor in being able to swim in a state with large swimming and boating areas bordering the bay and ocean Please consider setting up a telephone conference for future meetings and focus groups for those who find it difficult to travel to meetings, and who would be interested in being part of the discussion. Thank you.