

**Res 07-07**

**ANC 3F RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE D.C. DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION ADDRESS CERTAIN PLANNING ISSUES IN RECONSTRUCTING WILSON POOL**

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3F  
North Cleveland Park, Forest Hills, and Tenleytown  
4401-A Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Box 244  
Washington, D.C. 20008-2322

**WHEREAS**, the D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) is planning to raze the existing Wilson Pool, which has been condemned and has not been used for several years, and to replace it with a new, 53,589 square-foot structure that will include a 25 yard x 50 meter competition pool, a wellness/leisure pool, an adult whirlpool, locker rooms, and 477 spectator seats; and

**WHEREAS**, the new pool will be built in the same location as the existing pool, on the southern end of Wilson High School between the Wilson football stadium and the headwaters of Soapstone Creek, but because it will be larger than the existing pool, it will come closer to Nebraska Avenue and to the headwaters of Soapstone Creek; and

**WHEREAS**, DPR has indicated that this new facility is intended to be used for recreation by Ward 3 and District residents, for Wilson High School classes and swim meets, and for regional and multi-state swimming competitions; and

**PARKING AND ZONING ISSUES**

**WHEREAS**, 11 DCMR Section 106.5 specifies that new construction of District-owned buildings or additions to buildings shall be subject to zoning, and Zoning Commission Order No. 02-15-B (June 10, 2003) sets forth the number of required parking spaces for public recreation centers, defined in 11 DCMR Section 199.1 to include public swimming pools:

<u>Public Recreation and Community Center Use</u>	1 for each 2,000 ft <sup>2</sup> . gross floor area of bldg. or use
<u>Bleachers</u>	1 for each 12 seats

(11 DCMR Section 2101.1); so that for bleacher seats alone, 48 parking spaces are required, as indicated by Bill Crews, the Zoning Administrator in the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) during the public meeting of ANC 3F on March 19, 2007; and

**WHEREAS**, because of the size of the facility and tightness of the site, no parking is being planned; in fact, the extension of the pool toward Nebraska Avenue will eliminate 14 parking spaces in one of Wilson High School's staff parking lots; and although the pool is served by both Metrorail and Metrobus, experience in the community and at other pools shows that a large

number of swimmers and spectators can be expected to travel to the pool by private car or bus; even many residents of Ward 3 are likely to use their cars to come to the pool because they do not live near Metrorail or Metrobus lines; in addition, swim teams often are required to travel to meets by charter or school bus; and

**WHEREAS**, very high parking demand can be expected if Wilson Pool is used for large regional and multi-state swimming competitions, like the Black History Swim Meet held at the Takoma Pool in February, an event for 2,500 people to which participants came by private car and bus from such distant places as California, Connecticut, Michigan, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, which are not served by Metrorail or Metrobus; and

**WHEREAS**, this parking demand cannot be accommodated in Tenleytown, where there are no municipal parking garages, the few retail parking lots are needed and used by store patrons, and very little street parking exists for cars and buses: only a handful of parking spaces exist on Fort Drive and 40<sup>th</sup> Street in front of the pool entrance because these streets comprise the WMATA “Kiss ‘n Ride” for the Tenleytown Metro Station; although there are a few parking spaces on other nearby streets in the commercial area, these parking spaces can barely handle all the cars that park in the area now for Metro, the shops and offices, the Sport and Health Club, Wilson High School, Potomac College, and Fort Reno National Park; other streets in the area are residential and, as such, are not designed to accommodate the cars or any of the buses that would be drawn to events at Wilson Pool; and

**WHEREAS**, Tenleytown residents, as well as people coming to swim or watch swim meets would benefit from a well-coordinated parking management plan; and

**WHEREAS**, there could be other zoning issues, such as the need for more teacher and student parking for Wilson High School; and

### **ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS**

**WHEREAS**, DPR is committed to meeting LEED silver standards in the design of the Wilson Pool by

- recycling demolition and construction debris;
- using efficient mechanical, electrical, and water-saving systems;
- incorporating elements of green design into the building, like recycled interior finishes, windows for natural ventilation and lighting, and use of exterior lights that will not reflect into the sky;
- and relying on the use of nearby mass transit for access by alternative transportation means; and

**WHEREAS**, because of the location of the pool, DPR also has the opportunity to augment its green building strategies by preserving the adjacent headwaters of Soapstone Creek and its wetland, as well as two very large trees that are growing close to the construction – a 32” dbh. white oak at the southwest corner of the existing building and a 34” dbh. black oak near the northeast corner of the new building; in particular, the white oak, which was 12-18” inches in

diameter in 1933 when Wilson High School was being planned, is one of the oldest trees in Tenleytown; and

### **NEED TO WORK MORE CLOSELY WITH STAKEHOLDERS**

**WHEREAS**, at public meetings of ANC 3F on January 17 and March 19, 2007, residents and officials from DDOT and DCRA made comments on the plans for Wilson High School:

- DPR should give the community as a whole greater opportunity to comment on and offer suggestions for the Wilson Pool to improve the overall functioning and enjoyment of the pool;
- The Zoning Administrator in DCRA is willing to meet with DPR to discuss zoning issues now during the design phase;
- The parking study that DPR submitted to the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is inadequate because it does not give estimates of future parking demand or a schedule of routine and special event use of the pool;
- Because of the slope of the land, parking could be built under the locker rooms;
- DPR must take measures to protect the adjacent stream, wetland, and two oaks and explain how this will be accomplished;
- DPR should incorporate additional measures to save or generate energy, such as the use of polycarbonate panels in the roof: for example, on a recent day, 98 lights were being used to illuminate the Takoma Pool, but only two lights were needed at the Turkey Thicket Pool, which has polycarbonate panels;
- DPR should correct flaws in the design of the locker rooms: too few showers (a public health issue), an excessively long tunnel from the men's locker room to the pool, and lack of attendant booths in both the men's and women's locker rooms (security issues);
- A state-of-the-art diving well should have a tower and blowers underneath the tower and 3-meter diving board to break the impact of entry into the water; this is a safety need especially for divers trying out new dives;
- DPR should develop a construction management plan with the neighborhood.
- Construction of the new pool will take place during the school year when classes are in session; students could be subjected to dust, noise, debris, and other disruptions if measures are not taken to mitigate these effects of construction;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** ANC 3F recommends and urges that the Department of Parks and Recreation:

- Meet immediately with the Zoning Administrator in DCRA to determine what the zoning requirements are for the pool and whether this project will have to go to the Board of Zoning Adjustment for zoning relief;
- Form a task force to develop a parking management plan for general use of the pool and for special events; this task force should include representatives of DDOT, the DC Office of Planning (OP), the Department of Public Works (DPW), the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), WMATA, Wilson High School, the Tenleytown Neighbors

Association, Potomac College, Tenleytown merchants, ANC 3E, and ANC 3F; any parking management plan that is developed must not put a burden on other neighborhoods;

- Alter the building plans to include a level of parking underneath the locker rooms and to correct other design problems;
- In consultation with the Urban Forestry Administration in DDOT and Casey Trees, design and implement strong tree preservation measures for the two oaks both during the razing and construction phases; these should include defining sufficient limits of disturbance for the trees to survive (at least 16' from the white oak, and for the black oak the area of the existing grassy strip), strong wire tree preservation fencing, root pruning, root protection matting, use of a tree growth regulator like Cambistat, and any other steps recommended by a tree preservationist;
- With the help of the District Department of the Environment and the Army Corps of Engineers, develop measures to preserve the adjacent stream and wetland and to protect them from sedimentation, harmful chemicals, or any other polluting effects of construction or use of the pool;
- Strongly consider using such energy-reducing or generating measures as translucent polycarbonate panels in the roof to increase natural daylighting, or in the alternative, solar panels; solar heating tubes to heat the pool water and showers and to provide radiant heat in the pool deck; and geothermal energy;
- Consult with the DC Energy Office on these energy-reducing or generating measures and seek grants to help defray costs;
- Strongly consider measures to reduce chlorine use, such as an ultra-violet filtration system;
- Work with Wilson High School and residents to mitigate the effects of construction on students, staff, and the neighborhood;
- Review these comments and those submitted earlier by residents, and return to the community to show what changes have been made in response; and
- Work closely with all stakeholders throughout the design and construction process.

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Approved by a vote of 6-0-1 at a duly noticed public meeting of ANC 3F on March 19, 2007, with a quorum present (a quorum being 4).

*/s/ Cathy Wiss*

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Cathy Wiss, Chair

*/s/ Susan Banta*

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Susan Banta, Secretary