CCAC Community Needs Subcommittee Minutes July 31, 2012

Members present: Jean Wilcox, Sheri Furman, Tom Crystal, Diane Reklis

Members absent: Rachel Samoff, Tom Vician

Staff absent: Rob De Geus

Deliverables that we expect to complete by November:

- Table exploring **current users of Cubberley Community Center** (September).
- **Potential new users and services** based on research into what others are offering and what services are currently requested beyond our capacity.
- Possible **community survey** of current usage and unmet needs using PAN neighborhood e-mail contacts.
- **Survey of current tenants and other regular space users** (September) This was not discussed, but Rob sent e-mail later asking for feedback on planned staff survey and results will be important findings.

**Priorities. How can we evaluate future users?** Some ideas we generated include:

1. **Don’t let space just sit there.** Share some spaces with different users depending on time of day.
2. Consider **Palo Alto residents vs. non-residents.**
3. Which services have **wait lists** at Cubberley or elsewhere in town that implies additional demand?
4. **Geographic balance** between areas of town and services offered is desirable, particularly for seniors and kids who tend to be less mobile than teens and younger adults.
5. **Density of development.** Sometimes less is more. We value open space and spaces with less dense use as well as fully developed spaces. What is optimal density for Cubberley? More simple spaces with benches in shade would be nice.
6. **Services for kids, parents, non-parents, seniors, and the elderly** all deserve space. The population of truly old folks is likely to expand and so should services for them.
7. We need **more cross-cultural opportunities** (both organized activities and simple shared spaces) both by age and ethnicity.
Discussion

- Have decisions already been made? Is citizen’s committee really window dressing or is our input sincerely valued by PAC? by City Council? by PAUSD Board of Education?
- Are the rates charged too low? We heard anecdotal evidence that some artists are using space for storage since rates are lower than storage units nearby. In this real estate market, does it make sense to subsidize community services at current levels?
- How do our community centers compare with those in other cities? It seems that some services are similar while other cities rely more on outside providers for many services.
- What services are not currently offered but would be valued by our community? Are there ages or groups that are currently underserved? Reports from October 2011 meetings about Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Amendment provide some ideas and we plan to go over these documents carefully.
- Palo Alto is lucky to have Pacific Art League, Art Center, art classes at Foothill and Adult School, art in the schools, etc. What is the value added from having subsidized art studios? This thinking was not meant to focus on one type of user, but to begin the task of prioritizing all users.
- What facilities lend themselves to be shared between students and community members? How have other communities handled this and what can we learn from them? Maximum sharing between open schools and community center needs might not be the optimal solution.
- We need to understand what others are doing in order to make recommendations as to the best allocation of our limited resources of space and money.

Individual tasks / assignments accepted by committee members:

- Sheri Fill in table of current Cubberley users. What hours are spaces used?
- Jean Explore recent City survey. What did it cover? What can we learn?
- Tom C. Find out which city classes are overbooked.
- Rachel Child care needs.
- Diane Research shared community facilities in other communities. Identify successful ones and pitfalls.

Future meetings:

- August 14 1 PM Cubberley
- August 28 1 PM Cubberley
- September 11 10 AM Cubberley
- every 2 weeks after that 10 AM Cubberley