CCAC Community Needs Subcommittee Minutes  
October 24, 2012

Members present: Sheri Furman, Tom Crystal, Jean Wilcox, Rachel Samoff, and Diane Reklis
Members absent: Tom Vician
Staff present: Rob De Geus
Others present: Stacey Ashlund

We discussed the previous two CCAC meetings and finalized the following report which summarizes our principal findings so far, including what makes Cubberley special, our problem statement, our vision for a community center at Cubberley, and a summary of our beliefs.

Community Needs Report to CCAC  
10/29/2012

What is special about Cubberley? Cubberley provides an irreplaceable public, comprehensive community facility with safe and convenient walkable, bikeable access to programs and services from nearby schools and neighborhoods.

1. Cubberley is the last large under-developed publicly owned space in town.
2. Palo Alto has wisely chosen to disperse our public buildings to make our services walkable, bikeable, and transit-oriented whenever possible. This fundamental vision is the policy basis for the City of Palo Alto Land Use & Community design as it is laid out in the Comprehensive Plan. Cubberley in the south end of town and Lucie Stern in the north allow many classes and programs to meet this goal, while youth and teen programs at Ventura and Mitchell Park add even more balance for many non-drivers. It is important to note that the new community center spaces being constructed at Mitchell Park will merely replace the original spaces and will not in any way replace those currently at Cubberley.
3. The Cubberley site provides a unique opportunity for PAUSD and the City to come together to plan a creative co-location of schools and community services that work together to make the most of this valuable public property to serve our community in the best way possible now and into the future.
4. It is essential to understand what is provided at Cubberley now in order to make good decisions about what to offer at Cubberley in the long term and understand potential interactions with a school once one occupies a significant portion of the site. Staff is compiling results of a survey of current tenants and the Community Needs Subcommittee is interviewing the members of the following groups.
   - Artists in Residence – 22 artists currently have studios at Cubberley; co-location yields benefits to community and to artists and is being copied in several locations around the world.
   - Dance Programs – 3 dance studios plus several small companies share spaces at Cubberley and provide a variety of classes for all ages and abilities.
• Outdoor Sports, particularly softball, soccer, and tennis – 4 softball fields and several soccer fields allow spring, summer, and fall youth leagues to practice and play Monday - Saturday at Cubberley. Adults use fields heavily on Sundays. Tennis courts are used heavily at all hours and the football field is used regularly for soccer and football. The track is used primarily by joggers.

• Indoor Sports and Fitness Classes – Both Foothill and the City offer a wide array of sports and fitness classes for all ages and abilities. Foothill is not building a gymnasium and would like to maintain a presence here after they move most of their classes to its new location.

• Senior Wellness, including Stroke & Cardiovascular Programs – Avenidas is interested in increasing opportunities for seniors and combining 3 programs.

• Childcare, both preschool care and after-school care -- Good childcare encourages learning and allows parents to work at their chosen profession, confident that their children are learning and thriving.

• Private Schools and Tutoring Programs – Several private schools and tutoring programs allow children to learn in a specialized environment. Tutoring co-located with “fun” afterschool classes is easier for parents and for kids.

• Classes and camps for all ages -- Foothill, the City, and the District all offer classes at Cubberley. Many are adult education classes.

• Music Programs – Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra, Peninsula Women’s Chorus, Peninsula Piano School, Palo Alto Philharmonic, and El Camino Youth Symphony all make their homes at Cubberley.

• Theatre programs

• Organizations like the Friends of Palo Alto Library and Wildlife Rescue are at Cubberley.

• Spiritual offerings
Statement of the Problem Given Lease Termination in 2014

1. City Interest
   - Improve cost recovery of Cubberley maintenance, operations, and capital improvement costs.
   - Continue offering the programs and services currently housed at Cubberley.
   - Plan now for building or rebuilding on City-owned 8 acres with sufficient use time to justify taxpayers’ expense.
   - Work with a willing partner to create comprehensive plan for the best use of all 35 acres to serve the community and the school district.

2. PAUSD interest
   - Maintain current revenue stream in the face of decreasing state revenues.
   - Preserve the flexibility to respond to increasing enrollment as it evolves by adding schools on the site.
   - Recover the ability to use entire 35 acres for District purposes.

3. The short term plans require negotiations for 5-year lease extension, which must include plans for short and medium term maintenance and a commitment to plan for the longer term.

Vision: How to Best Utilize the Cubberley Site and Honor the City’s Interests and the District’s Interests Beyond 5 Years

The time frame and professional support allocated to the CCAC are inadequate to allow for the comprehensive study needed for a detailed recommendation. However, the Community Needs Subcommittee believes that we have enough information to work towards creation of a viable plan over the next 5 years for the community interests on the Cubberley site while respecting the needs for flexibility for the District to open and operate a comprehensive high school or other schools as they are needed.

The Community Needs Subcommittee Believes:

1. The Community values the services and opportunities currently available at the Cubberley Community Center.
2. The Community values the high quality schools in our District and wants to make them even better.
3. It is possible and desirable to plan a Cubberley campus that would support an ongoing Community Center and allow for the eventual design and construction of a school or schools to meet PAUSD’s needs as they develop.
4. A more efficient use of the space in the future would allow more efficient use of the space as both City and District needs grow. This is the last large under-developed publicly owned space in town and it must be used wisely.
5. The redesigned Cubberley campus should be
   - Multi-generational with programs from preschool through seniors
   - Multi-cultural to reflect, meet the needs of, and provide a gathering place for our growing and increasingly diverse population
   - Multi-disciplinary to support programs such as sports, health, music, art, dance, science, and technology throughout our community
   - Lively and fun
   - Flexible for the changing needs of the City and the School District.

6. The creative and productive synergy provided by co-locating community and school district use at Cubberley would more than make up for a smaller footprint for a school.

7. Short term savings cannot be allowed to prevent seeking the best long term solution for this site.

8. This community has the imagination and drive to surmount the many hurdles ahead to achieve this vision.

Additional points:

**Potential New Services at Cubberley**

- Avenidas has proposed a potential Senior Wellness Program including new classes and programs plus the current Stroke and Cardiovascular Programs. They also suggested a new therapeutic pool to replace Abilities United’s aging facility.
- Bathrooms adjacent to fields.
- More services for seniors.
- Multi-age eating area.
- Reading room.
- Display space for artists of all ages.
- Farmers’ market including cooking demonstrations and cultural shows.
- Wheelchair-accessible trail surrounding fields with occasional trees, benches, par course items, or children’s play structures (similar to Greer Park). Eventually link to trails in Mitchell Park.

**Priorities for Selecting Future Tenants at Cubberley**

- Tenants should be selected depending on how well they fulfill our vision of a community center that is multi-generational, multi-cultural, multi-disciplinary, lively and fun, and flexible for changing needs.
- Decisions between similar users should be made with input from outside judges. The juried selection process developed for selecting artists could be a good model.