

Proposal for Pine Meadow Park

Our Proposal for Pine Meadow Park:

A. Honors the Coward family connection with the land since the 1800s, potentially including:

- Keeping the general property contours, reducing deforming grading to a minimum
- Keeping the clubhouse and hill intact as a working facility, bar and restaurant, park center, etc. with historic artifacts and memorabilia in place
- Retaining and high-lighting the pond
- Nurturing the native trees that exist now on the property, attempting to bring the fair-to-poor trees back to health
- Mounting historic plaques and markers in and outside the clubhouse and throughout the property
- Naming building(s), features like the pond, etc. in a manner that memorializes the Coward family connection to this land.

B. Continues the historic purpose of the property as open space/recreation by use of the property as open space/park/recreation fields/public facility, or some combination of these, and fulfills the intent expressed by the family. This is especially appropriate given the limited number of other large parcels that have the same natural ability for these uses. It is also appropriate that this would be the only such new City-owned facility in Martinez in over 20 years.

C. Meets the needs and desires of the neighborhoods and the larger Martinez community by:

- Maintaining the outdoor, nature and recreation-oriented use of the property
- Saving critical trees and affirming Martinez as truly a Tree City
- Providing sorely-needed park space, recreation fields, walking open space and possible public facility for both the immediate community and the whole town. This is in the face of increasing population, over 3000 new residents since the last City owned park was opened. More population growth is planned too.
- Reducing traffic in the neighborhood on streets already in poor repair
- Reducing impact on our over-crowded schools in the Mt. Diablo School District, and on the local high school which is impacted per the October draft study prepared for the Martinez Unified School District.
- Lowering the greenhouse gas impact of the property by increasing the vegetation and tree life and not putting in very carbon-intensive housing.

- Increasing property values and quality of life for local residents and residents throughout Martinez

We propose the purchase of the property through a combination of City, community, grant and donated funds. Initially Pine Meadow would be repurposed for a low-impact/low-cost park use. A Community Task Force would be formed to discuss and plan a long-term open space/park/recreation fields/public facility use, or some combination of these uses. The agreed use would be implemented over time, and would conform to the agreement with the Dean/Coward family for memorialization of the Coward family heritage on the land.

The following pictures offer some ideas for interim use (and possibly for long term use), and are for discussion purposes.

Picture 1: Now

Picture 2: Children's play area, picnic area, perimeter trails.

Picture 3: Add soccer field, basketball court and dog park area.

Funding---potential funding sources are broken into three categories: *City, Martinez Public and Organizations*. They include City funds, possible bond or tax mechanisms for the local area and city-wide, donations, grants, and major gifts.

City

Mitigation/Impact Fee Fund

\$1,234,268 = Total Fund balance at the end of 2012-13 fiscal year.

\$2,171,418 = Total Fund balance at 6/30/14, the end of 2013-14 fiscal year, an increase of \$937,150.

\$1,952,818 = Total Fund balance at 11/30/14,

\$1,066,941= Amount available as of 11/30/14 for Park In-Lieu and Park/Recreation

Additional funds possible from current and in-process projects. *These are estimates only. This information is not from city budget and must be verified.*

Park In Lieu and Park & Recreation income estimated by us to be coming from some of these projects:

Seeno project 81 units x \$5557 = \$450,100

Taco Bell center TBD

610/630 Court Street TBD

Per City IMPACT/MITIGATION FEE SCHEDULE on the City website, combined Park & Recreation/Park In Lieu fees are \$7604/single family residence and \$5557/multi-family residence. This estimate uses the lower multi-family residence figure.

We are using the lower multi-family residence figure for this estimate to be conservative. Waivers and other accommodations may have been given that are not reflected in these estimates.

Budget Surplus----after a series of difficult years, 2013-14 saw a budget surplus of \$1,293,099. Tax income may improve further for a number of factors. Expenditures will also increase for re-staffing and for pension and labor costs. It remains to be seen if budget surpluses will continue, but that is possible.

Measure WW Funds---- these funds are Martinez' portion of regional bond funds for park acquisition, etc., and must be applied for by the City. No project applications have been made so far, but several projects are under consideration.

\$1.65 million = amount allocated to Martinez.

City General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance (Reserve Fund)

\$3.8 million = Fund balance at the end of 2012-13 fiscal year.

\$5.7 million = Fund balance at 6/30/14, the end of 2013-14 fiscal year, an increase of approx. \$1.9 million.

\$2.85 million = Fund excess accumulation as of 6/30/14 based on a reserve percentage threshold of 15%, which staff used in the budget. The Council has not set an official percentage yet.

(\$19 million approx. General Fund Revenues x .15 = \$2.85 million. \$5.7 million - \$2.85 million = \$2.85 million)

Although 2014-15 expenses will increase, tax revenues may also. A further increase in this fund is possible.

In October, 2014, the City Council transferred \$1.25 million to Improvements and Deferred Maintenance Funds.

Measure H Funds---- This \$30 million bond issue was spear-headed and passed by local residents with minimal City support. Funds are being allocated under the watchful scrutiny of the Parks Recreation Marina and Cultural Commission (PRMCC). They are not available for land acquisition, but can be used for park amenities and development for those parks listed in the bond.

Much of the bond balance is basically committed; however Preliminary Budgets of REMAINING Measure H Projects totals \$3.6 million, a \$1 million reserve fund is being considered, and the Budget of Approved Measure H Projects includes \$1.8 million for Hidden Lakes.

Pine Meadow Park is not one of the parks listed in the bond; however, we are planning to discuss Measure H funding for Pine Meadow Park with the PRMCC. Pine Meadow has been considered as a park site by the PRMCC in the past, and has been advanced by the staff as one of several projects discussed for Measure WW and Developer Impact Fee funds.

We will also explore the possibility of asking voters to expand the bond issue to accommodate land acquisition and Pine Meadow Park development and to include more funds.

Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District program---This is a new financing mechanism that becomes law on 1/1/15. It allows incremental property tax income to be diverted from any consenting municipality, county or special district to this entity. Spending is based upon an adopted infrastructure development plan, and bonds must be approved by a 55% majority of voters. Income is limited to incremental tax diversions only from tax entities that agree to the diversions. The City council heard a review of this funding mechanism at the Wednesday meeting, and is reviewing it now.

Martinez Public

Mello Roos tax district---definable area, rate, method of apportionment. Can be used for direct funding or to pay off bonds. Can fund property and services. Requires 2/3 vote of the public. Used successfully for major open space acquisitions in Solano County.

Benefit Assessment District---can be used for financial support of park/open space maintenance and acquisition based upon specific benefits conferred on real property over and above general benefits conferred on real property in the district or on the public at large. Requires 50%+1 vote. The City may have experience with one type of this bond with the Alhambra Creek Assessment District.

City-wide Bond---the public responded to citizen efforts to pass a \$30 million bond in 2008 with very explicit goals. The goals revolved around our parks, pool facility and library. The citizens, not the City, passed the bond issue, and it has had a major effect in our town.

Citizens have respect for the PRMCC Committee above all other departments/organizations in town, and two of those committee members led the bond effort. PRMCC has also tightly controlled expenditure of the fund to ensure they hone closely to the agreed purposes.

The possibility of doing another such citizen-led bond issue for Open Space/Park acquisition exists. The PRMCC has envisioned Pine Meadow as an open space/park in the past. Martinez citizens have shown strong support for open space and parks.

An Open Space/Park bond to encompass Pine Meadow and possibly other Open Space opportunities like Alhambra Hills would garner City-wide support.

Organizations, grants, individuals, etc.

Private corporate donations—we have already been in contact with potential sources.

Grants and land acquisition monies—we are in contact with several organizations, including the Trust for Public Land, the Coastal Conservancy and the Sierra Club.

Private individual donations—we are able to set up a funding center and will support a drive for private donations from the community.

Discussions have been held with the following interested parties that would potentially be part of the team to pursue funding for Pine Meadow Park:

Sierra Club
Trust for Public Land
Coastal Conservancy
Park Recreation Marina and Cultural Committee (PRMCC)
Martinez City Council
Sonoma County Open Space and Farmland Foundation
Shell Oil
East Bay Regional Park District
Tesoro

We look forward to working with you to bring all interested parties together to make Pine Meadow Park a reality that will honor the Coward family and be a unique asset for all of Martinez.

We will work to build public support for its creation. We will also work to involve a legion of organizations to support this effort. And we will work to convince the City and others to supply funding.

for Friends of Pine Meadow

Mark Thomson
Tim Platt
Kerry Kilmer

December 17, 2014

Pine Meadow Golf Course today



Pine Meadow Park with minimal amenities



Pine Meadow Park with soccer field and dog park added

