

MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 5, 2019 COMMUNITY MEETING ON WATTS  
RECREATIONAL CENTER  
GLENCOE PARK DISTRICT  
999 GREEN BAY ROAD, GLENCOE, ILLINOIS 60022

The community input meeting began at 7:00pm.

Staff present:

Lisa Sheppard, Executive Director/Secretary  
Carol Mensinger, Director of Finance/HR  
Chris Leiner, Director of Parks/Maintenance  
Bobby Collins, Director of Recreation/Facilities  
Erin Classen, Supt. of Marketing/Comm.  
Jenny Runkel, Administrative Assistant

Members of the public in attendance who signed in or spoke: Adam Bandari, Josh Cooper, Sandy Culver, Francois Delcourt, Anita Diat, Dan Dorfman, Michael Glass, Sacha Gordon, Lou Harrison, Taylor Hartz, Gary Hazan, Natalie Holtzman, George Kelly, Steve Kohn, Paul Krieger, Hilary Lee, Lee Lyle, John McAdams, Susan Mehlman, Matt Miller, Jim Montembeault, Steve Nolan, Steve Norehad, Kevin Osimitz, Joe Rosenthal, Ann Scheuer, John Scully, Muareen Valvasson, Simon Ward, Jack Weinberg, Keith Weinstein, Brit Wright, Willie Zimberoff, Commissioner Lisa Brooks, and Commissioner Dudley Onderdonk

Executive Director Sheppard explained the meeting is for community feedback to aid the Board of Commissioners in the development and plan for the future of Watts Recreational Center. The history of the Watts facility and its use were highlighted. Staff shared current detail on facility use and programming, past renovations, and a possible grant.

The next step in applying for the grant is receiving feedback from the community. The Watts Advisory Committee will review the feedback and provide a synopsis to the Board.

Members of the public were then asked a series of questions. Public comments included:

What makes Watts special to you and your family?

- All children in Glencoe schools learn to skate.
- A group of 40 men drove a bus all the way from north of Toronto, Canada to experience Watts.
- A unique facility that differentiates Glencoe from other communities
- Has skated every year with friends since the facility opened and is one of the reasons he still lives in this town

- Grew up here with great memories skating and drinking hot cocoa in a safe environment and now wants her kids to have that experience
- A way to enjoy winter and darkness under the stars, it is not the same in indoor facilities and would be nice to see it continue.
- Bring someone from outside of Glencoe and they are blown away by the facility being under the lights outside at night. It is what makes Glencoe very special.
- Worked at Watts for four years in high school and would want his kids to have the experience of a job there.
- Taught their kids how to skate at Watts, their kids played hockey in high school, and then one became a skate guard. Without Watts, their child would not have had that leadership opportunity.
- Watts drew their family to Glencoe and have held Thanksgiving events there with such good memories.
- It is something for kids to be active in the winter.
- Watts is magical and unique and wants to see it live on.

Do you think it is important to retain the current “experience” of the ice rink?

- Yes: Everyone in attendance
- No: 0

Would you be opposed to an addition to the side of the building? Non-rink /north side and would not take away from soccer (same side), path might need to be adjusted/moved.

- Opposed? 0
- Northeast side will be reviewed per suggestion. Second floor will also be reviewed.

If you could only make one improvement to Watts, what would it be?

- Beef up coolers, add shade on the north sunny side, add on for company parties, beef up the allure
- Reduce distractions including level/style of music, extends beyond hours, pucks hitting a home’s garage
- Lighting needs to be improved, dead light spots, sodium vapors
- Rustic ski chalet similar to the fireplace room, more comfortable seating, concessions
- A bar, fire, better theme for those who do not skate but spend time there
- Heating lamps near the benches to keep warm
- If families are being turned away from Kids Club, expand to include them
- Stay open during fall/spring (DekHockey is a great start), utilizing the facility would be a big improvement for the community
- Could be open another month if shade is added on the north side, use the facility more than three months a year
- Off months put down turf for lacrosse or an outdoor soccer field, if the drainage can be fixed, would be a good opportunity and another field for practice

Is there anything that you would like to see during the off-season on the rinks?  
Dekhockey was used for a couple months already or perhaps a modular circuit for skateboarders, bikes, etc.?

- Modular units would be used less than lacrosse, soccer, team play
- Roller skating/blading
- A sport field that never floods or gets muddy would be used by schools and during after hours
- Adult fitness classes
- Portable bike/scooter/skateboard circuit

Answers to questions and additional comments

- Add parking to support activities
- Wight and Company's report is an existing conditions assessment and giving a few options and plans for a makeover rather than a teardown.
- The grant application has not been released yet, so staff do not know how much the grant will cover, how much we have to match, or any other detail. It is a very competitive grant for the whole state. We have a historic facility, after school care, and programming to make it an attractive grant. If there is not a grant funding, we may make it a long-range plan as opposed to something we do right away. There is \$50 million total in grant funds available.
- Sustainability Task Force: solar panels/ efficient lighting

The next step is to bring this feedback to the Watts Advisory Group for review. The District will keep everyone updated who shares their email on the sign-up sheet. Progress will be available on our Web site.

Adjourn: The community input meeting adjourned at 7:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lisa M. Sheppard  
Secretary