From:	Shelby S
To:	City Clerk
Subject:	[EXTERNAL] comment for CC 5C 9/17/24 -Jean Sweeney OPEN SPACE should not have a pool
Date:	Tuesday, September 17, 2024 3:52:32 PM

Clerk-

Please submit for public comment.

I concur that the contract with Blach construction contract should be terminated. Recall last time this Project was on the calendar I submitted a public comment comparing the estimated costs with other local projects, and their estimate was much much higher in comparison. That resulted in the item being pulled so it appears the contract never got started. Overall, given the current state of ballooning construction costs, it might be wise to at least de-prioritize the pool project temporarily. In addition, costs for a pool specifically located at Jean Sweeney OPEN SPACE, is not only inappropriate, it is cost-prohibitive, described below.

NO NEW RFP
A new RFP should not be issued. Aside from the folly of spending an exorbitant amount of money on a pool when there are urgent unfunded infrastructure needs shows a distinct disregard for priorities, but more importantly a pool at Jean Sweeney OPEN SPACE has already been rejected twice by Council. In addition, the Master Plan would have to undergo a NEW EIR process--and have I mentioned the contaminated soil that would have to be removed?

Mind you, a public aquatic center does have wide public support, but it is incompatible with the Park's Open Space concept--and then there's the issue of cost.

JEAN SWEENEY OPEN SPACE
Way back in May 2013, Amy Wooldridge--on her 1 year anniversary as Rec Park Director--presented the Jean Sweeney Open Space DRAFT Concept plan.
Recommendation to Endorse a Preferred Conceptual Plan for a Passive Recreational Use Program at the Future Alameda Beltline/Jean Sweeney Open Space Park. (Recreation 0318)

The design concept presented by Amy Wooldridge named the "park" very deliberately as Jean Sweeney OPEN SPACE. There was a long process with lots and lots of public input for Developing the Master Plan--remember that?

At that time, a pool was one of the elements proposed, which was then resoundingly rejected by Council, including current Councilmembers **Ashcraft** and **Daysog**, who zealously supported that the "Open Space" be for passive recreation and the Master Plan concept consistent with passive recreation was approved at that meeting.
I'm still wondering where the urban agriculture is, but that's another story.
By the way, Amy Wooldridge confirmed in an email to public works in 2023 that the 1900 Thau Way parcel is "part of the open space parcel connected with Jean Sweeney Open Space Park", as does the City's website.

AUGUST 2021 Public Survey
In 2021, the City attempted to undermine the Open Space Concept with a survey asking "what amenities do you want on the western end of Jean Sweeney OPEN SPACE?". from a public survey of 921 respondents, lack of an adequate true public pool was bemoaned in only 6 answers, and not even necessarily related to the location--they just wanted a pool somewhere. **ONLY SIX!**

Given that 1/2 a percent of respondents in 2021 identified the pool as a want--and not specifically at Jean Sweeney--they just wanted one somewhere, and given a pool is NOT Open Space--why the choice for Jean Sweeney? I recall it was Mayor Ashcraft suggested the nearby Business Park as a good location, and I think the costs should be paused and reviewed more critically.
https://www.alamedaca.gov/files/assets/public/v/1/departments/alameda/rec-and-park/sweeney-park-urban-ag-survey-data.pdf

OCTOBER 2022 CC MEETING

Somehow, after the collective "NO" from the 2021 survey, at the 10/18/22 City Council meeting, an item appeared on the agenda and the motion was approved to study finance options for a pool at Jean Sweeney OPEN SPACE.
City funding was limited to 50% of the project cost--and it was **Malia Vella** in particular who was concerned about the approval for $15 million in funding given the $200 million delayed infrastructure maintenance even back then.
In July 2023, Council approved a $1 million contract for the design/management plan.
So just how much has the City spent on this so far?

COST

As I said above, costs for a pool specifically located at Jean Sweeney OPEN SPACE, is not only inappropriate, it is cost-prohibitive.
Addition of a pool requires a change in the Master Plan--In order to change the Master Plan, a supplemental EIR is required. That's alot of money! and how many years?

The supplemental EIR will have to address the excavation and disposal of contaminated soil=mo money, mo money, mo money!

I get extremely dismayed about the public process when I see a record of extensive public engagement and participation during the design phase of a project, and then years go by and during that process, the elements important to the Public disappear iteratively over time---so the Project ends up being different from what the public wanted once the City builds it.
This serves as a reminder of the original spirit and intent of the proper use of the Jean Sweeney properties, as well as the agreements that the City has entered into on behalf of the citizens of Alameda.

Happens too much lately, that's for sure.

SO WHY AT JEAN SWEENEY OPEN SPACE? IT MAKES NO SENSE.