

Attendees:

Mi Kyung Lew (Pub Wks) - Moderator, Project, San Antonio Park Master Plan, OPW
Ali Schwarz (Pub Wks)
Dana Riley (Parks & Rec)
Ed Manasse (Planning)
Brendan Moriarty (RE)
James Bowran (OFD)
Lia Salaverry (Bas office)
Jinnhua Suy (RE)
Sean Maher (Pub Wks public info)
Michael Hunt (OFD)

Jinhee Ha (PRAC)

Kent Lewandowski - nearby resident and park user
Wendy Jung - nearby resident and Park Steward for San Antonio Park
Ryan Lester - nearby resident and park user
Diego Gonzalez - nearby resident and park user
Naomi Schiff - Member of Oakland Heritage Alliance
Mira Manickam-Shirley - nearby resident and park user

Fire Station 4 (FS4) – Project Development/Status



INTRODUCTIONS:

After introductions, Mi Kyung Lew, Project, San Antonio Park Master Plan, opened the meeting with the above flow chart. It outlines the dates and city departments (Real Estate (RE), OFD, Oakland Parks and Recreation Youth Development (OPRYD) and City Planning) involved in identifying a new site for Fire Station #4, currently located at 1235 International Boulevard. In December, Council approved a

consultant team, LCAA, to assess the San Antonio Park site for this new structure. The public was not engaged in any of these negotiations. Without names and context of the discussions, this diagram is not helpful in understanding how this project came into discussion. In general, residents found the answers inadequate.

AGENDA:

Sean Maher (Pub Wks public info) discussed the City's goal in outreach to diverse groups for input for Capital Improvement Programs

Ms. Lew suggested that we follow the items outlined in the letter from San Antonio Park Steward Wendy Jung to CP Bas on February 12, 2021, and the city's responses to those questions.

GENERAL REMARKS REGARDING CIP

Before getting to Q and A agenda, several statements were made by residents and City staff regarding capital improvement funds outreach for community input, and the survey conducted by LCAA that has been used in the first three public outreach meetings. The survey stated the fire station location in San Antonio Park as a fact, and then sought feedback about how that structure would look, and what community benefits it might provide. There was also concern that consultants were expressing their approval of the project rather than remaining neutral facilitators of the public discussion. This was called out during the meeting and mentioned in follow up emails to the consultants that did not respond.

Residents expressed disappointment that the long-awaited Capital Improvement Project (CIP) for San Antonio Park has turned into a discussion about the build out of a new fire station building rather than much-needed updates to the infrastructure of the Park itself. In 2003, a master plan was adopted for the Park, and it was shown in one of documents presented in the first series of meetings. Eighteen years later, more than 70% of the recommended improvements are STILL pending including safety issues of repairing path walkways, improving lighting, repairing the four tennis courts so that they can be safely used, tree planting to replace our dramatically diminished leaf canopy inside the park and repairs and upgrades to play equipment. The \$1 million earmarked for PARK improvements will not go very far in addressing that long list of needs. Other issues include bringing the recreation center back into usage after many failed efforts on behalf of OPR to establish programming, and underuse of the Head start school which serves fewer than 40 children throughout the year and is closed three months of the year. We need to better utilize the spaces we currently have before any renovations are made to the recreation center. Many non-profit groups, like EBAYC, Soccer without Border, and trybe have succeeded in building recreational and food distribution programs. OPR should look to them for viable models.

QUESTION / ITEM #1 OF LETTER

1. OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION, AND RECREATION (OSCAR) - linka

<http://www2.oaklandnet.com/government/o/PBN/OurServices/GeneralPlan/DOWD009017http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/ceda/documents/webcontent/oak035249.pdf>

One of the key stipulations of OSCAR was that there should be no net loss of public open space in the city. (Chapter 2, Open Space, page 2-2.) OSCAR is part of Oakland's General Plan. We have emailed these links to Denise at LCAA. B. As you noted in your presentation about the Master Plan, San Antonio Park serves one of the city's densest neighborhoods. Our current percentage of open space by population density is 5.4%, already one of the lowest ratios in the City. This proposal permanently repurposes even

more open space. We are very concerned that this is counterproductive to the goals outlined by OSCAR. As a stakeholder, the City's Planning Department will be providing guidance such that adherence to OSCAR is fulfilled as part of the Master Plan.

CITY RESPONSE TO #1

As a stakeholder, the City's Planning Department will be providing guidance such that adherence to OSCAR is fulfilled as part of the Master Plan.

FURTHER COMMENT AND DISCUSSION regarding OSCAR and EIRs

Naomi Schiff, Member, Oakland Heritage Alliance outlined the basics of OSCAR which is part of the Master Plan for the City of Oakland, and repeated the statement from the OSCAR, included in our initial question, that **there was to be no net loss of public open space. The City needs to obtain a conditional use permit, and/or amend its General Plan in order to build on this Park land.** Several studies/surveys would be required to measure the environmental impacts of such an undertaking, particularly given the high density of people to available open space in the immediate area. If OFD annexes a section of the Park for its fire station, the City must provide an equal amount of open space nearby to compensate for that loss. She also noted that the historical location of the Park indicated that there could be remains and artifacts that cannot be disturbed.

Ed Manasse (Planning) also stated that City Council could not proceed with such a plan without full approval of Council and adhering to all of the environmental checklists necessary. He stated that Planning has not taken a position concerning this project.

Mi Kyung Lew (Pub Wks) disagreed with Manesse, and said that the project only needed to pass through City Council approval to get underway. It is our understanding that so far, OPW, DHS, OFD, and OPRYD have approved the proposal for a fire station build-out in San Antonio Park. Neither Council District Two nor the Planning Department nor PRAC have taken a position. PLEASE identify DHS, and its role in this project. Did anyone from DHS attend the meeting on Wednesday. **Dana Riley (OPR)** referred to this department a number of times in her remarks.

As residents of Oakland, It was alarming to see so much disagreement/confusion between major departments within the City regarding Oakland's Master Plan and how it should be applied. It did not inspire confidence in the decision making process moving forward.

QUESTION / ITEM #2 OF LETTER

2. THE CURRENT FIRE STATION, #4, at 1235 INTERNATIONAL BOULEVARD - OFD

What we need to know about the current structure in comparison with other Oakland Fire Stations, and why it is no longer capable of serving our area.

- A. Size
- B. Area Served
- C. Response Time for Service Calls
- D. Frequency of calls as compared with other local fire stations
- E. Can other nearby stations pick up some of the calls if response capability is an issue. Why is this issue coming to the fore now, and why the hurry?

F. Where is the money coming from to fund this new construction project? Is it a grant? What is that dollar amount?

G. If the station is relocated, will the current property be sold? Which City budget would receive that financial windfall? Would a percentage of that profit be re-invested in San Antonio Park?

H. Is it correct that LCAA is scheduled to show preliminary plans for the proposed station at the next zoom meeting scheduled for March 14?

I. We insist that the many issues we are raising here are addressed before a design plan for the building is presented for community review. It is premature at this stage of the decision-making process.

CITY RESPONSE TO #2

The existing Station 4 is approximately 7100 square feet, encompassing two floors for apparatus, equipment, living quarters, and a hayloft that has been converted to a small kitchen and dining area. Current space allows for one Fire Engine and one Ladder Truck, serving the area as shown in the Service Area Map (refer to pdf in Project Documents). Station 4 is the fifth busiest fire station in the City and has an average total response time of 7 minutes for all service calls, including medical calls, structure fires, outdoor/encampment fires, and more. It is also the first unit on scene for medical and fire related incidents at homeless encampments in the East Lake area and along East 12th street corridor between 15-19th avenues. In 2020, Station 4 received a total of 4,355 calls; in 2019, a total of 4,272 calls. Oakland Fire Stations are strategically placed to ensure that department response times are compliant with national standards set by the National Fire Prevention Association and it is already standard procedure that when Station 4's Fire Engine and Ladder Truck is already responding to calls within the service area, other stations and crews assist with "cover-ins". The existing Fire Station 4 is over 110 years old and has been facing the following challenges, not only jeopardizing the health and safety of San Antonio area residents, but also the capacity to properly respond in the event of a catastrophic event:

1. The size, design and layout have drastically fallen behind modern fire service standards.
2. The Structure lacks adequate design and facilities to accommodate a mixed gender workforce.
3. The narrow width of the building barely fits a modern fire engine, and the lack of distance between the street and the firehouse doors creates traffic safety and other related hazards for OFD personnel, neighbors, drivers, and pedestrians.
4. The building is poorly heated and lacks basic climate controls.
5. Station 4 does not meet ADA compliance, or align with NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) and OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) standards.
6. The kitchen area was built into an old hayloft for horses, which dates back to the earliest days of the department.
7. Deferred maintenance of a century-old building has resulted in a multitude of structural issues including extensive dry rot and leaks around windows, failing exterior walls, failing plumbing, and has exposed potential health risks, including cancer.
8. The building is incapable of meeting the range of community response and resilience needs and is unable to serve as a hub for mutual aid and related disaster recovery activities due to limited available training/storage/meeting space.

Please refer to the response for question 3 regarding funding for the Fire Station 4 project; plans for the current station are yet to be determined. The agenda for the next community engagement meeting will include a summary of the first survey results and related breakout sessions to dialogue about potential layout options for the park as a whole, including the Fire Station.

FURTHER COMMENT AND DISCUSSION regarding CURRENT FIRE STATION

Thank you for this information.

Michael Hunt (PFD) stated many of the items mentioned above to make the case for a need for a new modern fire station. He also agreed to post a map showing the area considered to be appropriate for fire station #4.

Kent Lewandawski made it very clear that the residents do NOT oppose a new fire station, and recognize that the current building is lacking in amenities - our concern is the LOCATION.

QUESTION / ITEM #3 OF LETTER

3. FUNDING FOR THE PROPOSED FIRE STATION BUILD-OUT

- A. We request a comprehensive budget including "all-in" costs: to include land, engineering and architectural design, site-construction, the building itself, operation/maintenance, etc.
- B. We object to the use of city funds for the design of a facility that has not been approved by the neighborhood.
- C. Please confirm that the budget for NON-RELATED fire station improvements is \$1,000,000 as is indicated in the FAQ
- D. How will you ensure that the operating expenses for the Fire Station are in no way co-mingled with San Antonio Park operating expenses? Who will be responsible for that oversight?

CITY RESPONSE TO #3

The costs for Fire Station 4 will be dependent on design, yet to be determined. Measure KK funds were voter-approved for Infrastructure Improvements, of which Fire Station 4 is one, and Anti-Displacement and Affordable Housing projects; in July 2020, Council approved Resolution No. 88240 C.M.S (attached) for the design of Fire Station 4, which is separate from the \$1M available for San Antonio Park. Maintenance, in general, falls under the purview of the City's Facilities Services.

FURTHER COMMENT AND DISCUSSION regarding FIRE STATION FUNDING

Diego Gonzalez, Ryan Lester, and Naomi Schiff questioned the wisdom of the \$1.5 million fee from Measure KK paid to LCAA Consultants before a site has been located, and the community has agreed to the removal of open space from its public park. Again, the process seems rushed.

The city response did not begin to address the specifics of costs, and is unclear on its funding sources. It is distressing that a plan, complete with a consultant team, should be so far into the process without community input or a proposed budget.

QUESTION / ITEM #4 OF LETTER

4. OTHER NEARBY VACANT LOTS IN THE SAN ANTONIO AREA

A. Under FAQs on the Project website, you mention that: "The City's Real Estate staff have researched this vacant lot, along with other potential properties within the service area of Fire Station #4 over the course of a year and a half but have found them unsuitable or not for sale." B. We want to see documentation listing the sites that were researched during that 18-month period. C. The City should consider Eminent Domain as a fallback for finding a "suitable" site for this public building. As I am sure you know, we have many empty, blighted lots in the San Antonio neighborhood. C. The City should consider Eminent Domain as a fallback for finding a "suitable" site for this public building. As I am sure you know, we have many empty, blighted lots in the San Antonio neighborhood.

CITY RESPONSE TO QUESTION #4

First and foremost, as it pertains to acquiring a new location for Station 4, the City of Oakland is only interested in working with willing sellers of a potentially suitable site. The City's Real Estate Division staff have researched potential properties within the service area of Fire Station #4 over the course of a year and a half. Of the approximately 10 parcels identified by the Real Estate Division as a possible new location for Station 4, four parcels were found to be unsuitable by Oakland Fire staff due to size limitations, and one was found to be unfeasible based on an assessment by the City's Department of Transportation. In other cases, despite outreach attempts, property owners have been unresponsive or their willingness to sell has not been confirmed. With respect to the vacant parcel across from San Antonio Park, the Fire Department has determined that the parcel is simply too small to meet the requirements for a new modern fire station.

The Fire Department utilizes a data-driven approach to assess emergency response times, and uses various predictive modeling strategies to evaluate potential changes to call volumes and its effect on service delivery. Of the sites considered most viable based on parcel size to accommodate a new fire station, and the geographic and emergency response service area, San Antonio Park is the superior option due to its central location in the district, and because data shows it would reduce response times for the Truck when responding to structure fires by approximately 16 seconds, while ensuring that engine company response times stay in compliance with national standards.

FURTHER COMMENT AND DISCUSSION regarding ALTERNATE SITE LOCATIONS

Residents Ryan Lester and Diego Gonzalez - had many questions regarding specific sites that were researched and the criteria used. Although we realize that the city would prefer not to use eminent domain to acquire property, it DOES have the right to do so, particularly when the structure plays an important public safety role.

Brendan Moriarty (RE) has responded to our request for the list of properties considered, and has posted that on the website - thank you.

Wendy Jung. Please consider the Blue Print Services site at 1745 14th Avenue which used to be the location of a Safeway Store.

QUESTION / ITEM #5 OF LETTER

5. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECK LIST

A. What steps have you taken to evaluate the environmental impact of this building? We want to see that study.

B. We believe that an Environmental Impact Report should be required before any further actions are taken. Those findings must be made public.

CITY RESPONSE TO #5

The environmental requirements are directly related to the actual design, yet to be determined, but CEQA (the California Environmental Quality Act) will most definitely be part of this project.

FURTHER COMMENT AND DISCUSSION regarding ENVIRONMENTAL CHECK LIST

We believe that this answer is inadequate, particularly in light of the fact that Ms. Lew with OPW and Mr. Manasse with Planning have different understandings about how the report would be conducted, how the results would be analyzed, and how those findings would be interpreted to conform with the City of Oakland's Master Plan.

QUESTION / ITEM #6 OF LETTER

6. HISTORICAL ROLE OF SAN ANTONIO PARK

A. Although these past uses of the Park were noted in the consultant's presentation, along with visuals, there is no mention of how that history would be memorialized and honored moving forward. Building a fire station on the land hardly pays homage to its earlier significance as a meeting place. This needs to be addressed in detail.

CITY RESPONSE TO #6

In coordination with the City's Cultural Affairs, Question 5 of the first survey dealt with general cultural activities and will continue to be explored as a part of future community engagement meetings and surveys.

END OF Q/A, CITY RESPONSES, AND RESIDENT INPUT FROM MEETING ON 3/3.2021

OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS:

1. Explanation of the role of OSCAR and City of Oakland Master Plan as requested in Question #1.
2. All-in costs and funding sources for the proposed Fire Station #4 Build as requested in Question #3

3. We have submitted additional sites to be explored for acquisition directly to Brendan. We urge RE to continue to look for a suitable site as requested in Question #4.
4. As requested in Questions #5, we request access to ALL environmental impact reports and environmental check list items related to this proposed build out in a public park.
5. How to best honor the Parks' historical role in the neighborhood has not been addressed in any detail. Although public input will be helpful in generating some ideas, we need the guidance and expertise of historians to understand what is required and desirable when documenting the history.