



City of Huntington Beach

File #: 22-486

MEETING DATE: 6/7/2022

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

SUBMITTED TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

SUBMITTED BY: Sean Joyce, Interim City Manager

VIA: Chris Slama, Director of Community & Library Services

PREPARED BY: Chris Slama, Director of Community & Library Services

Subject:

Approve the renaming of the former Michael E. Rodgers Seniors' Center site as recommended by the Community and Library Services Commission as 17th Street Park (for the parkland) and Michael E. Rodgers Clubhouse (for the community building)

Statement of Issue:

On July 20, 2020, City Council approved a Master Plan to redevelop the parkland at 1706 Orange Avenue (Attachment 1), which includes the demolition of the former senior center building and the development of the area into a passive park, while retaining and improving for public use the former Outreach Building. The project is currently under construction and completion is estimated to be at the end of this calendar year. Due to the site redevelopment, there remains a need to formally name the parkland and included amenities.

Financial Impact:

Not applicable.

Recommended Action:

A) Approve recommendation by the Community and Library Services Commission to formally name the parkland located at 1706 Orange Avenue as 17th Street Park; and,

B) Approve recommendation by the Community and Library Services Commission to formally name the community building at 1706 Orange Avenue as the Michael E. Rodgers Clubhouse.

Alternative Action(s):

Do not approve the recommended actions, and direct staff accordingly.

Analysis:

At the June 5, 2017 City Council meeting, Council Member Patrick Brenden submitted an item requesting that consideration be given to name the parkland located at 1706 Orange Avenue

(Attachment 2). City Council approved the recommended action, which was to refer the issue to the Community Services Commission Park Naming and Memorials Committee (PNMC) for its review and recommendation.

Resolution No. 2017-25 established the policy for naming parks and park features, including review by the Community and Library Commission. At its August 1, 2017 meeting, the PNMC believed that it was important to retain the name of Michael E. Rodgers based upon his contributions to the City, which extended beyond senior citizen advocacy. Therefore, the PNMC recommended approval for the naming of the parkland located at 1706 Orange Avenue and any park improvements, including any recreation facilities, as “Michael E. Rodgers Park.” The Committee’s recommendation was presented to the Commission at the November 8, 2017 Commission meeting. The Commission rejected the recommendation due to the undetermined use of the property and referred the item back to the PNMC (Attachment 3). On July 20, 2020, following robust community input, City Council approved a Master Plan for the site (Attachment 4) and the PNMC reconvened in 2022 to consider the site name.

As part of the PNMC consideration, Kathie Schey, Chair of the Historic Resources Board, provided the following information:

The parcel of parkland at 1706 Orange Avenue was identified as Block 417 when it was first laid out in the original tract map of 1905. The site is historically significant to the City of Huntington Beach as it was one of three parcels deeded specifically for park use between 1911 and 1917. The Board of Trustees generally referred to the site as “417” or “the parkland at”, thus never having a clear “original” name. Following this, they often referred to it as “17th Street Park.” There was an attempt to landscape the site in 1931, which included some trees, shrubs and picnic tables, and by 1948 horseshoe pits and a baseball field were constructed. In 1949, a former military building was placed in the parkland for public use and became known as the “Recreation Center” or “Community Center.” The building was remodeled in 1975 to serve as the new center established for use by elders in the community. In 1984, the building was dedicated as the “Michael E. Rodgers Seniors’ Center” in honor of Mr. Rodgers for his contributions to the City, particularly the well-being of seniors in the community as well as dedicating his time to serve on several transportation and housing committees.

On March 22, 2022, the PNMC, comprised of Commissioners Patrick Burns, Laura Costelloe, and James Pike, held a public meeting to deliberate the topic. After eight public comments and a presentation on the history of the property by Kathie Schey, the Committee narrowed its consideration to two options, which included naming the parkland the “17th Street Park” or the “Michael E. Rodgers Park.” Discussion ensued regarding the combined option of “Michael E. Rodgers Park at 17th Street”, which the Committee agreed was too long. In response to public comments, the Committee also discussed naming the community building the “Michael E. Rodgers Clubhouse” and the park as the “17th Street Park”. A motion was made by Commissioner Burns to name the entire property as “Rodgers 17th Street Park”. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Costelloe and was approved 2-1, with Commissioner Pike dissenting.

At the May 11, 2022 Community & Library Services Commission meeting, six public comments were

made and eight supplemental email communications received regarding “Naming of the Parkland at 1706 Orange Avenue.” Commissioner Pike provided a summary of the discussion that ensued at the March 22, 2022 Park Naming and Memorials Committee Meeting. After lengthy deliberation of several proposed options, the Commission ultimately recommended to name the parkland and community building separately. A motion was made by Commissioner Costelloe to name the parkland as “17th Street Park” and the building as the “Michael E. Rodgers Clubhouse.” Commissioner Kemmerer seconded, and the motion was approved 5-3, with Commissioners Parker, Burns and Vogel voting no.

The parkland is about 2 acres. Once developed it will consist of open turf space, three seating areas, two ADA accessible café tables, a lighted pedestrian walking path, and a parking lot with four ADA and nine standard parking stalls.

The newly renovated clubhouse will be 2,623 square feet, which will include two meeting rooms with capacities of up to 35 and 50 people respectively, which will be available for community gatherings, internet access, an outdoor pergola canopy for dappled shade, and adjacent dedicated open turf area. The building will also serve as a meeting and storage facility for American Legion Post 133.

Environmental Status:

Not applicable.

Strategic Plan Goal:

Community Engagement

Attachment(s):

- 1) City Council approved Rodgers Seniors’ Center Master Plan RCA - July 20, 2020
- 2) City Council Member Brenden Item for City Council meeting - June 5, 2017
- 3) Community Services Commission meeting minutes - November 8, 2017
- 4) City Council approved Rodgers Seniors’ Center Site Plan - July 20, 2020