

Visitor Comments

Julie Konopacz

In addition to concerns regarding the addition of basketball court in Butterfield Park, has numerous concerns of the planned detention areas. Asked what is the objective/goal for the detention areas? What issues will it resolve? The District mentioned flooding prevention, where? Is the detention going to completely prevent it or is it like taking a cup of water out of a swimming. It appears that a decision has been made to go ahead with this project when no one knows the impact it is going to have. Whether it is going to be flood prevention or the negative impact it is going to have on the park visitors and neighbors. Regarding the water retention areas, have soil samples been taken? We installed an arbor in our backyard along the park and encountered play around 12-18" deep. I would not be surprised to find that the same holds true for the entire north end of Butterfield Park. Based on the amount of soil taken to create the expressway and the current lack of water absorption into the soil throughout the park. If these detention areas are built into clay, there will always be some residual water left in the lowest levels until it evaporates. I doubt that the plans vegetation will grow very well in clay. Has this been investigated? According to the US EPA, detention ponds are havens for mosquitos, much more likely to breed mosquitos than a retention pond. Do we really want this around the entire baseball playing fields with mosquitos? I don't think the players or spectators will appreciate this. Also, what about the livelihood of small animals taking residence in these areas. Skunks are already frequent visitors to the park with spraying one to two times per week. Mice, snakes, etc. What happens when the detention areas flood or when winter comes? I would think many will look for refuge in the neighboring homes. Butterfield Park is supposed to be an active park. Why is it that we are converting so much of the land to areas that cannot be actively used by the patrons? The Elmhurst College field already took away approximately 15% of the land and I would expect these detention areas to take another 20%. Almost 1/3 of the park will be inaccessible to the patron. Where are the players supposed to play? Where are the players supposed to warm up while the game is underway? This plan takes away all of the areas adjacent to the field. I can go on and on. The concerns that I'm finding a lot of issues the detention areas are creating. I do not know why we are putting them in. There are a lot of negatives. Can you tell me some positives? Will this make some significant positive difference somewhere? I have yet to be convinced. It will be financially irresponsible to spend money on this retention project without fully understanding the changes it will actually make. I would appreciate feedback from my concerns. Please let me know how I can get actual answers to my concerns.

Chis Elonich, 857 Cedar Avenue

Lives on the 800 block of Cedar Avenue. Does not back up to Butterfield Park, but on the opposite side of the street. Can see directly to the play area and tennis court. Self-proclaimed expert in the typography and history of the area. The second bases on the baseball field used to be the highest point in Butterfield Park. When houses were built in that area, I witnessed very little top soil and the rest all clay. Unless the PD is willing to excavate a lot of land, it will be impossible to put those native plants in. This is not the appropriate place to build a detention pond. Am pleased with the playground proposed. There is a bit of hypocrisy on the part of the Park District – on one side of the park the message is sent “welcome everybody,” but on the other side, there is fencing around the ball field allowing no admittance. Asked what is the end game with Elmhurst College? I haven't gotten an answer on that. The District claims that new paths are proposed because the old paths were wrong. Well, who was it that put in the old paths – the crew from 15 years ago. The paths have been compressed from pass years when people walked on the grass. The areas need a rototiller and fork the land. Don't need drain tiles.

(12:19)

Tom Allie, 822 S. Cedar Avenue

I don't have much to say, I just wanted to reiterate what the previous two speakers brought up as far as the detention pond. I would also like to add that I am opposed to the basketball net. I have talked to no one that wants these basketball nets (or basketball courts), why are we putting them in? Why don't we take the money that we are using for all this and put it towards the expense for the all-inclusive park which I am all for. It seems that we are spending money on a lot of other things, instead of spending on the park that everyone wants. That is pretty much it.

(14:07)

Nick DiLeonardis, 819 Hillcrest

I appreciate the opportunity to speak again. I think when I spoke a few weeks ago I addressed the area of concern to the Butterfield Park renovation. Specifically, the basketball courts. More importantly, I want to understand the methodology as to how we arrived to this decision for the basketball court. I think some of the individuals in the community do not necessarily want that and is it not in their interest. We actually took it a step further and took a survey over the past weekend of 80 residents. From those 80 individuals, 78 disapproved of the basketball court, 97% disapproval rate. So, it's an astounding number. So is this being addressed? So, number two, are we gathering intelligence from neighboring communities that have put in basketball courts and then have had to remove the basketball court. It is our understanding that three neighboring communities have had basketball courts and then they have had to remove them. I think this speaks volume as to what is going on the west suburbs. I want to make sure that we are looking at this in a holistic view knowing all of this information. I appreciate the opportunity and I am happy to be speaking on behalf of 80 individuals here.

(16:18)

Nick Magas, 822 Hillcrest

Nick and I have worked together on this, in fact, we walked the area around Butterfield Park this past weekend. We just asked the neighbors one question, would you like to have a basketball court replace a tennis court? Where do we sign? We have the petitions, so if you want the petitions I am willing to give you the petitions of the people that signed against replacing the tennis court with a basketball court. The question is, has the board take the survey to ask the residents, number one, just as we walked the streets. Do they really want this to happen or did you just make this up? The next question is, did you take a survey to find out how many areas have removed basketball courts for various reasons. We have, I have gone on the internet and many communities have removed basketball courts. You want to replace a basketball court, rather a tennis court with a volleyball court maybe that will be better. But, not a basketball court because we have had many problems in the past. We believe that the people of the community should have a voice before the board makes a decision. Finally, if you want the petitions, I am willing to relinquish them to you for whatever they are worth.

(18:51)

Kathleen Sullivan, 133 Pine

With regards to the detention I understand why people here are having comments about that, there is a lot to learn about that. I am in favor of holding as much rain water out of homes as possible and businesses. I am in favor of detention and I am mostly here for storm water update.

(19:50)

Patti Pagni, 803 S. Cedar

Hi, my husband and I are two people that signed Nick's petition and as taxpayers, I think we should get the first look at what benefits us the most. Now are these full court basketball courts going to be open to anyone who drives by and says, "Hey that looks like a nice court, I am going to pull in to that parking lot and my team is going to come here." Basketball breeds a lot of contention, you're going to look at full court, full competition, and is it something that we are going to have to charge a permit fee for? Just like we do for some of the pavilion rentals at different parks throughout the neighborhood? Or is this something that anyone can drive up and play? We have several families here that have young children that come through that park, which right now is in a parking lot, which is not safe either. But, now instead of a park where you are going to recognize faces and neighbors and people that you know which is wonderful to welcome it. But, are we going to have anyone who can come and use that park, and by anyone, I mean just non-taxpayers. The best interest should be in the taxpayers, the people who have a vested interest in Elmhurst. The people that really care what the parks look like at the end of the day. That is my main concern. As far as the detention, I do not know enough information about that. That is why I asked you to put my name under the bottom. It just doesn't sound safe, it doesn't sound normal that there would be water laying around and I agree with Julie, misquotes and all kind of problems. I just feel like there could be a better use of taxpayer money then what there is now. Thank you

1:34:39

Therese Gracey, 827 S. Linden

Lives on the 800 block of Linden, backyard is essentially Butterfield Park. Expects answers to questions. Perhaps there have been meetings about this before that I am unaware, but this feels to me that this is shaded in secrecy and that the general public was not notified of these plans for the park and the park expansion, which right there sits wrong with me. The first I heard of this was when Nick came to my door over the weekend to notify me that this was in the works. I will go a step further from what Patti and all others have said. I tell you the reasons why I think this basketball court is horrific idea. I am one of the people that has five young children. I have to leave the park when there are people playing basketball at that basketball court that is there now because of foul language, because of alcohol use, and because of fights. I don't feel safe having my children at that park when there are the basketball pickup games going on that will only get worse when we have full-court basketball courts with lights. Questions:

1. Is everyone here an elected official?

Ubriaco "Seven commissioners – three on this side, three here, Commissioner Spaeth is not here"

Gracey interrupts Ubriaco: I don't know what that means, I'm not a ...

2. Does commissioner imply being elected?

Ubriaco "I'm breaking with our typical policy and perhaps that was a mistake, but I think that is an important and since you are all here, it is important to know who the voting members are of this board are. There are three on this side of the table - Commissioner Ennis, Kies, Moll, I am elected, Commissioner Spaeth is not with us tonight. Anthony Pelosi and Commissioner Kevin Graf. So there are seven commissioners and we are all elected.

3. Elected by Elmhurst residents? Can I clarify that?

Ubriaco: Yes qualified electors of the Elmhurst Park District.

Gracey: OK, that is good to know.

4. Is there going to be a public forum to address this where we will get our answers addressed in present time and not this closed veil of secrecy that we had to deal with so far?

Rogers: Breaking with protocol – There was two public meetings to discuss the Butterfield Park project. One was held in 2014, one was held in 2015. We mailed 400 notices to all of the surrounding homes around Butterfield Park.

Gracey: So..we just moved here. So, in my defense...

Rogers: I am just trying to answer your questions in regards to this being veiled in secrecy and not having been any public meetings. There was one meeting in 2014. There was one in 2015. We mailed out 400 notices for each. We also put up signs in the park for that as well. So the concepts plans and ideas and where the plans came from and that rational behind them, has been vetted at two public meetings.

Ubriaco: We are going to move on with our meeting.

Gracey: One more question.

5. So what kind of newer security is going to be available, assuming that our concerns not heard and it certainly feels that is the tone of this meeting tonight? What kind of security is going to be put into this park?

Rogers: Briefly..At the public meetings and whomever else we spoke to, we have indicated the Park District will manage this park and the playgrounds and the tennis court and the ball fields to whatever measures they need to be managed. That goes for all facilities in the Park District including the other outdoor basketball courts that we have in seven or eight of our parks including the lighted basketball court at East End Park, which is adjacent to the tennis court there including the courts in Eldridge Park that are right off of Butterfield Road, including the courts at Washington Park. We will manage it. We don't have plans right now for specific security measures at the park. We will manage the park as we do at all of our sites to whatever level that management and I, will put it that way, is required.

6. Gracey: So just to be clear. There is no security cameras being discussed? There is no increase patrolling of the police force in the area?

Rogers: That is correct.

Bob Berger, 807 Linden

My backyards backs up to Butterfield Park. Just here to say the basketball court is not a good idea. A lighted basketball court is absolute lunacy. You talked about a lighted basketball court in Washington Park, which is not lighted. You talked about a lighted basketball court at East End Park. The main thoroughfare (Butterfield Road) is right by Butterfield Park. There is not that many people at Butterfield Park playing basketball in DuPage County. Okay? Bottom line. The gentlemen who took around petitions. Have you checked with other communities who took basketball courts? Did you ask the Elmhurst Police Department to see if that was a bright idea to be a lighted basketball court in Butterfield Park? I don't understand the motivation to putting a basketball court in Butterfield Park. If you want to put one out there unlit – maybe. A lit one is crazy. People who are playing basketball there are not and I don't want anyone here wants people bouncing basketballs near their house at 9, 10, 11 o'clock in summertime. Tennis balls, tennis courts are two people. Basketball – you have a dozen or fifteen people playing basketball at 10 o'clock at night. You are going to prove all of this. I fail to see where the rational is and how commonsense if that is a good idea. Again, has any one asked the Elmhurst Police Department to see if they think this is a good idea? You have already answered one question, there won't be any extra security there. So, if the Elmhurst Police Department feels like running cop cars out to Butterfield Park in the middle of the summer every other weekend. That is what you'll be walking into. That's all.