

## M E M O R A N D U M

**TO:** Tom Harmer, Town Manager  
**FROM:** Carolyn Brown, Support Services Director  
Isaac Brownman, Public Works Director  
**DATE:** June 17, 2019  
**SUBJECT:** Pickleball Courts - Update

### **Recommended Action**

Provide direction to Manager.

### **Background**

On May 20, 2019, the Town Commission received an update on a concept plan and costs to construct pickleball courts within the current shell parking lot at the four tennis courts located on the North side of Bay Isles Road (Attachment A – memo from 5/20/19 meeting). During that meeting the Town Commission provided their 7-0 consensus to move forward with the plan as outlined.

After the May 20 2019 Commission meeting several alternative concepts were presented to the Commission. Three of those concepts are attached to this memorandum for background information only. At the Special Meeting held on June 3, 2019 to tour the Town Center Open Space Venue, the Commission requested that the expansion of pickleball topic be placed on the June 17, 2019 Regular Workshop Meeting agenda. Since that time, staff has compiled the following information as a reminder of the history behind the various amenities at Bayfront Park including the pickleball court. Also included are recent updates to assist in further discussing pickleball.

### **History**

#### **Pickleball at Bayfront Park:**

The Town partnered with Sarasota County in the development of a park concept plan, including a series of public workshops held in early 2009. The concept planning included both the existing Bayfront Park and the adjacent County-owned property acquired in 2007. The public meetings were very well attended, and the concept plan benefited from the range of public input received. The community members who participated in the public meetings strongly endorsed one of six concept plans. The amenities and improvements in the concept plan included: trails/walking paths throughout the property, boardwalk, fitness stations and educational signage/kiosks along the trails, open field/play area and/or multi-purpose field, tennis courts, picnic shelters, playground, kayak launch, fishing pier, boat dock, dog park, renovation of existing recreation center, and construction of a new community center. A new community center proposed in 2004 in Bayfront Park was placed on the ballot in March of 2004 but did not pass. The decision on a new community center was further deferred due to the work by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) panel and their recommendations to expand the recreation activities at

Bayfront Park and to plan for a community/cultural center at a Town Center location. As a result, the concept plan without a new community center was revised.

The plan was then further changed and updated. Of note, was moving the hard-court amenities off the Sarasota County parcel and the addition of a dedicated pickleball court, as the sport was beginning to emerge.

Since Bayfront Park reopened, the popularity of all spaces and amenities in the park have been well used providing a balanced variety of recreational opportunities for the residents and visitors of the island.

Additional pickleball courts were more recently requested by area residents and visitors. Discussions with the Commission on the possibility of adding additional pickleball opportunities began in March 2018. Dates and key points from each discussion are outlined below.

### **Prior Commission Discussions and Actions:**

#### March 28, 2018

Commission received a presentation on the history of Bayfront Park. Key points included discussion of having a pickleball membership and user fees at Tennis Center, that there are passive recreation areas in Bayfront Park with restrictions on uses for the neighborhood park and funding from public/private partnerships. The Commission supported staff recommendations and staff was asked to identify possible locations for four pickleball courts as well as gather feedback from Tennis Center and Library users.

#### May 21, 2018

Pickleball was discussed at the 2018 CIP Budget Workshop. Key points included partial funding of pickleball courts in the 5 -year CIP (in FY20), proposed location and layout of pickleball courts, membership assumptions of fees for pickleball players and membership options and outcome of feedback from Tennis Center users. Also discussed was contributions from donors in the construction of the Tennis Center/ capital costs for originals courts.

#### December 3, 2018

Town Commission passed Resolution 2018- 34, Amending the FY19 Budget, Infrastructure Surtax Fund (\$20,000) for Pickleball Facilities Feasibility Study & Preliminary Design). This would allow the use of a portion of the \$100,000 set aside for pickleball expansion to be used for additional site evaluation and initial design work. During the Public Hearing evaluation on the location of the proposed courts, obtaining realistic costs, consideration of parking requirements for the use of the courts, and noise considerations for proposed site location were discussed.

#### May 20, 2019

Discussions of alternative pickleball court location, available parking, fencing for courts, funding for the project, using a reservation system and operating costs took place. There was consensus to forward as recommended, including further discussions with All Angels by the Sea Episcopal Church on parking impacts, and follow-up with the various stakeholders regarding the proposed location and bring back to a regular meeting.

June 3, 2019

The Commission requested that pickleball be placed as an agenda item on the June 17, 2019 agenda for further discussion

### **Update**

#### **Staff Observations:**

Requests for the expansion of public pickleball opportunities on the island have somewhat been accommodated by lining one of the tennis courts at Bayfront Park for dual use (completed March 2018), as well as purchasing two sets of portable pickleball nets for play on the lined pickleball courts. In-season (especially in the morning), players must wait to play due to the large volume of participants. It is important to mention that since the end of April, there has been a noted decline in users. The current quantity of public pickleball opportunities appear to be sufficient to accommodate the need during the months of May through December. Further, it has been noted that players are not only Longboat Key residents or visitors, but they come from other local municipalities including Anna Maria Island, City of Sarasota, Manatee and Sarasota Counties.

Another emerging trend is that the private sector has begun to add pickleball courts or convert tennis courts to pickleball courts, thus reducing the quantity of public pickleball courts needed on the island. The Longboat Key Club, some condominium properties, and other private properties have recently added pickleball courts. It would be worth investigating what the future installation or conversion of tennis to pickleball court plans are at resorts, condominiums, and other residential locations to determine if their plans will balance the needed inventory of available pickleball amenities.

#### **Parking:**

On Tuesday, June 4, 2019, staff met with representatives from the All Angels by the Sea Episcopal Church at which time they indicated that there are ongoing activities and events that take place throughout the week which would preclude the use of their parking lot by tennis or pickleball players.

In looking at the area surrounding the Town Center and the Tennis Center, there appears to be multiple opportunities for parking. Potential areas could include Temple Beth Israel, the lot at Mediterranean Plaza, Post Office, parking at the future Town Center Venue as well as existing parking at Town Hall and on-street parking along Bay Isles Road (Attachment B). Staff originally had positive conversations with the Temple and the Post Office. Staff will continue to pursue securing permanent parking agreements to ensure ample parking would be available for the addition of four pickleball courts and to facilitate public parking within the Town Center.

#### **Outreach to 540 Neptune:**

On June 8, 2019, staff met with one of the owners of the condos located at 540 Neptune. The owners requested that a new fence be installed at the property line, a tree be removed, and gate as an access to walk to Publix be a part of the pickleball expansion project. The residents also expressed concerns about noise from tennis;

often hearing loud talking and the beeping noise from remote automobile locking devices.

**Other Considerations:**

Since there has been some concern expressed about placing the pickleball courts in the shell lot, staff has outlined below a list of potential considerations:

- Continue with the current plan to construct four pickleball courts and pursue parking agreements with the Temple, Post Office and Mediterranean Plaza.
- Pay for a revised concept plan and cost estimate to put pickleball courts back in the original location adjacent to the library. This area has not been thoroughly vetted. Construction costs may increase due to the additional site work, permitting and mitigation of stormwater that could be needed.
- Construct only two pickleball courts to reduce parking impacts. Use as a pilot to understand impacts before moving forward with four courts.
- Receive further public input prior to moving forward.

**Next Steps**

Staff will continue to pursue and confirm parking agreements with the Temple Beth Israel, Mediterranean Plaza and the Post Office to facilitate parking capacity in the Town Center.

**Attachments**

- A. May 20, 2019 Staff Memo
- B. Potential Parking
- C. PowerPoint Presentation
- D. Diagram from the Vice Mayor (Available in Town Clerk's Office)
- E. Email from Mr. Younger (Available in Town Clerk's Office)
- F. Handout from Mr. James (Available in Town Clerk's Office)

## M E M O R A N D U M

**TO:** Tom Harmer, Town Manager  
**FROM:** Carolyn Brown, Support Services Director  
Isaac Brownman, Public Works Director  
**DATE:** May 20, 2019  
**SUBJECT:** Pickleball Courts Feasibility Study Update

### **Recommended Action**

None, informational only.

### **Background**

After requests from the pickleball community for additional pickleball opportunities, the Town Commission directed the Town Manager to move forward with a feasibility study for adding four pickleball courts in the area between the Library and four existing tennis courts on the North side of Bay Isles Road.

Town staff began by exploring the site feasibility, parking, potential revenue, and capital costs. In addition, in April of 2018, staff sent out a survey to Tennis Center members to understand their level of support and to identify concerns they may have. The greatest concern expressed by the Tennis Center members was the noise associated with pickleball and the disruption to the concentration needed for tennis. There were also concerns regarding parking and the assurance that no tennis courts would be removed. Staff discussed these items with the Town Commission at the May 21, 2018 Special Budget Workshop meeting.

Planning level order of magnitude estimates for design and construction for adding four pickleball courts was estimated at approximately \$200,000. As part of the 5-Year capital improvement budgeting process, it was determined that \$100,000 would be allocated in the FY20 budget to match private funding that could potentially be raised towards this effort.

On December 3, 2018, the Commission authorized a budget amendment to facilitate moving forward with hiring a firm to provide professional services for high level planning, design and cost estimates. The budget amendment for FY19 was approved for \$20,000 of the \$100,000 in funds allocated in the FY20 budget from the Sarasota County Infrastructure Surtax Fund.

Since that time, George F. Young was hired and has finalized a concept plan (“sketch”) and opinion of probable cost. The following outlines the findings and work completed by staff and George F. Young:

1. **Concept** – Staff met onsite with George F. Young on several occasions. After conducting an on-site assessment, it was determined that the least impact to area residents would be to place the courts in the area where the shell parking lot is currently located.

2. **Parking** - Parking behind the library would be available as well as in the grass area between the library lot and the tennis courts. Staff contacted the pastor of the All Angels by the Sea Episcopal Church regarding potential use of their grass parking during the weekdays and on Saturdays. On Sundays, the parking lot at Town Hall would be available for parking. The pastor agreed to discuss the idea with the church members and follow up with staff with their response.
3. **Opinion of Probable Cost** – George F. Young conducted research on the costs of other public pickleball courts as well as estimated costs associated with required site work such as clearing, grubbing and earthwork needed for the project and grass parking. Below is a cost estimate:

**A – Earthwork and Grassed Parking**

Item No.	Description	Unit	Estimated Quantity	Unit Price Estimate	Bid Price
1	Clear and Grub	AC	0.13	\$10,000.00	\$1,300.00
2	12' Type 'B' Stabilization (LBR 40)	SY	670	\$8.00	\$5,360.00
3	6" Crushed Concrete Base (LBR 100)	SY	670	\$15.00	\$10,050.00
4	2" Topsoil	SY	700	\$4.00	\$2,800.00
5	Sod	SY	700	\$2.50	\$1,750.00
6	Erosion Control Silt Fence	LF	300	\$2.50	\$750.00
	<b>Subtotal - A</b>				<b>\$22,010.00</b>

**B – Earthwork and Courts**

Item No.	Description	Unit	Estimated Quantity	Unit Price Estimate	Bid Price
1	Clear and Grub	AC	0.17	\$10,000.00	\$1,700.00
2	Erosion Control and Silt Fence	LF	500	\$2.50	\$1,250.00
3	Pickleball Courts 2 61'x61' Pads = 4 Courts) Complete	EA	2	\$36,000.00	\$72,000.00
4	Sidewalk Connections	LF	100	\$10.00	\$1,000.00
	<b>Subtotal - B</b>				<b>\$75,950.00</b>

**Subtotal A + B \$97,960.00**

**Total with Contingency (20%) \$117,552.00**

4. **Acoustical Solutions** – After conversations and feedback from other municipalities where pickleball courts are within close proximity to private homes, staff researched pricing on exterior sound blankets/acoustical fencing. Information received indicates that noise can be reduced by approximately 10 – 12 decibels, or an approximate 50% reduction in sound as perceived by the human ear. The cost varies depending on the number of panels installed, however costs for this project are estimated at approximately \$16,000 to cover 2 1/4 – 2 1/2 sides of each of the two sets of courts. Staff recommends

including acoustical fencing as part of this project to avoid noise to neighbors and tennis players.

5. **Total Estimated Project Costs** – Based on the information provided, total project estimates are **\$133,552**. This does not include any beautification improvements such as additional landscaping /shrubbery or other aesthetic elements.

Out of the \$100,000 originally allocated for this project, there is currently approximately \$90,000 remaining after payment to George F. Young for their work. Based on the current estimates, the project is approximately \$43,552 underfunded. The original funding concept included private fundraising for up to half of the cost. In addition, there is a potential for grant funding for the construction of the project.

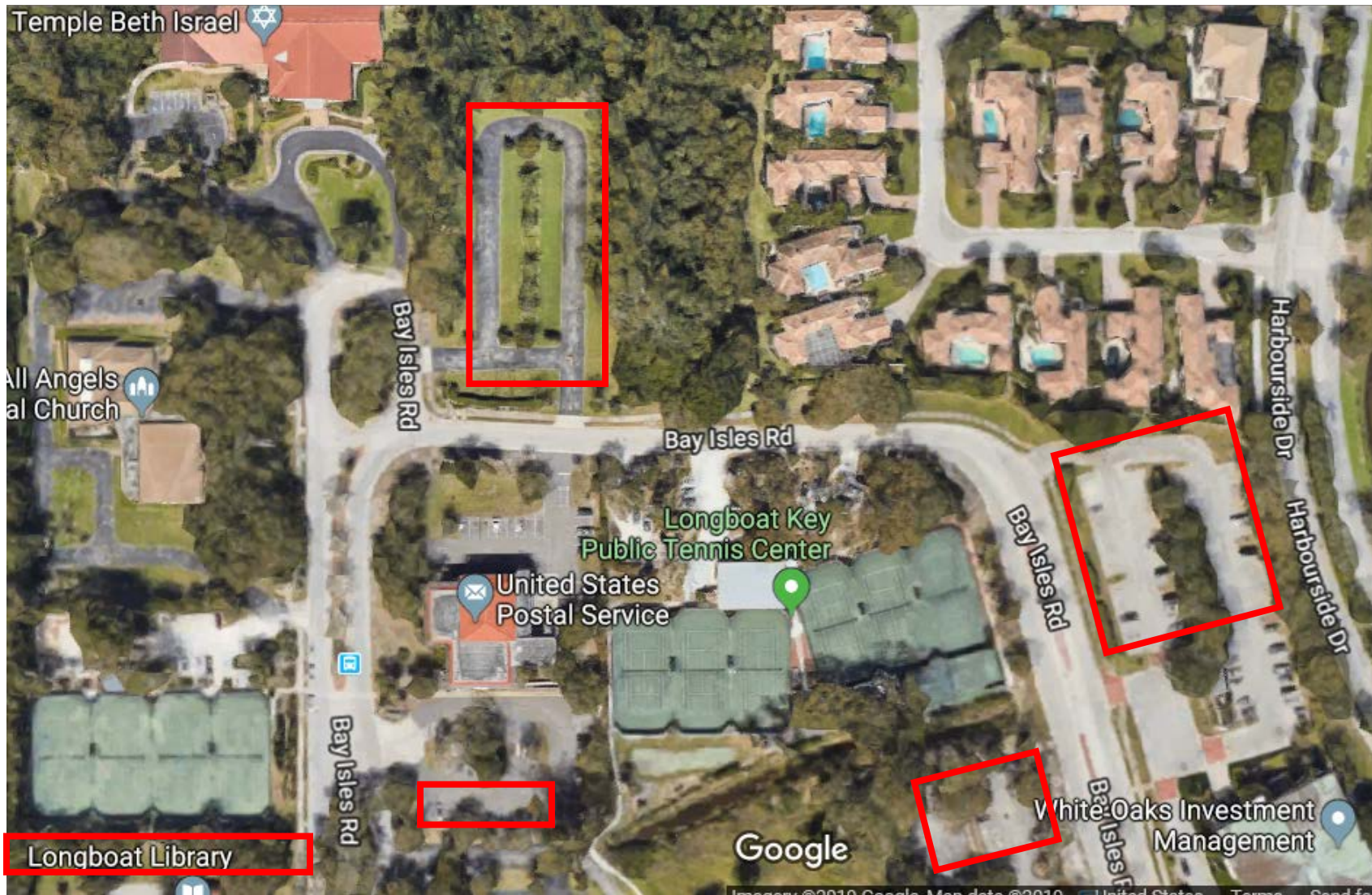
### **Next Steps**

After reviewing the location and plans as outlined above with the Town Commission, next steps include obtaining feedback from various stakeholders including pickleball players, members of the Tennis Center (including Friends of Tennis), and the public in late Fall. The staff will investigate potential grant opportunities and follow up with the pickleball representatives that have been advocating for the project regarding their fundraising efforts associated with the project. Finally, staff will continue to work with All Angels by the Sea Episcopal Church on a potential parking agreement.

### **Attachments**

PowerPoint presentation

## Exhibit B – Potential Parking



- 82 potential spaces at Temple Beth Israel
- 63 potential spaces at Mediterranean Plaza
- 50 spaces with walkover at Town Center Venue
- 31 potential spaces at Post Office
- 11 spaces at library + Town Hall Parking





# Pickleball

Town Commission Regular Workshop Meeting  
June 17, 2019



# Agenda

- Background
- History
- Update
  - Staff Observations at Bayfront Park
  - Parking at Town Center Area
  - Outreach to 540 Neptune
  - Considerations
- Commission Discussion
- Next Steps



# Background

- **May 20, 2019 TC Workshop**

- Pickleball Court Feasibility Study Update:

- Recommendation to place four (4) courts on shell parking between tennis courts and church
- Ballpark cost \$133,552. Available Town funds are \$90,000.
- Pickleball Friends to contribute towards difference.
- 7 – 0 Consensus.

- **June 3, 2019 Regular Meeting**

- Commission requested June 17, 2019 follow-up discussion.



# History

Prior to the Bayfront Park renovation, a tennis court was striped with pickleball lines around 2012.

As design of the park renovation progressed, a dedicated pickleball court was incorporated into the renovation design.

Once Bayfront Park re-opened and observing seasonal use, Public Works striped an additional two (2) pickleball courts onto one of the tennis courts for use as a multi-use court.

- **March 28, 2018 TC Workshop**

- Conduct due diligence and site feasibility for Tennis Center expansion to accommodate pickleball offerings.
- Gather Tennis Center and Library feedback.



# History, cont.

- **May 21, 2018 TC Special Workshop (Budget)**
  - Tennis Center member feedback: 117 support, 51 oppose.
  - Library feedback: general support for foot traffic.
  - Continue to support pickleball at Tennis Center and set aside funding in FY 19 budget (\$100,000) with intent for pickleball to provide matching funding, as needed.
  - Contributions from donors in the construction of Tennis Center capital costs.
  - Tennis Center develop business plan to support operation.
- **December 3, 2018 TC Regular Meeting**
  - Resolution 2018-24 Budget Amendment to transfer \$20,000 for feasibility at Tennis Center and preliminary cost estimate.
  - Actual cost around \$10,000.
- **May 20, 2019 TC Special Workshop**
  - Outcome of feasibility study costs and recommended location
  - 7- 0 consensus to forward item to July 1, 2019 Regular Meeting.



# Staff Observation Update

- **Bayfront Park:**
  - Pickleball Seasonality: Four (4) months through April
  - Pickleball courts sufficient May through December
  - Seasonal players not limited to Longboat Key
  - Private Areas adding pickleball courts (over 20-courts)
  - Off-Season: other hard courts tend to receive more use than pickleball courts.



# Parking Update – Town Center



- 82 potential spaces at Temple Beth Israel
- 63 potential spaces at Mediterranean Plaza
- 50 spaces with walkover at Town Center Venue
- 31 potential spaces at Post Office
- 11 spaces at library + Town Hall Parking

# Parking Update – Library Area







# Outreach to 540 Neptune Update

- June 8, 2019 staff met with owner
  - As part of pickleball expansion they requested:
    - New fence at property line
    - Tree removal
    - Gated access to and through Tennis Center for overall access to Publix
    - Also expressed concerns about Tennis Center noise, including talking and remote automobile devices.



# Considerations

- **Staff Recommends:**

- Continuing with the current plan to construct four (4) pickleball courts managed and operated at Tennis Center
- To mitigate parking concerns, pursue parking agreements with the Temple Beth Israel, Post Office and Mediterranean Plaza.

- **As Alternatives:**

- Pay for a revised concept plan and cost estimate to put four (4) pickleball courts back in original location adjacent to the library.
  - This area has not been thoroughly vetted. Construction costs may increase due to additional site work, permitting and mitigation of stormwater.
- Construct only two (2) pickleball courts to reduce parking impacts. Use as a pilot to understand impacts before moving forward with four courts.
- Gather further public input prior to moving forward at either the Tennis Center or Bayfront Park with temporary and/or permanent solutions.



# Commission Discussion

- **Next Steps:**

- Proceed with planning for pickleball court expansion at the Tennis Center
- Tennis Center - develop a business plan to support the operation of membership and reservation based play while maintaining the current open-to-the-public three (3) court configuration at Bayfront Park.

**End of Agenda Item**