

THE LATEST “SKINNY” (NO PUN INTENDED) ON THE AQUATIC & FITNESS CENTER

Last month, we told you about the very detailed process the Board of Directors and your Association committees are following to obtain the information we all need to make informed decisions about the proposed Aquatic & Fitness Center. A key element of this process is the work of the Properties Committee’s Subcommittee for the Aquatic & Fitness Center.

The Subcommittee has been asked to interview architectural firms that are interested in providing preliminary design and construction estimates sufficient to establish reasonably accurate costs for the project. Seven firms have been invited to make presentations to the Subcommittee and five have done so as we go to press. All have experience designing and building fitness and recreation centers.

Each firm has been given approximately two hours to make their presentations, answer questions and tour the existing sports facilities. All have been given the same written criteria, which include:

- The budget for the proposed project (Note that the architects were given a budget of \$2.2 million, which allows for a cushion relative to the Board-approved \$2.5 million budget.)
- A main entrance facing Rancho Vistoso Boulevard
- Flexibility of design, including multi-purpose rooms for different activities
- Maximization of exterior views of the Catalina Mountains
- The requirement for a light and airy interior
- Expanded space that is architecturally compatible with existing spaces, including information about the kinds of activities that will take place in the new spaces
- Consideration of space for a health and wellness area
- Major renovation of locker and restroom facilities
- Provision for adequate storage (folded table tennis tables, chair, floor mats, etc.)
- Incorporation of current building codes
- Expansion limitations

Once initial interviews have been completed, the Subcommittee will evaluate all applicants and select three of the seven firms to submit their initial concepts or visions for the project. From these, a single candidate will be selected and recommended to the Board for approval. The selected firm will then provide layout drawings, renderings, elevations and cost estimates. The Board has authorized payment of not more than \$15,000 for this work, which is expected to be completed in December.

Each of the firms the Subcommittee has interviewed to date has expressed interest in designing a facility that “**excites**” and “**inspires**” residents, as well as addressing their needs. Firm principals have indicated a desire to collect as much information as possible from “stakeholders” (residents, staff, fitness instructors, etc.) to assist them in the design phase, as well as willingness to participate in community meetings to present the project and answer questions about the completed design.

Resident input is currently being collected by the Communications Committee. An electronic survey (“Your good ideas are needed for the Aquatic & Fitness Center) was completed on July 17, with over 260 detailed responses – and even a sketch or two. The same survey questions will be used to conduct two focus groups in August and will be repeated during the fall.

Are you giving yourself every possible chance to participate in developing this project? If you have a computer, you can take part in all upcoming surveys. Here’s how: Go to the Sun City Vistoso website, www.suncity-vistoso.com. Hold your mouse over “News & Information.” Select “In The Know” from the drop down menu that appears and fill out the form. You can select any lists (or topics) about which you’d like to be informed, and you’ll receive information electronically on a regular basis, including the opportunity to participate in surveys. It’s easy! Just be sure to select the “Board Newsletter” list. If you are receiving the Board Newsletter, you will also receive the surveys and special reports on the A&FC project via Listserv.

Watch for a survey on “Fitness and Wellness Classes” in August. This survey will also be followed by focus groups on the same topic. Focus group participation will be solicited online, in Tipster inserts, and on bulletin boards. (But, hurry! Each focus group is limited to the first 10 residents who sign up.)

Surveys and focus groups on additional topics, including “Opportunities, Concerns and Challenges”, will be scheduled throughout the fall.

As we continue with this process, the Board, staff and committees continue to work together to identify potential cost savings.

Remember: The Board has a fiduciary responsibility to maintain and improve our community in the best interests of all residents, and thus an obligation to ensure that the proposal it presents to residents for a vote is as good, accurate and cost effective as it can be. **We want and need YOUR input.** That’s what this lengthy process is all about.