



appears the city just does not want to keep this one open; a new Center built in Westmoreland Park, as the city itself proposed in its previous 20-year plan, seems to be the only option that might interest the city.” Elaine O’Keefe worried about SMILE volunteering to take responsibility for a building that the city perceives to be a “money pit”, although we believe it has been a while since they put any money into it. Joel Leib mused that if the city closes the Community Center, then we could potentially use the Helen Hicsun Community Center Fund money to try to keep the Center’s programs going, elsewhere in the community.

Kevin Palmer suggested we use some of the Hicsun funds to perform an official feasibility study of our various options, including an evaluation of the building – and then seek time from the city to do this before closing the Center. Elaine O’Keefe cautioned that such a study of the building and its condition would require full participation of the city and of its records on the building, in order to come up with an accurate and realistic evaluation. So far they have not been cooperative after our previous request for this information. Further discussion ensued on variations of all these points.

Julie Currin said that since the city’s current 2020 plan *did* propose a new Community Center in Westmoreland Park, and since 2020 is next year, now is the time to look at the next decade or two to further our plans. Neighborhood growth has far exceeded what was projected in the current 2020 plan; the Westmoreland Park location would be equidistant from all our neighborhood schools and closer to Duniway Elementary, and also to Westmoreland Union Manor. Gail Hoffnagle then asked Julie to write down for her the points she had made, for Gail’s reference at the April 9 meeting. Julie agreed to do that.

Tyler Janzen suggested that in whatever we present, we should directly address the city’s published criteria on “equity”, “accessibility”, etc., if we expect to get anywhere in talks with the city on this matter. We have had major population growth; our median demographic is changing – it’s younger, and there are more kids. The regional Mt. Scott Community Center to which the city seems to want to divert our residents is more than four miles from here, and is not easily accessible for young families and for older and low-income residents in our neighborhood.

With the allotted time drawing to a close, the Board united to give thanks to Gail Hoffnagle and Julie Currin for spearheading this effort on behalf of SMILE and the neighborhood, and wished her success in her brief testimony at the April 9 meeting.

Joel Leib declared the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m., to make way for the monthly SMILE General Meeting, which was due to start five minutes later.