

San Mateo County Event Center Board Retreat
November 10, 2018 10am-1pm
Facilitated by the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center

Retreat Notes

Retreat Purpose: Discuss the Event Center Master Plan, Economic Impact Report and the County's RFP Process

Retreat Objectives:

- Board members understand the Master Plan and Economic Impact Report
- Board members understand the County's RFP process and next steps
- Board members discuss what they would like to see happen next with the Event Center and possible steps

Attendees: Tom Ames, David Caro, Leonard Iniguez, Sarah Burdick, Kari Foppiano, Bev Miller, Mike Pacelli, Steven Wong, Carole Groom, Aimee Armsby, Dana Stoehr

Group Agreements:

- Share the air
- Listen for understanding
- Be present
- Be open and curious
- Technology on silent/vibrate

Framing Activity:

Purpose: Set the stage for thinking about priorities for the future of the Event Center

1. What are you most excited about?

- We've come a long way in just two years
 - We have great staff and connections
 - We have a blueprint for the future
 - There are open communications between board and staff
- Planning for future uses of the Event Center; the framework (Master Plan) is useful
- Personnel infrastructure is working smoothly
- The potential increase in income to help with improvements

2. What concerns you?

- It will take a long time to achieve the Master Plan goals
- Losing the character of the Event Center; lose what the Event Center is
- Loss of control by Board: are things proceeding without us?
- Loss of relationship with community as we move along
- The redevelopment process
- Loss of open space, losing the size of the fair and other activities, loss of income from these activities
- Loss of horse racing revenue
- Two office buildings are too many

- Can we still hold enough events and be self-supporting? What events can we hold?
- Managing change
- Fear of the unknown
- Where new money will come from and go to
- Want to make sure that we can be good stewards
- Staff morale
- Maintenance

Master Plan and Economic Impact Report Update:

Purpose: Get everyone on the same page about the documents to prepare people for the discussion.

SMCEC CEO Dana Stoehr provided an update on the Master Plan and the Economic Impact Report. The consultants will conduct a second phase of economic planning in which they will analyze the current revenue stream and how it will be impacted by potential development. This will include a valuation of the property once new development has occurred. This phase will also look at the impact of loss of the parking and what events the Event Center will no longer be able to hold.

County RFP Update:

Purpose: The Board understands the RFP process, the County's objectives and next steps

County Supervisor Carole Groom provided an update on the County's RFP for a hotel at the SMCEC. The goal of the hotel is to enhance the property and get a revenue stream for the SMCEC and to support business and consumer shows. The office building will pay for the hotel. There are two consultants guiding the County and they are currently engaged in fact finding. Carole and Mike Callegy have been keeping the City of San Mateo updated. The consultants and the County have been meeting with other cities that have built hotels. The County is not convinced that two office buildings are needed. They will have another round of meetings with developer. They have not yet discussed finances, including revenue sharing with the SMCEC. No one will take the risk that the Event Center won't be successful.

Board members had the following questions and comments regarding the County RFP:

- At what point do the communities get involved? The County has met with them and will continue to. The City of San Mateo will do the Environmental Impact Report and the County and City planners
- Why is only one developer interested? No one wants to work with the government.
- What other options did the County consider for funding the Event Center? The County has looked at bonding but the County is limited in bonding capacity and there is a question about whether the public would support it.
- What about partnerships with schools and corporations? We could look into this.
- Will the revenues go to the Event Center? Yes, the goal of the hotel is to enhance the property, not to make money for the County.
- The underground storage tank money is a concern—the Event Center wants the money spent here. SMCEC built goodwill with the City of San Mateo.

- How will the revenue get distributed/used? What does the financial partnership with County look like? We don't know yet.
- What happens after Phase 1? We don't know yet.
- In looking at new development at the SMCEC, we need to be mindful of all the other projects in the area and the associated traffic.

What the Board Would Like to See/Next Steps:

Purpose: Board members collaboratively discuss what steps the Board may want to take regarding the future of the Event Center and what needs to happen next

Board members identified the following important objectives and next steps:

- The Board would like to see economic numbers on the impact of office buildings on land valuation and revenues (projection of hotel and office revenues). This will be included in the revised Economic Impact Report.
- The Board would like to have a discussion of revenue sharing/distribution with the County. This will happen some time in the future
- The Board would like to add the mission statement of Event Center to the Master Plan, making sure that it includes the fair and public benefit. The Board will vote on this at next Board meeting.
- The Board would like to continue to get regular updates from the County. This has been a standing agenda item and will continue.
- The Board would like a better understanding of the financial process from EPS. Board members will identify specific questions and send to Dana by 11/15. There will be a further discussion on the Economic Impact Report with EPS.
- It is helpful to have a facilitator to lead the meeting and not require Dana, Carole and Aimee to lead. The Board should consider this for future meetings/retreats.
- The Board would like to explore the idea of foundation or corporate partnerships. This should be a discussion at a future retreat.

Evaluation:

Retreat attendees conducted a plus/delta evaluation of the retreat, where plus indicated what went well and delta indicated what could be improved or changed for next time.

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- Facilitator rephrasing what was said
- Clarification of the project and process
- Facilitator stepped in to manage the conversation
- Board said what they wanted
- Location

Δ

- Have Carole speak earlier
- The facilitator needed to step in to manage the conversation
- Timing of meeting: would have been helpful to meet after getting additional financial information
- More coffee