

**Late Backup**

**Item No. 77**

**9/26/2013**

**Initiated by Council Member Tovo**

**RESOLUTION NO.**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin owns a 7.36 acre tract of land in the upper Waller Creek watershed at 401 West St. Johns Avenue; and

**WHEREAS**, Waller Creek is a high priority watershed due to pollution and flooding concerns; and

**WHEREAS**, the site was purchased for stormwater management use and the Watershed Protection Department (WPD) has identified it as an appropriate location for a stormwater management pond to address pollution; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1970 the Austin City Council approved the use of the West St. Johns Avenue site as a sports field and has leased the site to the University Hills Optimists (UHO) for its exclusive use since 1971; and

**WHEREAS**, UHO currently offers kickball, baseball, and soccer to youth in Austin and surrounding communities at "Reznicek Field" at the site; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin relies on organizations like University Hills Optimists to provide youth sports programming on public land throughout Austin; and

**WHEREAS**, most recent numbers from the Parks and Recreation Department suggest that a substantial number of youth sports participants who use this facility reside outside the City of Austin; and

**WHEREAS**, the site remains locked when youth sports activities are not taking place and thus largely inaccessible for more general park use; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2003 Brentwood/Highland Neighborhood Plan calls for construction of a park on this property but the City has taken no action in the past decade to consider or facilitate such a use; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin has adopted a goal of providing parks within a distance of one-quarter to one-half mile of every household, and the Parks and Recreation Department's (PARD) Gap Analysis in the Long Range Plan identifies this area of Austin as deficient in adequate parkland; and

**WHEREAS**, among the top five votes during the Central Public Input Meeting conducted as part of PARD's Long Range Plan was to "move [the University Hills Optimists]... to create more park opportunity"; and

**WHEREAS**, WPD presented 60%-complete plans for the stormwater facility to the Highland Neighborhood at meetings on December 13, 2012, and February 18, 2013, and neighbors expressed concern over lack of input regarding the design of the pond and their interest in using the WPD site as a park; and

**WHEREAS**, WPD has placed plans for construction of the stormwater facility on hold pending direction from the City Council regarding future use of the site; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

The City Manager is directed to hold a community meeting to solicit suggestions and ideas and to report to Council by October 24, 2013, with options for the future use of the Watershed Protection Department tract located at 401 West St. Johns Avenue, including 1) using the entire tract for stormwater management; 2) using the entire tract as a park including a stormwater management pond and relocating University Hills Optimist sports; 3) reconfiguring the site to allow both public park uses, a stormwater pond, and continued youth sports activities; and 4) maintaining the site in its current use and configuration with modifications necessary to include a stormwater pond.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The City Manager is directed to include in consideration of options 1-3 possible relocation options for the University Hills Optimist sports and, with regard to option 3, to prioritize which sports activities fill the greatest need in the community and also allow flexibility in the use of the site.

**ADOPTED:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2013    **ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_

Jannette S. Goodall  
City Clerk