

e-Correspondence Received Regarding Piedmont Swim Club Lease

Dear Mayor Nancy McEnroe and Members of the Piedmont City Council,

As previously submitted to you in my e-mail letter dated May 29, 2007, I am a lifetime resident of Piedmont and a 34 year member of the Piedmont Swim Club. I am an avid "senior" lap swimmer, currently swimming 4-5 days a week which I regard as a major factor in my well-being.

My two daughters were active Piedmont Swim Team and Piedmont High School swim team members, lifeguards, instructors and coaches for the Piedmont High School swim teams. When my family is visiting, the grandchildren especially enjoy swimming at "Grandma's pool".

I am a newly elected member of the Piedmont Swim Club board which shows my dedication to the concerns of the current lease dispute. I am strongly in favor of a 3 year lease extension of the Piedmont Swim Club.

Thank you for your consideration.

Priscilla Davis

Dear City Council Member:

Over the past few years there has been considerable controversy over the future of swimming in Piedmont. Everyone agrees that the demand for swimming lanes greatly exceeds the supply and that the community would benefit from an expanded aquatic facility. There is momentum behind the new Civic Center Master Plan which includes a bigger pool. With the seismic retrofitting of Havens as a guide, it will take at least 2-3 years before ground will be broken on a new pool. The Piedmont Swim Club's lease is set to expire and people have been wondering what will happen to swimming in Piedmont after June 30, 2008?

One of three scenarios:

1. The city of Piedmont will take over the management of the pool. As stated in the Sports Management Report of October 2006, the city will be forced to operate at a loss, with estimates as high as \$327,000 annually.
2. The city closes the pool and it ceases to operate.
3. The city extends the Piedmont Swim Club's lease to operate the pool for an additional 3 years. This allows time for funds to be raised and plans to be approved for the new city operated aquatic facility.

Keeping the pool, built originally by the Piedmont Swim Club with 100% private funds on city land, operating in a smooth and fiscally responsible manner is in the best interest of the Piedmont community as a short term solution. The lease extension should be viewed as a bridge that allows for continuation of aquatic services until the new pool and Civic Center are built. It is for these reasons that the city council should extend the Piedmont Swim Club's lease to June 30, 2011.

Sincerely,

Andrew Damon

Dear City Council Members:

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Keeping the pool, built originally by the Piedmont Swim Club with 100% private funds on city land, operating in a smooth and fiscally responsible manner is in the best interest of the Piedmont community as a short term solution. The lease extension should be viewed as a bridge that allows for continuation of aquatic services until the new pool and Civic Center are built. It is for these reasons that the city council should extend the Piedmont Swim Club's lease to June 30, 2011. We also have two children who are on the swim team and use the pool year round. It would be a shame to lose the facility during this interim period.

Sincerely,

Barbara Singer (Swim club member)

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor and City Council Members:

We appreciate the considerable effort that has gone into defining the future of the aquatic facilities in Piedmont.

Over the past few years there has been a lot of controversy over the future of swimming in Piedmont. Everyone agrees that the demand for swimming lanes greatly exceeds the supply and that the community would benefit from an expanded aquatic facility. There is momentum behind the new Civic Center Master Plan which includes a bigger pool. With the seismic retrofitting of Havens as a guide, it will take at least 2-3 years before ground will be broken on a new pool. The Piedmont Swim Club's lease is set to expire and people have been wondering what will happen to swimming in Piedmont after June 30, 2008?

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We strongly support keeping the pool, built originally by the Piedmont Swim Club with 100% private funds on city land, operating in a smooth and fiscally responsible manner as the best short term solution and in the best interest of the Piedmont community.

The lease extension should be viewed as a bridge that allows for continuation of aquatic services until the new pool and Civic Center are built. It is for these reasons that the city council should extend the Piedmont Swim Club's lease to June 30, 2011.

Sincerely,

Swim club members
Jeff & Leslie Scott

Dear Ann Swift:

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Sincerely,

Regina del Rosario Chan
Carlton Chan
Joseph Chan
Maria Chan

Dear City Council Members,

We would like to ask you to extend the pool lease for three more years. We have lived in the community and have been members of the swim club for four years. It is a great place for our family to be together and meet our neighbors. It would be a shame to lose this important part of our community.

Thank you

The Dinetz family

Dear City Council Member:

Over the past few years there has been considerable controversy over the future of swimming in Piedmont. Everyone agrees that the demand for swimming lanes greatly exceeds the supply and that the community would benefit from an expanded aquatic facility. There is momentum behind the new Civic Center Master Plan which includes a bigger pool. With the seismic retrofitting of Havens as a guide, it will take at least 2-3 years before ground will be broken on a new pool. The Piedmont Swim Club's lease is set to expire and people have been wondering what will happen to swimming in Piedmont after June 30, 2008?

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Sincerely,

Vanessa Cahill

Hi all,

Extending the current lease is the most prudent thing to do for every user of the pool.

The time to decide is critical. Without a new lease, the club will cease operation on June 30, 2008. As you know from the Sports Management Report of October 2006, the city,

assuming it takes over operation of the pool, can't reasonably afford to operate the pool at an estimated annual loss of \$327,000.

The Civic Master Plan includes a bigger pool, but it could be at least 2-3 years before ground is broken on a new pool. It would be wasteful of existing resources (both the facility and the people) to allow operations to cease until a new pool is built and opened.

Please vote to extend the lease to the Piedmont Swim Club for 3 years at the December 17 City Council meeting.

Our family have been members of the club for about 8 years. Our children continue to learn to swim at the club and enjoy birthday parties and relaxing afternoons in and around the pool. The pool is one of the many social centers in our great city and it would be a shame to allow this to go to waste.

Thanks.

Sincerely,
Marc and Susan Bryan

Dear All:

As a member of Piedmont Swim Club, I urge you to please vote yes for a 3 year lease extension until June 30, 2011 of the PSC lease. We have a young family with 3 children and use the pool almost daily during the summer months. Our oldest two have learned to swim at the club and being without a local swim facility would greatly reduce the enjoyment of our spring and summer months here in Piedmont. We used to belong to Orinda Park Pool when we lived in Oakland and were thrilled to cancel membership there and purchase membership in Piedmont upon moving here two years ago. We would be so sad to be without a community pool for 2-3+ years while the city raised capital and made plans for a new pool. Please let us keep the pool we've got while plans are drawn up and capital is being raised for a city owned aquatics center. Please! Otherwise, we would be forced to go back to Orinda, making summer life here in Piedmont more hectic and less fun for our whole family.

Thank you for your consideration,
Leah Turner

Dear City Council:

I am writing to voice my request that you please extend the Swim Club lease for 3 years.

The availability of an outdoor pool in Piedmont is one of the best parts of living here. I swim every day at the Piedmont pool, and would be extremely disappointed if the ability

to enjoy this form of exercise were curtailed or eliminated. I have lived in Piedmont, and been a daily lap-swimmer at the Piedmont pool, for over 20 years.

Thank you in advance for working with the Swim Club and its members to find a way to continue to offer year-round, outdoor swimming in Piedmont.

Sincerely,
Jim Barnes

Ann,

I understand the City Council will be considering renewal of the Piedmont Swim Club's lease to June 30, 2011 at its December 17th meeting. I am writing the City Council to urge that members vote in favor of such extension. I feel this is the best way to insure that the pool will continue to operate until final plans can be made and ground can be broken on a bigger pool that is part of the Civic Center Master Plan. In all likelihood it will be at least another three years before that can happen. During the intervening time, operation by the Swim Club precludes the City having to incur several hundred thousand dollars of annual operating expense to keep the pool open.

Swimming is an important recreational activity for me and my wife Natalie. We trust that the City Council will make a decision in this matter that provides for continued interim access as well as expanded long term access to a swimming pool for members of this community.

Thank you.

David Arpi

Dear City Council,

I am writing to add my voice to the growing group of confused Piedmont citizens regarding the lack of action being taken to preserve a pool facility for our community. My family has been swim club members for many years, and although my children are beyond the ages of wanting to spend much of their time at the pool, I enjoy occasional lap swimming and do believe a facility suitable for a variety of uses is needed in Piedmont. With growing alarm I have been following the muddled chain of events that have led us to this point, and I cannot understand the inaction of the city to preserve a much used and needed facility. While the gesture of offering a short-term lease extension to PSC is heartening, it in fact would only create a deeper future financial problem for the swim club and its members as such a short future would not allow for a stable income for the club to maintain its operations and staffing. I urge you to reconsider your position on the term of the lease extension being offered to PSC. By allowing a longer lease extension,

not only will it improve the feasibility of the swim club's finances, but it will also minimize the length of time the community is without a pool facility.

The future of the city center is deserving of careful and thoughtful planning, and I applaud the deliberate and careful approach the Council is taking. Unfortunately, the time this process takes combined with the uncertain use of Measure E funds does not seem to indicate there is imminent action in redeveloping this area. One can only assume there is some agenda yet to be disclosed regarding your plans for the pool facility, and how allowing it to operate in the interim would be counterproductive to your purposes. However, as representatives of the citizens of Piedmont, I believe you have an obligation to serve the best interests of the community. Unless I have completely misunderstood the situation, there is not a single interested group in favor of going without water space for an extended period of time. If you do intend for the City to take over the operations of the pool at the conclusion of its lease, bravo! But as a courtesy to the pool members and the community, disclosing this information would put many minds at ease. If you have no plans, it is past time to make them and you are doing a disservice to the community by ignoring this issue.

Respectfully,

Jeanette Kerley

City Council Members,

We'd like to express our concern about the fate of the Piedmont pool. Given the choices of closing the pool, extending the PSC lease for three years, or having the city operate the pool at a loss of close to a million dollars over three years; the best options appears to be the lease extension.

We've been members of the PSC since we moved to Piedmont six years ago and have nothing but good things to say about the operation of the club. Having the pool walking distance has been a great benefit to our family, year round. The PSC has been a wonderful addition to the community both for parents and kids, and I cannot imagine my kids' summers without a pool close by – for weekends and for camps.

There is no question that the future of the pool will be different than it's current situation, but that future is not close at hand. When Dracena Park was redone, the entire park was closed in June, then they didn't break ground until Fall. The entire summer of play at that park was lost to the children – due to construction delay realities. The same situation faces you with the Piedmont pool. There is no way a new pool will be completed in the next year or two – not with all the other work in the master plan. Make the planned changes to the pool, but until they are ready to break ground, please extend the PSC lease – three years seems reasonable for all parties involved.

Regards,

Robert Houser
Marianna Houser

Dear Madam Mayor and Members of the Piedmont City Council:

Please consider sympathetically the proposal for a three-year “Transition Extension” of the Piedmont Swim Club’s lease, now ending June 30, 2008, until June 30, 2011.

There is widespread Piedmont interest in access to the PSC pool—by the Piedmont high school teams, the Piedmont Swim Team, and other non-paying bodies, as well as by paying members of the PSC. While everyone wants a successful Civic Center Master Plan construction process, keeping water space available as long as possible in the interim—i.e., continuity of water—should be a part of that objective.

The PSC is offering its services at, I believe, no charge to the City. Its offer should not be denied in response to the chimera of “economic blackmail” or “cooked books” that have been bandied about. And the decision on whether the new pool should be municipal rather than quasi-private is better addressed at the time a new pool is built, not with respect to an interim pool during an interim period.

To let the PSC pool lie fallow during the transition period would be poorly received by a large water-inclined constituency. And setting up a municipal-style pool to operate just during the transition period would seem a financial extravagance.

Why not let the PSC continue doing during the transition period what it has been doing so well during the past forty years? A three-year “Transition Extension” is merited and deserves your approval.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Clive Chandler

Dear City Council Member:

Over the past few years there has been considerable controversy over the future of swimming in Piedmont. Everyone agrees that the demand for swimming lanes greatly exceeds the supply and that the community would benefit from an expanded aquatic facility. There is momentum behind the new Civic Center Master Plan which includes a bigger pool. With the seismic retrofitting of Havens as a guide, it will take at least 2-3 years before ground will be broken on a new pool. The Piedmont Swim Club's lease is set to expire and people have been wondering what will happen to swimming in Piedmont after June 30, 2008?

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Sincerely,

Alan & Elena Kong (Swim club members)

To the City Council members:

I understand that there will be another discussion of the future of the Piedmont Pool lease on December 17. As I've written a few times about this topic, you may recall that I write from the perspective of a Swim Club (but not Board) member, daily lap swimmer, but also as the mother of a PHS water polo captain who is also a Piedmont High School and Piedmont Swim Team swimmer. Not to put too fine a point on it, I'm passionately committed to having a pool in Piedmont. I strongly support the concept of a new pool, but acknowledge the reality that it is at the very least a few years away (perhaps many years away) from reality. My hope is that the current pool management will be afforded the kind of lease conditions that it requests to be able to continue running the existing pool in the interim. Should this not occur, then my earnest desire is that the City keep this pool open and available for Piedmont residents with no hiatus in this operation.

Our pool is a wonderful resource that should not be allowed to wither away because negotiations stall. Already, the Piedmont Swim Club has lost its manager and assistant manager, as well as a significant number of its members due to the protracted nature and uncertain outcome of the on-going negotiations. Please don't let the whole operation "evaporate." My main concern is for my son and his teammates and other Piedmont children who benefit from the use (both PHS and private) of the pool. Should the pool not be available for their use this upcoming year, I believe that would be a death-blow for a very promising and energetic water polo team and would severely impact the swim team programs, both private and school-related. As for myself, I could find another

place to swim laps. Granted, I would lose the enjoyment of meeting a variety of my Piedmont neighbors, extending and cementing our friendships. I, and others like me, would lose that neighborly spot in the center of town. But I could continue swimming elsewhere, as I'm sure many of the now lost PSC members have decided to do. Less enjoyable to be sure, certainly less convenient, and definitely to be toted up in the "loss" column for Piedmont community involvement and spirit, but do-able. For the children and teens, the issue of transportation to and from more distant pools, adding time on to an already tight and limited swim schedule would be prohibitive. Please do not let them down.

My thanks for your consideration,

Jody Cornelius

Hello Piedmont City Council Members,

I wanted to email you to inform you of my support for a lease extension for the Piedmont Swim Club pool which is under consideration at your upcoming meeting on December 17. Not renewing the lease means that the pool will either shut down this coming summer on June 30, or that the city will have to run the pool, at a loss of somewhere around \$300,000 per year.

Since I don't think the city has expertise nor personnel trained in running a pool facility, I fear that the pool will end up being closed, and probably stay that way, perhaps for years. And it will sit there idle while the whole central Piedmont "downtown" planning process carries on, gets approved, goes through Environment Impact Reviews, bond measures are voted on, architects are retained, engineers do studies, and then construction can start...

Whether you are a supporter of the "downtown" development project or not, that's a decent amount of time from now. So why close the pool down now when instead we can renew the lease for 3 years and continue to let the competent Piedmont Swim Club run the facility for all of us who use it regularly, especially the kids.

Please vote in favor of a 3 year lease extension for the Piedmont Swim Club.

Thank you for listening,
Oren Jacob

Dear Ann:

First, thank you for your continued excellent service to our city. We consider ourselves the grateful beneficiaries of your work.

We are writing to ask your support in extending the Piedmont Swim Team lease to June 30, 2011.

As long term PST members, as well as strong supporters of the new Civic Center Master Plan, we just want there to be a strong interim management plan in place for the pool. The lease can carry a "quit for convenience" clause that could allow a shorter term should financing for the new Civic Center take shape earlier than expected.

Thanks for your consideration of our request, and thanks again for great service to our city.

Kind regards,

Roseanne and Ray
The Perman Family

From the desk of Valentina Pozin, P.E.

DATE: December 14, 2007
TO: **Piedmont City Council.**
RE: The Piedmont Swim Club lease extension.

I am a member of the Piedmont Swim Club since 1984.

- As it is now Swim Club facility provides pool access to a big group of Piedmont residents.
- You can see adults and kids of all ages enjoying the pool.
- 50% of the pool lanes are dedicated to the Piedmont School swim team.
- There is no need to destroy something that works so well.
- I work in construction for 30+ years and can see that 3 year extension of the Swim Club lease in no way will harm the future new projects.

Please, extend the lease for 3 more years that will allow Swim Club to raise sufficient funds to run the pool.

Dear City Council Members:

My family has been a member of the PSC for the last nine years, my husband's family (Fennell) were founding members of PSC over 40 years ago. We are active users of the pool (5+ times a week) as swim team members (Kelsey & Marina Fennell) and as lap swimmers. I strongly support the development of a new expanded aquatic facility within Piedmont as we get squeezed on both sides of our pool usage and understand personally the lack of adequate water space in the City.

Having said that, I also know how long it takes to work through all the civic issues of funding, plan development and approval and governmental regulations that go into such an effort. If we use the Haven's retrofitting as a benchmark in how such a progress goes, (we're in portables for a second year this year with not one shovel dug for new construction) in a best case scenario, I would expect it will take at least three years before the city is ready to start construction on this new facility. In the meantime please let the PSC continue to operate the pool for the benefit of the members and community. The staff and management do an excellent job of accommodating, within the constraints the facility affords them, the needs of the members and the swim team, and at no cost to the city. Why would the city want to be in the business of running the pool for the next three years if it doesn't have to and the PSC has proven with it's 40+ years of being a very competently run facility? Let's take that \$327K a year the Sports Mgmt Report projected (almost a million over three years) and put it toward the new facilities.

I urge you to accept the final lease proposal put before the board. It allows swimming to continue in Piedmont with no out of pocket expense to the city and it provides the PSC some avenues to recoup some of the financial decline it's suffered over the last three years by providing them fair rent credits up to the true value of what they provide the city and it's agencies (school mates, rec department, school district) and allows them to charge the Piedmont Swim Team, an independent organization, a fair and reasonable rental fee that they would have to pay elsewhere. And perhaps on a selfish note, it allows my kids to walk to swim practice from schools and me to ride my bike to the pool for lap swimming. The closure of our facility would force us to go outside the our community to continue our swim activities.

Please support this final proposal by endorsing and then voting in favor of the proposal submitted by the PSC Board.

Regards,

Leslie Pannell
Swim Club Member

December 12, 2007

RECEIVED
DEC 13 2007
CITY CLERK
CITY OF PIEDMONT

To: Piedmont City Council
From: Josh Bernstein
Re: Piedmont Pool

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Piedmont Swim Club board offers up a false choice of only 3 possible scenarios for the future of the pool, leading to the conclusion that renewing the lease is the only viable solution. There is another.

Let the lease expire on schedule this July. The pool continues to operate. The current aquatics director or a replacement hired by the Recreation Department continues to manage the pool. An Aquatics Commission with representatives from all stakeholders decides on scheduling of its user groups. Current club members and any other interested Piedmonters continue to support the pool financially with an appeal for annual, seasonal, monthly and daily subscriptions.

In a previous letter to the Council I outlined suggestions for improvement in the management of the facility. Streamlining staff, improving personnel management, and discontinuing outsourcing for janitorial helps in the expense column. Expanding lessons, events, and product sales helps in the income column.

The Sports Management Report, dated October 2006, was found to have numerous false expense assumptions, such as inflated insurance costs, and was found to ignore the income opportunity of community subscriptions, which Piedmonters are likely to support.

Ending the lease this July and allowing the city to "get its feet wet" with the current pool is a transition plan that makes sense as we look to the future of a new aquatics center and the Civic Center Master Plan.

Respectfully submitted,



Josh Bernstein