MEMORANDUM

Date: April 15, 2015

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
    Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
      County Administrator

Re: Rillito Park Public Improvements for Soccer

This weekend is the last weekend for County Fair Horseracing and other horseracing associated with the current sublease of Rillito Park. Former Pima County Supervisor Ed Moore distributed the attached flyer (Attachment 1) regarding our termination of horseracing at Rillito Park. The flyer contains misleading and false information. The contractor will continue to remove dilapidated structures on the west side of the track to make room for new soccer facilities, and these improvements will continue unimpeded. The Rillito Foundation has been provided the opportunity to replace these structures on the east side of the racetrack, a location that has been consolidated to maximize joint use of this public park facility and to improve as well as increase its use as a public park for youth activities.

Please note that Point 4 in the attached flyer asks interested individuals to contact your offices regarding the removal of the barns that have been planned for a number of years in consultation with the Rillito Park Foundation and others. The project will continue and result in a total of 11 soccer fields, 9 of which will be lit, and increase the multiple public uses of Rillito Park.

Horseracing investments, including barn reconstruction, are up to the Rillito Park Foundation, not the County.

I have also attached an April 14, 2014 status report (Attachment 2) with extensive discussion about horse stall replacement.

CHH/anc

Attachments

c: Nanette Slusser, Assistant County Administrator for Public Works Policy
   Nancy Cole, Program Manager, Capital Improvement Projects
PIMA COUNTY TERMINATES HORSE RACING AT RILLITO!

1. A contractor was hired on March 17, 2015 to remove the barns on the west side of the track. Without those 260 stalls, there can be no horse racing. The public was not told that removing the barns would terminate horse racing. That information was not on the agenda.

2. The 2004 bond provided money to the County to buy land, build a park and give it to the city. Pima County instead is using the money to tear down part of our registered National Historic Site, terminate horse racing and build 2 soccer fields. That is against Arizona State Law. Bonds must be used for the purpose approved by the voters.

3. The same bureaucrat who proposed a highway through the Rillito Racetrack grandstands in 1984 which was rejected overwhelmingly by the voters, is orchestrating this destruction today.

4. Call the County Supervisors and ask them to cancel this barn destruction and obey the laws in regard to the legal use of bond money. Ask them to protect this National Historic Site and preserve one of Tucson’s most popular tourist attractions along with hundreds of jobs. Horse racing in rural Arizona depends on the survival of Rillito Racetrack. Ask the County Supervisors not to support the bureaucrat’s 30 year crusade to destroy Rillito.

Ed Moore,

President of Historic Rillito Race Track, Inc.  
Former Pima County Supervisor  
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PIMA COUNTY SUPERVISORS:  
Sharon Bronson -(520) 742-8051  
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The Northside Community Park at Rillito project is moving forward this week with the third phase of construction work related to the new west side soccer fields. The project has an extremely tight deadline, which was designed to allow the 2015 racing season to move ahead unimpeded and balance the year-round use of the existing west fields with the leagues. The construction term is brief considering the need to allow the grass to establish properly before allowing field-use for league opening on September 30, 2015.

The project was phased by development area.

1. The Farmer’s Market

This area is located on the south-east portion of the site and has been extremely successful with an estimated 2,500 shoppers and more than 80 vendors participating since opening in November 2014. This area has the potential to work with larger soccer tournaments or other activities on site or on the Loop as a concessions or picnic/rest area.

2. The East Stable Yard Development

This project included the reconfiguration to house the horse barns, equipment and other related racing support functions in a consolidated area east of the racetrack. This project is completed, but it has considerably fewer built horse stalls than the current west configuration. The original design for the east yard was predicated on keeping the existing west stalls, relocating salvageable pre-fabricated metal stalls from the west end, and building new pre-fabricated stalls similar to the salvaged stalls to meet the previous overall stall count of 264.

During plan reviews with stakeholders in June and July 2014, the use of existing pre-fabricated metal stalls was rejected by the Rillito Racing Group because the stalls did not have an adequate shedrow (porch roof) and did not meet the group’s future vision for the site as a mini Del Mar racing venue. A much more expensive barn configuration was selected and planned for the site.
The new barn selection was considerably more costly than the original proposal. As the costs per stall rose, the design team communicated to the racing community that the project budget would require a reduction in the number of stalls that could be built using the 2004 bond funds. At the time, the Rillito Racing Group prioritized building aesthetics over maximizing the total number of stalls available (see the attached Meeting Notes).

The barn layout was changed at that time to allow for future investment in the new barn model versus the original plan of relocating and replacing in-kind the existing metal stalls (see the two attached layouts). The meeting notes clearly show the County’s concern that the lack of stalls would create a difficult situation for the racing operators in the upcoming 2016 season. The original design re-used the 60 newer stables and continued the use of the existing 42 barns to the east, resulting in the need to add only 162 new stalls. This was the original plan to meet the requirement to ensure a one-to-one stall match. Instead, the more expensive barn design was used, and although 72 stalls were bid, only 36 new stalls were actually installed (along with infrastructure, fencing, and utilities associated with the stable yard) within the budget limits provided. The Rillito Racing group was aware of the project budget for barn replacement at the onset.

The design team structured the construction bid for the current phase to include the salvage of the 60 existing pre-fabricated metal stalls, which were recently installed (2007) and are in excellent condition. These are bolted assemblies and can be salvaged for reuse at an affordable price. If not used at Rillito, they could be used elsewhere in the County, perhaps at the fairgrounds.

During the bidding and award process, the Rillito Racing group asked why we were not salvaging the 66 older metal pre-fabricated stalls. These were not on the salvage list because of age and condition. The racing community felt the stalls were re-usable and have sought a price to salvage and re-use these as well. The current pricing for this effort is about five times the cost of the salvage of the newer stalls. The older stalls have considerable welded joints on the panels and steel joists, and use is questionable as to how well they would perform if taken down and re-assembled.

The choice to install the more expensive barn requires the racing community to fund the cost to re-assemble the salvaged 60 stalls, plus the need to install 138 new or temporary stalls to meet the 264 total stall count goal before the start of the 2016 racing season. One alternative is to use temporary stalls and tents for a racing season; however, there is a cost for the temporary structure and the alternative does not further the permanent stall installation effort.
3. Westside Soccer Development

The Board of Supervisors awarded this current phase of work on March 17, 2015. This project has been carefully balanced to provide continued use by both communities; however, it requires patience and coordination between both user groups to function. The site has maximized use of the entire site, making the 90 acres size seem small. The County’s support and development of a tournament site at the Kino Stadium area has helped to meet the tournament site goals, while this project increases the soccer fields at Rillito to a total of 11—the single largest soccer park in Southern Arizona. The racing work consolidates operations to the east barns, with the design of the stable area literally led by the current operators throughout the process.

The advancing improvements fit within the master plan allowing for continued soccer and horse racing in the future. Any delay in the start of construction will impact the start of the soccer league season at Rillito.

Attachments
Northside Community Park at Rillito Regional Park
Stables Design – input from Rillito Park Foundation
Meeting Notes from July 8, 2014 @ Public Works Building

Attendees:
Rillito Park Foundation: Jaye Wells, Walt Rogers, Frank DeFazio, JoAnn diFilippo (SAHRA), Mike Weiss
Pima County: Nancy Cole, Mike Holmes
Design team: Maria Reudinger, Don McGann, Donna Mertes, Tim Smith (via phone)

Notes:
1. Walt Rogers reviewed the comments provided via email from the Foundation and SAHRA along with the sketched concept plan revision. The comments were provided via email to the County and design team. The top comment of concern is the Shedrow requirement (6’ min, 8’ preferred). The notes provide direction on muck bins/tack/feed/walkers/washers on a per stall basis. Some items, such as landscaping, will likely be a future phase item; County dollars will be used to maximize infrastructure installation. RFP will look to be able to add new stables via fundraising using a standard layout.

2. The County has the above information, along with the site concept plan. The site concept is generally similar to the original layout, based on a radial concept and using the existing utility easements for circulation. The issue of discussion between the two plans is the quality/price of the RFP layout. The additional roof structure meets the design requirements, but does also significantly increase cost of delivery. RFP has suggested a local manufacturer could provide the barns as sketched closer to $3500/stall (including roof), they are currently proceeding with an actual estimate. Anything built on site will require compliance with state procurement law, and county requirements for licensing/bonding; so the cost will likely require some additional up cost than that provided by the local fabricator.

3. The east barns were left in previous versions of the plan to help increase the number of stalls available on the east side without additional cost – though the intent would be eventually to replace with new stalls. RFP suggests that these should not be considered for the final build out – they are constraining site layout. Agreed, the current location should not impact the final plan, though they may continue to stay in place for the 2015 season.

4. The layout clearly separates the daily haul area vs. the weekly barns. This is further separated by fencing/gates to avoid any conflicts. The Daily area is set to the north, and is proximity to both the vet/testing area and the 4 furlong staging area (entry to the track for specific races). The vet area should be located near the exit of the track for testing as needed, but also good to be near the daily horses for medical review.

5. The RFP is working with the condo HOA manager north of the site to secure the use of an overflow gated parking area for staff and trailer parking. This would reduce or eliminate the need to consider parking within the full build out of the east stable area. RFP is generally less concerned about overall spectator parking; they will work with nearby parking for additional spaces. Use of riverpark to safely access from remote parking, or use of shuttles may be reviewed. Pima County has done some review of adjacent parking areas – there is potential to look at a shuttle agreement with Sun Tran depending on demand.

6. The County made it clear that the original design layout was based on direction given to the design team to use a similar stable design as on the west – particularly the new modular stalls recently installed. These are more efficient from a site planning perspective, but not what the RFP group would like for horse stable management. The RFP group proposed the different barn
layout to resolve the shedrow, but this could also have been resolved by a different modular barn selection. The County and design team can work with the new barn layout, but this increased unit cost will affect the number of stables that can be built in phase 1, the additional roofing for internal aisles will be more expensive than the original model. The County is limited to a total of $500K for this work. RFP believes these are less expensive than the current estimates, even if a more expensive layout in terms of size/materials. The existing western stables can stay in place (except for the derelict barn) through racing season 2015, which will offset the much smaller than originally anticipated stable install. However, after the 2015 season, construction is planned to start on the west side, which will eliminate the western stables. The 2016 season will require additional stables to be built in order to meet a minimum stable count. The County will not have funding for additional stables, this will have to be led by the RPF, or the 2016 season will be in jeopardy.

7. The County will go back with the design team and refine the plan as proposed by the RFP. The current layout is still showing a total build out of 264 stalls. The RFP would like to fit 300 for their operational goals. The design team will look at meeting this number if possible in the plan, as well as getting any efficiencies possible.
Plan dated 7.16.14
Approach 7-8 metcon
previous design layout rejected.
Plan Dated 6-17-14

Stall Type Consistent Existing prefab Stalls Criollo

60 Salvaged barns

Total Stalls 264