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Three thumbs up for EDH park

By: *Matthew Self, The Telegraph*

After nearly two hours of presentation and public comment last Thursday night, the El Dorado Hills Community Services District board took all of 15 minutes to approve a plan for a new community park.

The members - President Joe Chinn, Vice President Justin Masters and director Larry Brilliant - read from prepared statements before unanimously passing the proposal.

Before calling for a vote, Chinn referenced his own experience as a fourth grade Little League team member playing on the "big field." He said the lasting experience played a role in his decision.

"That park had a special memory for our team," he said. "This park will make them for El Dorado Hills children."

Directors Norb Witt and Constance Wyatt were not present for last week's vote. However, the board only needed three members for a quorum.

The board accepted the district's plans for the park in general, but removed a dog park element to leave open space as the district awaits word from the county on potential zoning.

Consultants will now begin putting together design criteria and county permit requests will be submitted. District general manager Wayne Lowery was unsure whether the park needed to be approved by The Promontory's Architectural Review Committee.

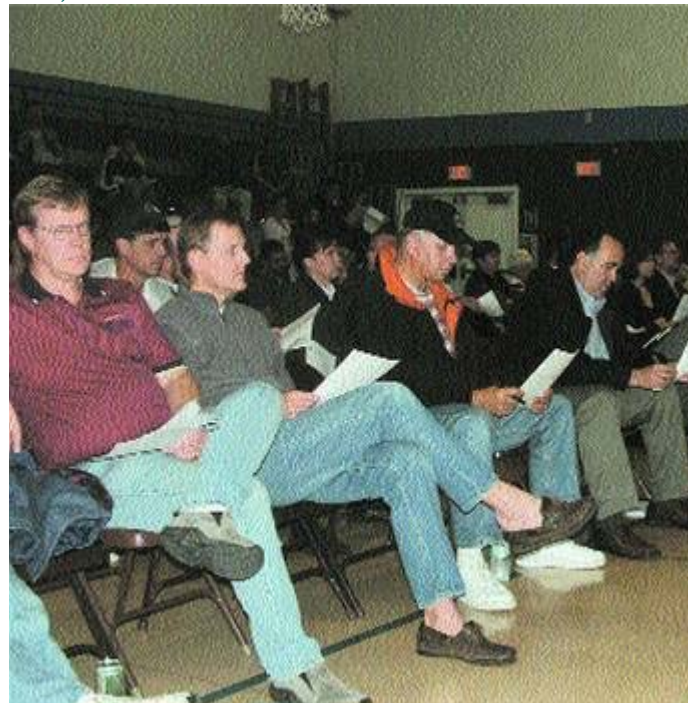
Finding funding options are another problem the district will need to resolve before moving forward. The district has budgeted a little over \$2 million for Promontory Park, but early estimates to build the park are in the \$5 million to \$6 million-dollar range, Lowery said.

"Maybe we will have to build the park in phases, but we'll see," Lowery said.

How the district chooses to fund the project could potentially delay other, similar projects now in the planning stages, he said.

The park has been the subject of an intense public battle between sports groups and Promontory residents since the district unveiled their first plans last July. Opponents to the design were quick to negotiate more neighborhood park facilities in the design, but have resisted any plans for high-reaching light towers planned for three fields at the site.

That resistance has led to retaining attorney Michael Thomas and the promise of a lawsuit when the park passed. Attempts to reach Thomas were unsuccessful before press time.



El Dorado Hills residents packed one half of the CSD gym for one of the most anticipated district board meetings in recent history. Photo by Matthew Self, The Telegraph .