

ITEM	12
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	19
COUNCIL MEETING	1982 03 22

RE: REQUEST BY THE BURNABY TENNIS CLUB TO INSTALL AN AIR-SUPPORT
STRUCTURE FOR SIX MONTHS EACH YEAR AT THE BURNABY LAKE SPORTS
COMPLEX FOR THE PURPOSE OF INDOOR WINTER TENNIS PLAY

The Municipal Manager has prepared a separate report on this matter, and it is recommended that this report be considered at the same time as Item 11 is considered.

MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT this report item be considered when Item 11 is considered.

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1982 MARCH 10

TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER

FROM: DIRECTOR RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

RE: REQUEST BY THE BURNABY TENNIS CLUB TO INSTALL AN AIR SUPPORT
STRUCTURE FOR SIX MONTHS EACH YEAR AT THE BURNABY LAKE
SPORTS COMPLEX FOR THE PURPOSE OF INDOOR WINTER TENNIS PLAY

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Council approve the concept of the installation of an air support structure for six months each year by the Burnaby Tennis Club at the Burnaby Lake Sports Complex.
2. THAT the Burnaby Tennis Club be advised that final approval for the installation will be subject to the acceptance of a detailed presentation including such items as structure colour, landscaping, and public accessibility, plus the following conditions:-
 - a) THAT the project be dependent on the capability of the Club to finance 100% of the air support structure purchase, initial installation and operation.
 - b) THAT the Club pay all costs beyond the cost of constructing the approved six lighted outdoor courts, estimated at \$130,000.
 - c) THAT the Club be responsible for the annual costs associated with the operation, assembly, disassembly and storage of the structure and also for the annual application for a building permit under the Building By-law.
 - d) THAT the terms of the installation, operation and use of the facility be executed in the form of a written legal agreement.

SUMMARY:

The Burnaby Tennis Club has requested permission to install at the Burnaby Lake Sports Complex an air support structure for six months each year over six new tennis courts to be constructed by the Parks and Recreation Commission from its 1981 capital budget. The details of the proposal by the Club are summarized on Attachment No:1.

The Commission debated this matter in some depth during two meetings, heard two delegations, and in particular, considered the implications of aesthetic perceptions versus service to the community. Resulting from these considerations, the Commission approved the Club's request which is now submitted for Council's consideration and approval.

REPORT:

Approval of the concept:

Approval of the concept is requested because the preparation of a detailed presentation requires a heavy investment in time and money. If Council grants such approval, final authority will depend upon a further submission which outlines details of cost, construction, landscaping, usage, public access, the specific product that is proposed for installation, the financing arrangements that the Club needs to meet its obligations and any other pertinent details.

Not a substitute for a traditional rigid building:

It is emphasized that the structure is not a substitute for and therefore not in competition with the alternative of constructing a permanent building in a traditional architectural style.

The Club wishes to offer the alternative of outdoor play for six months and indoor play for six months of the year. It does not wish to be confined to a building year round. There is no known alternative method of meeting this objective other than the air support structure.

The structure should not therefore be considered as temporary, but as a specific facility serving a pre-defined purpose. Having said that, approval does not mean approval for all time. The Club is asking for a ten year agreement to enable repayment of the capital cost. Should the presence of the structure within the community for that period of time engender sufficient public opposition, then no further extensions to the agreement need be granted.

Terms of the proposed legal agreement:

Legally, the Corporation can grant only a five year occupancy. However, if this request is approved, the Club will also ask for a commitment by Council to later extend the five years to a period compatible with repaying their capital costs. This is now tentatively set at ten years.

A commitment by Council to consider such an extension would not be binding on future Councils, but would be a strong indication of the way in which the Corporation intends to act. The present Tennis Club house was built under a similar arrangement.

Controls under the Building Code:

It is understood that annually, before the building is erected or taken down, the Club will have to apply for a building permit which would be considered by the Chief Building Inspector under the building code as it applies to air support structures in the year of the application. If building code regulations change, the permit would be subject to any new regulations applicable in that current year.

A comment on aesthetics:

The prime objection to the installation of an air support structure appears to be one of aesthetics in as much as:-

a) Its presence offends an individual viewer

b) Its presence indicates a lack of quality of construction in the community in which it is constructed.

On the question of personal perception, acceptance or offence lies entirely within the eye of the viewer. For some reasons, some people find such structures personally offensive.

A viewer in a decision making capacity, who finds them offensive, must therefore decide to what extent this personal view should influence the provision of a useful community facility which cannot be achieved in another manner.

On the question of community standards, it is agreed that Burnaby's standards of building construction and general civic aesthetics are second to none. The Parks and Recreation Commission feels that to some extent, it has contributed to this situation. Few people would argue that a well designed and constructed cedar building does not have advantages over an air support structure. However, the argument being presented here is that such a well designed and constructed cedar building is not a viable alternative to the proposal being made. Given that situation, care should be exercised that pride in the aesthetics of one's community does not extend beyond the point of diminishing returns in as much as it precludes for the people of that community certain desirable opportunities.

People who are not comfortable in building to Burnaby standards can of course be requested to build elsewhere. However, when people already reside in Burnaby and wish to extend their opportunities, the rules should be flexible enough to allow them to do so if the only alternative is to withhold from our community an opportunity for the enrichment of life which is being provided elsewhere. It is suggested that the aesthetics of a six months per year air support structure are such that consideration should be given to applying such flexibility. This is not an argument for abandonment of all standards, but rather that air support structures of this type can fall within acceptable standards.

Recognizing that there may be varying concerns re aesthetics, if Council provides an approval for the concept, the staff would accept such approval as a mandate to commence negotiations with the Club on the details of their proposal including aesthetics. Any negotiated agreement would be brought forward for Commission and Council consideration and approval.

Desirability of air support structures in Burnaby:

In 1977 Council decided against a year round air support structure at the Cameron Library and Recreation Centre. Since that time, Planning and Recreation and Cultural staff have reported to the Commission stating in summary that it was considered appropriate to experiment with part year structures in Burnaby, that some broad guidelines could be established and that certain sites (e.g. Riverway Sports Complex) had already found favour with some staff. The Commission declined the guidelines as being too restrictive and agreed to deal with each application on its own merits. It would appear therefore that the main debatable point in this application is one of location, namely, the Burnaby Lake Sports Complex.

The arguments in favour of the site are, it is central, it serves all of Burnaby, it is equally accessible to all residents, it has an existing tennis fieldhouse, it has general use washrooms, changerooms and concession, it has existing lighted courts and it already serves as a general tennis centre.

Advantages to the Community:

The following advantages accrue from the favourable consideration of this request.

a) INVOLVEMENT OF TAXPAYERS AND INITIATIVE FROM THE COMMUNITY:

The proposal involves taxpaying residents of the Municipality. This raises the interest and awareness of taxpayers in the activities of the Corporation and tends to provide a sense of community pride in the achievement of mutually accepted goals.

It is not a project being imposed by Council, Commission or staff. It is an initiative of a specific section of the community expressing a wish to provide additional opportunities in Burnaby for citizen participation in what is a universally accepted activity.

a) Cont'd..

This 'cut and thrust' of citizen participation follows excellent precedents, such as the Burnaby Art Gallery Association, the Lochdale and Capitol Hill Community Hall Associations, the Century Park Museum Association, the Burnaby Arts Council and the Burnaby Rugby Committee.

b) THE REPUTATION OF THE BURNABY TENNIS CLUB:

The body acting as spokesman for this particular initiative is the Burnaby Tennis Club which has an excellent reputation for achievement. The Club ranks high on that list of community groups such as soccer, elder's, and generalist organizations that have helped Burnaby to become a better place to live because of their endeavors.

The Club is responsible for the tennis club building, the tennis court lighting, and annual competition opportunities and training and participation opportunities for all ages in the tennis activity. Council support of the current project will encourage further self help by this and other organizations.

c) CAPITAL FUNDING:

Current fiscal restraints are causing Council and Commission to reduce capital spending. The immediate future does not look any brighter. Here, we have a citizens group which will provide total capital funding for an additional facility which we have every reason to believe will be well used.

More initiatives of this kind from citizen groups would help Council to provide a more balanced program for the taxpayers in these tough economic times.

d) OPERATING AND STAFF COSTS:

Council and Commission are also reducing operating budgets this year with resulting reductions in programs over a wide spectrum. The Club is proposing to fully cover all operating costs over the new facility's life time. It will not be necessary for Council to provide either operating funds or additional staff as is the normal practice when a new recreation facility is opened.

e) BURNABY'S TENNIS CENTRE:

For many years, the Commission has had a long range objective to turn the Burnaby Lake facility into a 'Tennis Centre' for Burnaby. The Club has assisted greatly in moving towards this objective. The centre is recognized as one of the best in the Lower Mainland and would have been the location for a recent international event if Canada had been successful in winning the hosting bid. This realization of the slow accumulation of the components for a tennis centre means better and differing levels of service to the taxpayers for this activity. The Commission aspires to this objective for all its functions but the span of activities and priorities mean that we move slowly. The construction of 6 extra courts will be the first Commission funded tennis addition for several years at the Sports Complex. The installation of a part year air support structure by the Club will help to further the 'Tennis Centre'.

ITEM	12
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	19
COUNCIL MEETING	1982 03 22

f) BETTER USE OF EXISTING FACILITIES:

An objective which the Commission keeps in mind at all times is to find ways and means of making better use of existing facilities at the lowest possible outlay. This is one such opportunity because tennis courts in which the Corporation has an investment and which sit idle throughout the rainy winter months would now be fully utilized. There will still be outdoor courts available for those days in the winter when outdoor play is comfortable.

We will thus provide for our citizens an environment wherein outdoor play (summer) and indoor and outdoor play (winter) can take place within easy reach of club room facilities and public washrooms, changerooms and concession facilities.

g) MEETING OF OTHER COMMISSION OBJECTIVES:

The structure will also help to meet the following Commission objectives:

- Encouragement of a life time activity
- Encouragement of a physical activity (fitness)
- Encouragement of a family activity

h) ACCESS TO ALL CITIZENS:

The proposal will allow average Burnaby families of modest means access to a facility at an affordable price. These activities have previously been available only to a privileged, higher income group. Access is proposed to be either through individual or family subscription to the club or through direct pay-as-you-go public participation. Some comparative fee schedules are shown in Attachment No:2 to emphasize this point.

i) LANDSCAPE DETAILS:

At the Council meeting of 1982 March 15, a drawing will be displayed which illustrates the perceived impact of the structure in the context of the Burnaby Lake Sports Complex.

It demonstrates the 'bulk' of the structure within the Burnaby Lake setting and shows its relationship to existing buildings and structures. It demonstrates potential landscaping without depicting detail. Such detail would be provided in the second stage of this process, should Council see fit to provide approval of the concept.

In reviewing the drawing, Council should keep in mind that later a number of landscaping alternatives could also be explored such as:-

- i) Consideration of lowering the courts and the structure 2 to 3 feet into the ground to reduce the visible impact.
- ii) There is 50 feet of landscape between Kensington Avenue and the proposed structure which together with the sides of the structure could hold a 3 to 4 foot berm thus gaining additional height coverage.
- iii) The structure will be surrounded by a 10 foot fence in the same way as the existing tennis courts.

ITEM 12
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 19
COUNCIL MEETING 1982 03 22

- 6 -

178

i) Cont'd..

- iv) A predominantly evergreen planting of 18 to 20 foot specimens could be introduced on to the berm around the structure. This would provide a much more intensive screening effect than is demonstrated on the drawing.

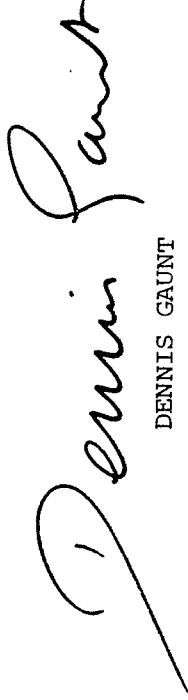
It is believed that the environment around the structure can be made most pleasing in a landscape sense, thus hopefully mitigating to some extent, the negative impact which some people experience from viewing an air support structure.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion recognizing that:

- the aesthetics of the situation are in the eye of the beholder,
- everything possible should be done to make the structure as attractive as possible,
- the structure is of a part year nature only with an identifiable life,
- the service to be provided to the community is of a very high order,

Council is requested to consider favourably the request of the Burnaby Tennis Club.


DENNIS GAUNT

C.C.
Director Planning & Building Inspection
Municipal Treasurer
Municipal Solicitor

Attach.
DG:hh

ITEM 12
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 19
COUNCIL MEETING 1982 03 22

ATTACHMENT NO:1

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE POINTS MADE BY THE BURNABY TENNIS CLUB TO THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION IN APPLYING FOR PERMISSION TO INSTALL A SIX MONTHS PER YEAR AIR SUPPORT STRUCTURE AT THE BURNABY LAKE SPORTS COMPLEX FOR THE PURPOSE OF WINTER TENNIS PLAY

Current Information:

1. The Club was incorporated in 1967.
2. Current membership is 425 Burnaby citizens and 75 non Burnaby still active from the days of earlier "residence" regulations.
3. The Club constructed the existing tennis club house and contributed substantially to the installation of tennis court lighting.
4. The Club hosts local and regional tennis events and provides a wide variety of tennis opportunities to all age groups in Burnaby.

Request:

1. That the Club be permitted to install an air support structure over the six new courts to be constructed by the Commission.
2. The structure would be put in place for the six winter months of each year. The Club does not wish to acquire a year round covered structure.
3. The Club would undertake to cover the entire capital cost presently estimated at \$250,000 and the annual operating costs estimated at \$90,000 per annum.
4. The Club would require a ten year agreement in order to allow sufficient time to repay capital costs.
5. The Club would stress the advantages of a year round facility for Burnaby including particularly youth involvement and development.
6. The structure would be supported by 400 members annually which could go as high as 600 members. Tentative costs which would have to be firmed up later on as more precise figures were available would be as follows:-

Annual charge (for six months) - \$125 per member
Hourly charge - \$7 per court hour

7. A commitment would be made to open the facility to direct pay-as-you-go public use.
8. It is estimated that the structure would be utilized at least 70% of the available time. Approximately 35% by members and 35% by general public.
9. Membership would first be drawn from interested Burnaby residents and only extended beyond Burnaby boundaries if places were still available after that need had been met.
10. If the Club can receive approval of the concept, then a further more detailed presentation would be made prior to final approval.

ITEM
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.
COUNCIL MEETING 1982 03 22

12

19

22

180

COMPARISON OF FEE SCHEDULES BETWEEN LOWER MAINLAND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING SIX MONTHS PER YEAR AIR SUPPORT STRUCTURES FOR WINTER TENNIS PLAY, PLUS COMPARISONS WITH THREE PERMANENT STRUCTURES

	Length of air support playing year	Initiation fee (single)	Annual Fee (single)	Court Rental per court per hour, average of prime/non prime	Direct Public access pay-as-you-go
<u>PUBLIC AIR SUPPORT</u>					
Burnaby Tennis Club	6 months	None	\$125.00	\$7.00	Yes - \$7.00
Richmond Tennis Club	6 months	\$ 200.00	\$150.00	None	None
West Vancouver Tennis Club	6 months	\$ 250.00	\$ 75.00	\$5.00	None
<u>PRIVATE AIR SUPPORT</u>					
Western Indoor Tennis	6 months	\$ 500.00	\$252.00	\$7.00	None
Jericho Tennis Club	6 months	\$1,250.00	\$380.00	None	None
Vancouver Lawn Tennis Club	6 months	\$4,300.00	\$526.00	None	None
<u>PUBLIC PERMANENT BUILDINGS (12 months)</u>					
Cameron Recreation Centre	N/A	None	\$5.00	\$6.50	Yes - \$6.50
<u>PRIVATE PERMANENT BUILDINGS (12 months)</u>					
Burnaby Racquets Club	N/A	\$ 350.00	\$480.00	\$5.00	None
Blue Mountain Racquet Centre	N/A	\$ 600.00	\$228.00	\$7.50	None