

Fox Hill Neighborhood Center

Community Engagement Report

Community Development Department

March 1, 2017

HAMPTON VA
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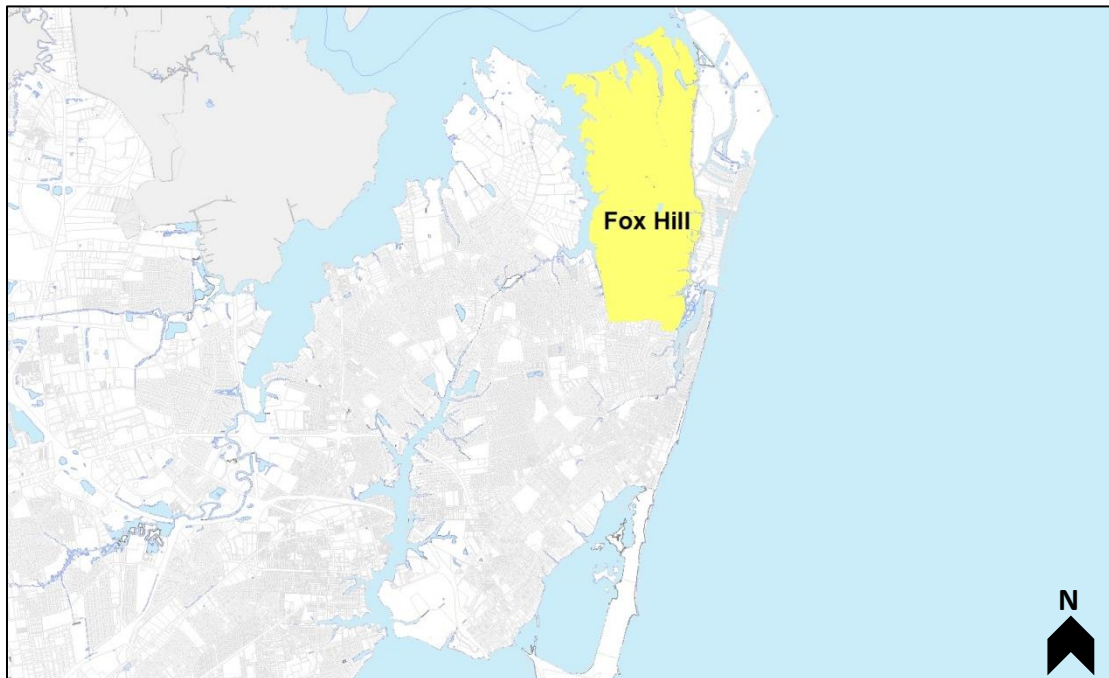
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BACKGROUND

The city is planning to replace a recreation center in Fox Hill destroyed by a tornado in 2014. The new center could be about 18,000 square feet and include a commercial kitchen, classroom space, multi-purpose room with partition walls to divide room(s), and a multi-purpose gym, although final plans are not yet set. The Hampton City Council has set aside \$3.5 million to construct a new neighborhood center in Fox Hill.

The preferred location of the new center is in Fox Hill Proper because the old center on Grundland Drive was located in Fox Hill Proper. Fox Hill Proper is considered to be the area north and east of Bloxom's Corner. This is essentially from the Fox Hill neighborhood sign (intersection of Silver Isles Boulevard and Beach Road) to the water. The southern boundary of Fox Hill is debatable, but for planning purposes the City has always used the Salt Ponds creek as the southern boundary separating Buckroe from Fox Hill. Figure A is a map of Fox Hill proper.

Figure A: Fox Hill Proper



The southern boundary is Bloxom's Corner, extending east to Silver Isles Boulevard and Salt Ponds Neighborhood, and north to Grundland Drive, excluding Grandview Nature Preserve.

Land use analyses of sixteen sites were conducted to determine the suitability of constructing a neighborhood center. The site analysis criteria used include the following:

- 1) Location: In Fox Hill proper or close proximity (0.5 mile)
- 2) Existing infrastructure to include water, sewer, sidewalks, and the like.
- 3) Environmental conditions: such as how the natural resources may be impacted by development of a site. For example, the presence of wetlands can have an impact on the buildable area of a site.
- 4) Size: the acreage needed to accommodate the facility and the associated parking, and building setback requirements is approximately 2 acres. The building needs to be at least 18,000 SF, with about 100 parking spaces.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Section 1: April 2016 – Community Input

In April 2016, a community meeting occurred at Asbury Elementary School. At that meeting, citizens identified a commercial kitchen, classroom space, multi-purpose room with partition walls to divide room(s), and a multi-purpose gym for cheerleading/dance room with mirrors, and a weight room area as their top building amenity requests. An on-line survey was also provided for those unable to attend the April meeting. The survey gave them an opportunity to identify their top building amenities, as well as indicate how they wanted to contribute to the planning process and governance or operation of the future facility.

Section 2: January 2017- Community Input

A community meeting was held to discuss the Fox Hill Neighborhood Center on Thursday, January 12th at 6:30PM at Asbury School on 14 Beach Road. A total of 57 citizens participated in the polling exercise; however, 47 citizens signed-in at the meeting. Attendees were able to rank their preferred site amongst the top five sites that were deemed most feasible. The preferred sites are listed below:

- Cornerstone Church – 65 Hall Road
- Hampton Soccer Complex – Intersection of Old Buckroe Rd & Andrews Blvd (A portion of an existing field would be used for the center)
- Jones Middle School – 1819 Nickerson Boulevard (Only a portion of the site may be used, the school is not being demolished. Permission from Hampton School Board would be required to use a school-owned site.)
- Gosnold's Hope Park – 901 E Little Back River (front portion of the park)
- Willow Oaks Shopping Center – 223 Fox Hill Road, Suites A & B

Table 1 - Top Site Selected of the 57 Citizen Participants

| SITE | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Cornerstone Church | 72% |
| Gosnold's Hope Park | 10% |
| Jones Middle | 8% |
| Willow Oaks Center | 8% |
| Soccer Complex | 3% |
| | 100% |

**See Section 4: Appendix for more details.*

GENERAL COMMENTS

Comments from the community meeting include the following:

Jones Magnet Middle School

Positive-

- Minimal impact to environment or from flooding
- Co-located
- Relocated with school easy transition for students
- Ample parking and access
- Middle school students need easy access to community center
- Share with Buckroe
- Not within Fox Hill, but that's a positive

Negative-

- Location
- In Buckroe/ not Fox Hill
- Walking trail needs to be replaced

Cornerstone Church

Positive-

- Zero environmental impact
- Parking and access
- Safe for kids to travel
- Best value
- Space
- Cost
- In Fox Hill
- More for your money - add on to existing building and reduce construction cost

Negative-

- Cost to acquire location
- Traffic impact/pattern

- Environmental (taking out trees)
- As long as purchase price doesn't detract from new site too much

Hampton Soccer Complex

Positive-

- Access
- Great central location

Negative-

- Move soccer field to Jones Magnet Middle School
- Not Fox Hill
- Cost to build
- Looking for expansion of soccer complex
- Too much effort went into getting extra fields
- Soccer players will say no
- Best soccer complex in area – makes no sense to take athletic and replace with community center

Willow Oaks Shopping Center

Positive-

- Would remove those blighted buildings off the lot
- Parking and could bring in more business.
- Revitalize shopping center
- Good location
- Bus route/ parking/ shopping
- Revitalize/ retrofitting is a good thing

Negative-

- Only if parking lot would be returned to green space or reuse the west building instead and have acre of green space
- Land owner may not be flexible to terms
- Rent
- Out of Fox Hill
- Too crowded
- No to lease

Gosnold's Hope Park

Positive-

- Beautiful park
- Great outdoor space
- Central location
- Already used by community
- Accessible

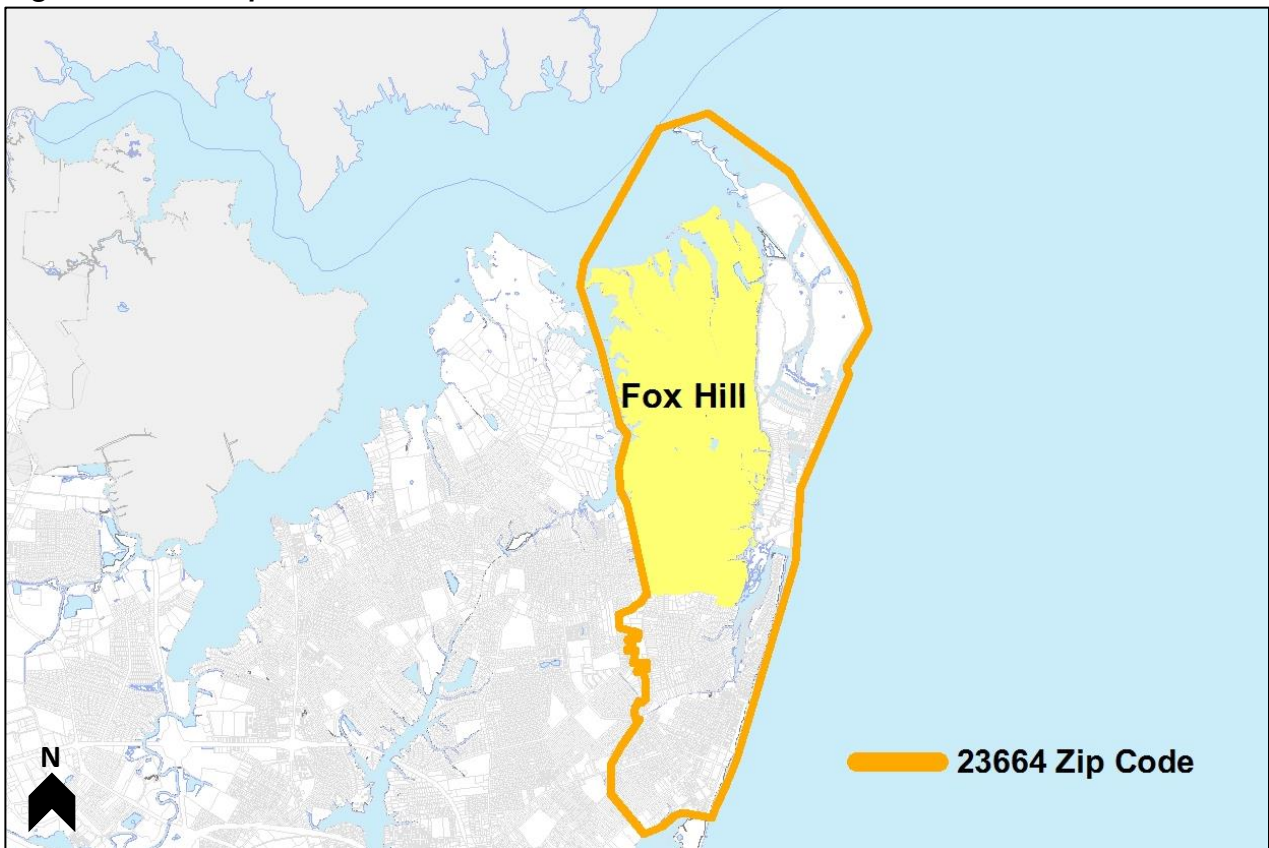
Negative-

- Concerned about flooding for a new building
- Parking
- Not Fox Hill
- Increase in traffic to locals/residents
- Don't want everyone from football games needing to use facilities every Saturday during football season

Section 3: February 2017- Community Input

The Fox Hill Neighborhood Center On-line Survey was made available on the City of Hampton's website from February 1, 2017-February 17, 2017. In total there were 533 survey responses from this survey. Of the 533 survey responses received city-wide, 219 of the respondents are residents that live within the 23664 zip code. The 23664 zip code represent: Fox Hill, Buckroe, Colonial Acres, Salt Ponds, and Southall Landing neighborhoods (Figure B: 23664 Zip Code Boundary). Table 2 is a more representative sample of Fox Hill residents. Cornerstone Church is the preferred site, representing 72% of the votes from residents who live within the 23664 zip code.

Figure B: 23664 Zip Code Boundaries



The 23664 zip code boundary encompasses: Fox Hill, Buckroe, Colonial Acres, Salt Ponds, and Southall Landing neighborhoods.

Table 2 - Top Site Selected of 219 Survey Responses (23664 Zip Code)

| SITE | |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| Cornerstone Church | 39% |
| <i>Willow Oaks Shopping Center</i> | 29% |
| <i>Soccer Complex</i> | 14% |
| <i>Gosnold's Hope Park</i> | 13% |
| <i>Jones Middle School</i> | 5% |
| | 100% |

**See Section 4: Appendix for more details.*

There were 77 respondents who completed the comment section of the survey that live within the 23664 zip code. These comments are summarized below, organized based on the following themes: location, traffic/parking, and other.

LOCATION

Willow Oaks

- Community Center great at Willow Oaks, instead of the derelict buildings.
- Retail options in Fox Hill are insufficient and need an anchoring facility. There are plenty of vacant storefronts and parking. High vacancy will lead to further disrepair.
- Do not construct center at this location because it will deter shoppers.
- Willow Oaks makes sense because it's close to Fox Hill. Not overly affiliated with one group/association.
- Would like to see this shopping center have a new amenity and it's centrally located.
- Significant renovations needed and additional greenspace – not an ideal location.
- Easily accessible and large vacant buildings and parking lots make it suitable for basketball courts.
- Willows Oaks Shopping Center has an existing library. Locating the center here would add to the community appeal.
- Too far away from Fox Hill.

Cornerstone Church

- This location keeps the center in Fox Hill.
- Putting the center at this location will assume a specific affiliation.
- Ideal location
- Only choice in Fox Hill Proper, already partially developed. Only minimum changes to infrastructure, utilities already in place, central to most of Fox Hill, and room to add athletic facilities.

- Best location since none of the other sites is within Fox Hill.
- All other options have a community center or recreational amenities close by.
- Cornerstone location would be in many individuals' backyards and all of the other locations are not a concern because they are in more public places.
- Too far off the beaten path to attract most people.

Soccer Complex

- Location makes sense because it's close to Fox Hill.
- Not overly affiliated with one group/association.
- Not a suitable location due to inconsistent sidewalks.
- A neighborhood center next to low-income housing is not a good idea. Complete the soccer park so that it can be used for soccer. Include bathrooms and more sidewalks.
- Losing a portion of a ball field would be unfortunate but it's easily accessible.
- Soccer complex during the season is highly utilized, removing a portion of the field is not beneficial to the users and it has not been completed with all of the promised amenities, e.g. bathrooms, concession stands, etc.
- Diminishing amount of soccer fields in the city is a problem. This is not an appropriate site.

Jones Middle

- Putting the center at this location will assume a specific affiliation.
- Neighborhood center may benefit students at Jones Middle School.
- Not easily accessible for pedestrians.

Gosnold's Hope Park

- Highly utilized, leave it alone. It would be unfortunate to take away the open space and create more traffic.
- May require additional Parks & Recreation staff to accommodate a new center at this location but has existing ball fields.
- Not easily accessible for pedestrians.
- Too far away from Fox Hill.

TRAFFIC/PARKING

Willow Oaks

- Can handle the traffic.
- Easily accessible by HRT.

Cornerstone Church

- Site has access issues with bordering Hall Road and Silver Isles Boulevard.

OTHER

- The site should be centrally located in the heart of Fox Hill. This would allow citizens to use the public bus system or easily walk to the location. Some of the sites listed are deep in the neighborhood and although convenient for me-hard for those that would benefit from a community center. Not to mention, the neighborhood does not need added traffic which brings the quiet community feel away. Keep the community center on the main roadways.
- Football, softball fields for double practice is needed regardless of where the center is located.
- Need an indoor or outdoor walking track similar to Boo Williams facility.
- Youth need a safe place to go and a community center, centrally located in Fox Hill is needed.
- Fox Hill needs a neighborhood center and revitalization of Fox Hill/Willow Oaks Shopping Center.
- It's important to have a neighborhood center with dedicated volunteers to manage daily operations. That exists in the old Fox Hill area and has existed for close to 50 years. The further geographically you move the center from that neighborhood, the more community building you will have to do to ensure its success. Additionally, anything that involves leasing instead of purchasing is short-sighted as there is no identifiable source of future funding for lease payments. Purchasing gives the city an asset. My preferred site is in a location that is easily accessible to many citizens, provides an almost immediate solution to a replacement facility for programs existing in Fox Hill, and allows future growth as well.
- Years ago the former Buckroe Trailer Park and other homes were demolished for a future community center, it never occurred. This is a more centrally located site and will be more accessible for pedestrians and youth.
- The top considerations should be accessibility to public transit so young people can get there. Also, a place where the youth can be loud and rowdy.
- Merrimack Elementary school site is a good location for the center.
- Avoid locations in low lying areas and that are susceptible to flooding/sea level rise.
- City owned properties on the list should be the only sites considered because the other sites will go from taxable properties to non-taxable sites.

Section 4: Appendix

| Data | Online - All Zip Codes | | | | | | Data | Online - 23664 Zip Code | | | | | | Data | In-Person Response | | | | | | |
|-------|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------------------|------|------|------|------|------|----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
| Raw | Jones Middle | 25 | 75 | 141 | 103 | 173 | 517 | Jones Middle | 12 | 28 | 50 | 50 | 73 | 213 | Jones Middle | 3 | 6 | 8 | 12 | 9 | 38 |
| | Cornerstone Church | 138 | 63 | 86 | 82 | 149 | 518 | Cornerstone Church | 88 | 21 | 25 | 22 | 51 | 207 | Cornerstone Church | 28 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 37 |
| | Soccer Complex | 71 | 111 | 113 | 123 | 106 | 524 | Soccer Complex | 32 | 60 | 40 | 31 | 53 | 216 | Soccer Complex | 1 | 9 | 14 | 2 | 12 | 38 |
| | Willow Oaks Center | 220 | 82 | 59 | 62 | 105 | 528 | Willow Oaks Center | 65 | 39 | 35 | 30 | 44 | 213 | Willow Oaks Center | 3 | 6 | 1 | 9 | 22 | 41 |
| | Gosnold's Hope Park | 99 | 144 | 87 | 82 | 110 | 522 | Gosnold's Hope Park | 30 | 43 | 43 | 44 | 56 | 216 | Gosnold's Hope Park | 4 | 5 | 6 | 9 | 14 | 38 |
| | | 553 | 475 | 486 | 452 | 643 | | | 227 | 191 | 193 | 177 | 277 | | | 39 | 31 | 31 | 34 | 57 | |
| Value | Jones Middle | 5% | 16% | 29% | 23% | 27% | | Jones Middle | 5% | 15% | 26% | 28% | 26% | | Jones Middle | 8% | 19% | 26% | 35% | 16% | |
| | Cornerstone Church | 25% | 13% | 18% | 18% | 23% | | Cornerstone Church | 39% | 11% | 13% | 12% | 18% | | Cornerstone Church | 72% | 16% | 6% | 6% | 0% | |
| | Soccer Complex | 13% | 23% | 23% | 27% | 16% | | Soccer Complex | 14% | 31% | 21% | 18% | 19% | | Soccer Complex | 3% | 29% | 45% | 6% | 21% | |
| | Willow Oaks Center | 40% | 17% | 12% | 14% | 16% | | Willow Oaks Center | 29% | 20% | 18% | 17% | 16% | | Willow Oaks Center | 8% | 19% | 3% | 26% | 39% | |
| | Gosnold's Hope Park | 18% | 30% | 18% | 18% | 17% | | Gosnold's Hope Park | 13% | 23% | 22% | 25% | 20% | | Gosnold's Hope Park | 10% | 16% | 19% | 26% | 25% | |
| | | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | | | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | | | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | |