



Wednesday, July 23, 2003

## Scores turn out to talk about Bass Lake Park

By Megan Marshack

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Scores of residents around the proposed Bass Lake Regional Park met Monday night at the Faith Episcopal Church to hear county agency presentations and ask questions.

Moderator David Glazier, an El Dorado Hills resident, said the community had a desire and need for a park, but preferences appeared to be for more day activities as opposed to night, and for a park that would be “geared to youth, not a mega-sports complex.”

He said a survey by the newly formed Bass Lake Action Committee indicated “immediate neighbors” of the proposed park were looking for quiet enjoyment.

Comments from the community residents will be incorporated into the Environmental Impact Review currently underway.

District I Supervisor Rusty Dupray addressed the nearly 300 people assembled saying he was on a “listening tour” while praising the “grass roots organization” that had brought the community to the meeting.

Gary Hyden, the park project coordinator – “a fancy name for landscape architect,” then presented the proposal.

He said as background, in 1992 an interim parks and recreation plan for the county was approved by the Board of Supervisors.

The plan consisted of nine service districts – El Dorado Hills and Cameron Park are district eight.

The plan called for regional parks that were based on 1.5 acres per 1,000 people, he said.

But in the following decade the population doubled.

“We’re falling behind in parkland once again,” Hyden said.

In 2000 through a contractor, Hyden said the county began to refine a wishlist which involves the facilities now proposed.

The park – about 45 acres, Hyden said, borders the north east of Bass Lake.

He waxed enthusiastic about the topography, saying there was a shortage of flat land for proposed ballfields.

He explained the tricky Bass Lake Road would be realigned especially at the proposed intersection of “Old, Old Bass Lake Road and the park entrance.”

As for the surrounding wetlands, home to many species, the planners would keep “hands off – and try to make it a feature.”

As the park developed – planners want to “transition” from a more active park to a more natural area – highlighting, for example, stands of oak trees.

Hyden said the plan could rival the Effie Yaw Nature Center.

He said a Bass Lake Regional Park could be a “crown jewel” tying into El Dorado Hills.

“We want to take on what we can handle a bit of a time,” Hyden said.

Initially, the planners are proposing the installation of an entry road, one ball field, one soccer field, one playground and toddler area, one restroom facility, approximately 60 to 90 parking spaces, picnic tables, walkways, lighting, fencing landscaping and a maintenance area.

Subsequent phases would include the addition of open turf areas, more ballfields and playgrounds, additional restrooms, basketball courts, a nine-“hole” disc golf course, a dog park, nature interpretive area, community meeting hall and concession building.

In a telephone interview Glazier said residents’ questions lasted past the meeting cutoff time of 9 p.m.

There were concerns about how children could get to the park from their homes -- highlighting concerns about Bass Lake Road.

Lighting was a big issue, he said, and setting curfews if the park was illuminated at night. Residents also questioned how the park would be patrolled and what to do about security.

Planners estimate the park will cost between \$3 million to \$5 million – and because of the county budget crises – the park would be built in stages.

A county workshop for the public is scheduled for Aug. 11 at 7 p.m. at the Board of Supervisors chambers in Placerville.