

Jeff LeRiche
7/19/23

Ruth Klein

From: Jeff LeRiche <jeff@nwnationsbaseball.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 19, 2023 1:40 PM
To: Ruth Klein
Subject: Conditional Use-003-23: Hillsboro Hops Ballpark:
Attachments: Conditional Use-003-23 Hillsboro Hops Ballpark-NW Nations Baseball.pdf

Hi Ruth,

I would like to submit the attached for the Planning and Zoning Hearing Board Meeting this evening (July 19, 2023).

Thanks,

Jeff LeRiche

NW Nations
Director
Oregon/ Washington/ Idaho/ Montana

Office (Land line): 503-352-5315
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File Number: CU-003-23

Proposed Project Name: Hillsboro Hops Ballpark

Item 3. Approving the CU would meet some public need or convenience.

The Hillsboro Hops baseball team provides several benefits to the people of Hillsboro.

- a. Events at the ballpark provide a necessary recreational outlet for the community and beyond.**
- b. Events at the ballpark bring in tourism dollars for businesses in the City of Hillsboro**
- c. The operation of the stadium provides hundreds of employment opportunities to the local workforce.**
- d. The improved facility will provide better training for Athletes to gain skills more effectively, and therefore improve performance on the field. The baseball team's success generates a source of pride in the community.**
- e. The improved facility will provide more opportunity for local businesses to utilize the ballpark for meetings or events.**
- f. The Hops Food & Beverage program plans to expand opportunities for local food vendors to operate within the ballpark, enhancing exposure and spurring growth for those businesses.**

The Hillsboro Hops baseball team does not provide a necessary recreation outlet for the community. A small sector of the population attends Hillsboro Hops baseball games. The economic impact benefits of Hillsboro Hops baseball games for surrounding businesses are substantially less than the youth baseball and softball tournaments that will be displaced by this project. The City of Hillsboro has conducted no study or asked for any information or study regarding the youth baseball and softball tournaments that utilize the current fields at the GFRC.

No data exists to support the claim that a new stadium will result in improved performance by players on the field. The nature of minor league baseball is such that if a player does excel on the field, the player will be promoted to a higher class of minor league baseball. Having the use of fields to recreate on, which will be lost if this project advances, is a source of pride for the community.

Has any data been provided as to how many people are employed by the Hillsboro Hops for operation of the current stadium and what the wage scale is for these positions? Has this data been compared to the loss of hours or city jobs due to displaced events caused by the proposed destruction of the current baseball/softball fields at the GFRC?

Who will set the rental rates and criteria for local businesses to utilize the proposed ballpark for meetings or events? Will local businesses be able to do so at a reasonable or reduced rate to generate economic impact which will support other local businesses?

Item 4. The characteristics of the site are suitable for the proposed conditional use.

As part of the Gordon Faber Recreational Complex, the proposed use fits perfectly into the existing context and surrounding uses. The use is consistent with what is already in place within the GFRC. People gather at the GFRC to play and watch a variety of sporting events including football, baseball and softball. The new stadium will add another professional level facility to the GFRC. Existing access, both pedestrian and vehicular transportation, will remain the same. The perimeter topography will also remain the same, as the design goals are to impact the surrounding parking lot and access driveways as little as possible. The City recognizes the value of the existing softball fields that will be removed for the new ballpark and is currently working on the plan to replace the fields elsewhere in the City. It is anticipated that the City will determine the location(s) and timing to construct the replacement fields later this summer.

This description of the GFRC is taken from the City of Hillsboro website: The Gordon Faber Recreation Complex is a destination location for sporting events and numerous community activities. The complex is a unique facility that serves the community in many ways including use by residents for softball, soccer, football, baseball, and lacrosse, spectator opportunities in sporting events, special events, and community and corporate activities. The Complex also hosts events and tournaments that attract spectators and participants from the region and throughout the country. While the city may value the existing softball/baseball fields that will be removed they have not determined the location(s) of or the timing of when replacement fields may be constructed.

Item 5. The proposed CU will not change the character of the surrounding area in a way which limits or precludes use of the surrounding properties consistent with the provisions of the underlying zone. As part of the Gordon Faber Recreational Complex, the proposed use fits well into the existing context and surrounding uses. It will not limit or preclude use of surrounding properties, as the operational lighting, sound from ballgames and events, vehicular and pedestrian access will remain the same, and in kind with the existing uses on site.

The GFRC is now unique in that it has six natural grass softball/baseball fields, along with two artificial turf fields in one location that can accommodate regional and national youth softball and baseball events. The GFRC is a regional draw due to the number of fields at one location that creates a festive tournament atmosphere for youth softball and baseball events. Removing existing softball/baseball fields from the GFRC and adding new fields at a different location may allow the same number of games to be played, but the GFRC will no longer be unique in the region as a facility that is able to accommodate large youth softball/baseball tournaments all at one location. The Hillsboro Hops have not been supportive of youth baseball or softball tournaments since they arrived in Hillsboro and the expectation is that they will continue to not be supportive in the future.

The proposed new baseball stadium does disrupt the current use as it removes three softball/baseball fields from the GFRC and eliminates the GFRC as a regional softball/baseball tournament destination and it also impacts Hillsboro Parks recreation softball leagues and other city recreational programming and uses.

Item 7. The proposed CU satisfies any applicable goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

The proposed use satisfies several goals in the Comprehensive Plan

a. Public Involvement Goal 2: Inclusion

The Hillsboro Hops already do a great job to prioritize community outreach and especially to diverse populations within the City of Hillsboro. They host a variety of events every year intent on increasing engagement with underserved groups. They also focus resources to promote, foster and support education, health, culture and youth activities, including activities for underprivileged youth, in the Greater Hillsboro area. The proposed project will allow more opportunities and space for these types of events to occur.

b. Design & Development Goal 1: Places

Policy D 1.4 Preserve Compatibility is met since the new use is essentially extending what is already on site. It matches the expectation of the community who is already coming to the site for ballgames and other community events. The proposed use will contribute to policy D1.9 for flexibility. This facility will be innovatively designed with a variety of uses in mind to accommodate not just baseball, but different types of events such as concerts or festivals at the Gordon Faber Recreational Complex. These events are already happening within the GFRC, but the new facility will provide accommodations to make hosting events easier.

c. Design & Development Goal 4: Public Realm

Policy D 4.1 Activate the Public Realm applies in this program in sports and outdoor community events. This project will enhance the lives and well-being of the community in providing spaces for community members to enjoy. A plaza is being planned outboard of the security gates that can be used by anyone on non-game days, and will serve as a welcoming gesture to all who enter the GFRC via Century Blvd, gate A.

A new stadium does not add anything to the GFRC or the City of Hillsboro that is not already there. Concerts and other events could take place in the current stadiums. If anything, a new stadium subtracts from the potential uses as established events will need to find new host locations. Parking is not currently sufficient for an event that runs concurrent with a Hops baseball game and will be even less so if the Hops were to draw more baseball fans or concert goers with a larger stadium, eliminating the use of the remaining fields during these events.

d. Parks & Recreation Goal 1: Opportunities

The project directly addresses policy PR1.3 Recreational Opportunities Growth. The new Hillsboro Hops Ballpark dramatically expands the capability of the site to host events and will provide increased opportunities for community events and recreation at the Gordon Faber Recreation Complex. Policy PR1.8 Partnerships is met as the Hops intend to continue the existing and ongoing collaborations with the City of Hillsboro, Hillsboro Parks and Recreation, business and community groups, and will be able to build new partnerships with the enhanced ability to host indoor meetings and events in addition to outdoor events.

As the owner of a local business that organizes large youth baseball tournaments that serve local teams as well as out of area teams, I will be relocating my established events that have taken place at the GFRC for over fifteen years if the proposed stadium is built due to the loss of the three baseball/softball fields. Which will result in the loss of \$1,000,000 dollars a year in economic impact in the area.

The Hillsboro Hops games do not generate near what youth baseball and softball tournaments do in hotel stays or spending at local restaurants and stores.

I am one of several tournament organizers that will relocate our events if the three baseball/softball fields are eliminated at the GFRC. The loss of economic impact is estimated to be five million dollars annually.

Sincerely,

Jeff LeRiche

Owner- NW Nations Tournament Baseball

Office (Land line): 503-352-5315

Cell/Text: 503-806-0319

www.nwnationsbaseball.com

Matt Rabe
7/19/23

From: [Matt Rabe](#)
To: [Ruth Klein](#)
Subject: Conditional Use-003-23: Hillsboro Hops Ballpark
Date: Wednesday, July 19, 2023 9:50:33 AM

The Conditional Use Permit ("Conditional Use-003-23: Hillsboro Hops Ballpark") for the proposed new Hillsboro Hops ball field should be denied. That is not to say the project is bad or doesn't have a future value to the city, but currently there are too many uncertainties and unanswered questions that MUST be addressed before further approvals are provided.

Uncertainties:

- Funding. Has the Hillsboro Hops secured the needed funding to cover its portion of the construction project? What happens if they begin construction, but cannot finish?
- MLB expansion. Recent media coverage suggests Portland is in a very good place to be awarded an expansion team. What happens to the Hillsboro Hops with that expansion? From what I read, the Hops may be forced to leave town.

Unanswered Questions:

- Ball Fields. Three established and well-used community recreation ball fields will be removed to make way for the new stadium. While the City has developed preliminary designs, there is no approved plan or funding to replace these City facilities. When will these be finalized and approved? Will there be a loss of use (even temporary) to the public during the construction period? What zoning requirements will new facilities be subject to?
- Transportation. The public has been told TriMet will increase service to the Gordon Faber Recreation Complex. Will this be continual or situational? But what about the added road traffic that could result due to an expanded facility?
- Parking. There is no plan to expand parking (frankly, there is no room to do so). What happens when the Hops and other users hold events at the same time? Where is the overflow parking?
- Joint Use. One point the Hops management has made is the City will regain full use of the existing ballfield and one restricted recreation field, and that the City can schedule event to coincide with Hops home games. But will the City be able to actually do that? I refer back to the issues with parking.
- Noise. The open end of the ball field will point toward US-26 and the Rock Creek neighborhood. Have there been any noise studies to learn and know what the potential noise impacts would be?
- Management. The Gordon Faber Recreation Complex is managed by the City of Hillsboro's Parks and Recreation Department, with oversight from the Parks and Recreation Commission. The City bypassed the PRC when it joined the Hops with the partnership in March. How does the PRD plan to manage the complex going forward? Is it prepared to do so? Where does the PRC currently stand on the overall project? Does this project fit within the PRD's current vision or master plan?

Finally, I question whether the City provided the right amount of notice of this hearing. I am sure the City met the "Letter of the Law" in how it noticed and announced this session. HOWEVER, did the City meet the "Spirit of the Law" and go beyond its established requirements to ensure those who have voiced an interest in the project had adequate awareness and ability to prepare. I don't feel the City met this obligation.

To be clear, I like the Hillsboro Hops. I attend several games a year, and have for the past decade when they chose to come to our community. But this community is bigger than the Hops. And the City's obligation to her citizens extends beyond this one company.

In closing, this project is not ready-enough for approval. The City should provide no further approvals to the Hops until the above issues are fully addressed.

Matt Rabe

1540 NE 54th Ave, Hillsboro, 97124

mrabe.pdx@gmail.com

Denise Caire
719123

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Petition details Comments Updates



Community

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Gordon Faber Recreation Complex



Preserve Public Baseball Diamonds and Prioritize Community Input

Started

July 18, 2023

23

Signatures

25

Next Goal

Gaining momentum

[Sign this petition](#)

Why this petition matters



Started by [denise caire](#)

As a concerned resident of Hillsboro, Oregon, I am deeply troubled by the City's decision to proceed with building the new Hops stadium without seeking public input. This decision directly affects the future of three existing baseball diamonds at Gordon Faber complex, which are currently managed by the Parks and Recreation district for Portland Metro use.

These public fields hold immense value for our community, providing a space for children and adults alike to engage in recreational activities and foster a sense of camaraderie. However, it has come to my attention that Hillsboro plans to "doze" these cherished diamonds in just a few months' time.

This petition is personal to me because I have witnessed firsthand how these baseball diamonds have positively impacted our community. They serve as a gathering place where families come together to cheer on their loved ones, where friendships are forged through shared passion for sportsmanship, and where dreams take flight on those hallowed grounds.

It is disheartening that such an important decision was made without considering the impact it will have on our children who will lose access to these fields. We believe that any major changes or developments within our city should be subject to public scrutiny and approval before proceeding further.

To ensure transparency and accountability in this process, we urge the City of Hillsboro to require a public vote before initiating any construction or demolition related to building the new Hops stadium. By involving all stakeholders in this decision-making process, we can collectively determine how best to balance progress with preserving vital community assets.

We call upon Mayor Steve Callaway and members of the Hillsboro City Council to listen attentively not only to their constituents but also consider alternative solutions that would allow us all – residents young and old – continued access to these beloved baseball diamonds.

Let us work together towards finding an equitable compromise that upholds both progress and community values. Sign this petition to demand that the public vote be a prerequisite before any further action is taken to "doze" the three existing public baseball diamonds at


Gordon Faber complex.

Together, we can ensure that our voices are heard and our community's interests are protected. Let us preserve these treasured spaces for future generations, fostering a sense of unity and pride in Hillsboro.

Sources:

- Hillsboro Parks & Recreation District: www.hillsboro-oregon.gov/departments/parks-recreation

- City of Hillsboro Official Website: www.hillsboro-oregon.gov

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Updates

10 supporters

5 hours ago

denise caire started this petition


16 hours ago

Reasons for signing



Dirk Knudsen · 5 hours ago

Because Denise is RIGHT! <http://hillsboroherald.com/hillsboro-hops-stadium-approval-on-tap-wednesday-night/>

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Denise Caire
7/19/23

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Petition details Comments Updates

Petition update

Meeting, Wed., July 19th, to approve the "Conditional Use-003-23: Hillsboro Hops Ballpark" plan

denise caire

Hillsboro, OR, United States



Jul 19, 2023 —

Please, please share this petition through all your social media accounts.

There's a public meeting to approve the "Conditional Use-003-23: Hillsboro Hops Ballpark" plan tomorrow, July 19th at the civic center.

The public notice of the meeting is shown posted above at the Gordon Faber Athletic Complex. That's the only public notice of this critical meeting. It doesn't appear that the City Council wants anyone to be aware of their objectives. Why so secretive?

Per Kirk Knudsen of the Hillsboro Herald:

"There has been a great deal of PR by the City of Hillsboro and the Hillsboro Hops leading up to the public hearing this Wednesday Night, which will be held before the Planning and Zoning Hearings Board at 6:30 PM this Wednesday night.


The PZHB will hear a specific request by the City of Hillsboro, which is the Applicant, and in essence, the City will be asking itself for approval to tear out 3 of our beautiful existing youth and recreational baseball and softball fields and put in a massive 7,000 seat stadium. We have reviewed the application by the City, which seems like it was written by the Hillsboro Hops, and are submitting our comments to the public record."

No public notice was published in the City Views flyer or was sent via electronic transmission of any kind.

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Denise Caire
7/19/23

Q Gordon Fabre



(/profile/01cxwkDph5834mtN2/?is=detail_auth...

Denise Caire (/profile/01cxwkDph5834mtN2) Hillsboro Airport South (/neighborhood/hillsboroairportsouth--hillsboro--or/?source=neighborhood_name) • 4h (/p/fHDrLYb72sYP?view=detail) • 🌐

I voted to build the Gordon Fabre Complex and my tax dollars paid for it. Now the City of Hillsboro wants to "give it away" to the Hops? Without a vote by the people who paid to built it? That's not right. It's flat out wrong.



📊 Post insights

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Denise Caire (/profile/01cxwkDph5834mtN2/?is=detail_commenter) Author • Hillsboro Airport South (/neighborhood/hillsboroairportsouth--hillsboro--or/?source=neighborhood_name)

/01cxwkDph5834mtN2
/?is=feed_commenter)

IF a new arena is built, no other venues can commence concurrently due to parking limitations. The current Tonkin ballpark can seat 3,700, but it will not be available for any other event if the proposed new HOPS arena has an event. The proposed new arena could seat over 7,000 w/ parking.

THAT IS A SERIOUS LIMITATION.

No ballgames could be scheduled in the other ball diamonds at the same time if an event is taking place at the new proposed venue.

BTW, Short Season LLC, a merger in Dec. 2022, is made up of 30 investors who plan to fund the new Hops arena. I do not want the HOPS arena (renovated or new) to be some private investment group's new revenue stream.

Profits should go back into the City's coffers because the original complex was built with public tax dollars. Profits should not go into some investors already-deep pocket.

But, it's public land and the City wants to give full rein to the Hops and their 30 investors? WHO authorized giving away Public land originally paid for with public tax dollars?

What's in it for the City of Hillsboro? Or should I say "who's" in on it on the city council? Who? Who? Who?

Maybe Kyle Iboshi would be interested in finding out what's really going on?



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Denise Caire (/profile/01cxwkDph5834mtN2/?is=detail_commenter) Author • ...

Hillsboro Airport South (/neighborhood/hillsboroairportsouth--hillsboro--
or/?source=neighborhood_name)

PLEASE, Please, please. I need all y'all to sign.

To everyone who reacted to this, will you please sign the petition I started
titled Preserve Public Baseball Diamonds and Prioritize Community Input at:

<https://chng.it/ywbbKr4D4d> (<https://chng.it/ywbbKr4D4d>)

HUGE THANKS!!

Also, please share this on any other social media platform on which you have
an account.

I only do ND. I'm 72, soo ;-) (edited)

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