

Tatlock Community Meeting Minutes

Sunday, April 21, 24 @ Summit Community Center at 4:00pm

Staff:

Mark Ozoroski

David Guida

Council:

Kevin Smallwood

DCP Advisory:

Jenny Winters

Public:

Laurie Rufolo

Emil Rufolo

Christine Gerike

Torsten Gerike

Jocelyn Modesto

Amy Herhold

Wei Du

Teresa Solano

Brian Solano

Debbie Walters

Google Doc Submissions (4/11-4/19)

First, at the 4/11 listening session, while residents discussed the futility of documenting agreements in ordinances given how easily ordinances can be changed, I mentioned that I believe that in fact there is currently an ordinance in place that prevents such tall lights from being put up and DCP and the council member stated that they were not aware of the ordinance. The ordinance can be found here in Part M, titled "Lighting:"

<https://ecode360.com/36969227#:~:text=The%20maximum%20height%20of%20all,otherwise%20be%20required%20by%20law>

. It states: "Purpose. Regulation of outdoor lighting and recreational/sports facility lighting is necessary to prevent the cause of unnecessary sky glow, to prevent light trespass and to reduce unnecessary glare caused by inappropriate or misaligned light fixtures and/or the inappropriate location of light poles. These standards are intended to save energy and reduce costs and to preserve and protect adjacent properties from negative lighting impacts. 2. Requirements. All outdoor light fixtures installed and thereafter maintained shall comply with the following requirements: a. The maximum height of all light fixtures

shall not exceed 15 feet except as otherwise regulated in this chapter, except as may otherwise be required by law..." The ordinance continues with more nuanced requirements, including prohibitions on lights being on when spaces are not in use (which the high school lights appear to violate on a daily basis, not to mention that they are significantly taller than 15 feet) and from lights being in various colors or rotating/pulsating, etc. (so that's a resounding no to Musco's offer to install lights that can do a whole song and dance I hope!). How are the proposed ~70 foot lights at Tatlock exempt from this ordinance's requirements that lights be no taller than 15 feet? This ordinance even explains in its "Purpose" section that it is important to regulate recreational/sports facility lighting - and for the exact reasons that Tatlock neighbors have been repeating: to preserve and protect adjacent properties from negative lighting impacts. Isn't the goal of this ordinance to protect neighbors from having lights installed at Tatlock and is that not exactly why there should not even be a discussion about lighting Tatlock? Second, it would be prudent to link this Google Doc directly on the Investors Field page. After searching (1) the Summit Community Programs website, (2) the Investors Field page, (3) the linked presentation that was accessible from the Investors Field page, (4) the Community Programs Facebook page and Tatlock posting, and (5) the email from DCP I received ahead of the Listening Session - all to no avail - I was only able to find this form in an email from a neighbor who was emailed a personal email by DCP requesting that she not attend the listening session and included this form as an alternative method of providing continuing/ongoing feedback. The places I searched are 5 locations where the form could reasonably be expected to be linked. Because it is not located in any of those places, this form does not seem to be available very publicly, which limits the engagement available to neighbors who wish to participate in the conversation but are not in-the-know and it also limits neighbors' ability to provide continuing/ongoing feedback.

We will ask the City Attorney to review the first question pertaining to the ordinance.

The site has been updated with the link.

How can we submit photos and videos for consideration to show how neighbors are already impacted by the extensive use of the field so you can see how demanding expanded use is unacceptable?

The Google Form has been updated to allow for such submissions.

The Relay Tournament at Tatlock Field was a disaster for anyone who lived or tried to drive in that neighborhood. Living on Lewis Avenue I knew it would present issues but nothing like the reality My driveway was blocked half way by different vehicles during the day. The fire hydrant in front of my home was blocked most of the day. Trying to navigate Butler Parkway when I finally could get out was a danger for pedestrians and drivers with school buses parked two by two. Will it take a death for the DCP to stop this madness. I can't imagine what the lighting proposal will do to our quality of life. I urge everyone involved in this decision to take a deep breath and realize that this is unsafe.

Thank you for your comments. The Summit Police Department is reviewing this event.

Has there been any consideration to the increased public traffic and pedestrians going to Magic Fountain during events along Morris Ave.

We will ask for this to be investigated as part of the traffic study, if possible.

Can the curb cut at the intersection of Aubrey St and Lewis Ave be modified?

If the person submitting this can please contact the DCP office and explain this request, we can pass it on to engineering.

I am concerned about quite a few things in regards to lighting Tatlock: 1. It seems like there are other places the money could go to help our kids spend time outdoors such as improving playgrounds and adding more sidewalks. Washington school can use more green, non turf, areas. 2. This doesn't seem to be such a strong need for the high school- teams are able to practice and play. And if other teams-club and private schools-are using it why are we subsidizing them? 3. Most importantly, the burden on the neighborhood will be strong. I don't live there, but the issues seems to be similar to the primrose daycare and Broad street west projects that were rejected: traffic, noise, overcrowding, etc. This is even more of a neighborhood than Broad street west area, so the impact will be worse for the quality of life for people that live in the vicinity. 4. It also sets a precedent to lighting other areas of Summit. Where will the light pollution end?

1. No decision has been made to allocate budget money for this project.
2. The usage pertains to the ecosystem of the Summit fields. This will free up times for other sports to practice. The field users all pay a field user fee. Private schools are being investigated.
3. This is why we are completing studies and listening to concerns of neighbors.
4. Light pollution will be studied as a part of the Environmental Impact Study.

Which companies will be doing the environmental and traffic studies?

We are in the process of obtaining quotes from third party vendors to complete both.

What is the timeline for the Environmental Impact Report? When will it be conducted, when will it be released to the public? Will the Summit Environmental Commission be able to review and respond?

We will have it complete by the fall and there will be a meeting where all residents are invited to review.

Does this project go before the planning or zoning board? If no, why not?

It will go in front of both boards for courtesy reviews - if not a full review.

Does the new lacrosse practice space being installed give or count for the teams and clubs an additional field space? How will that be utilized in their program?

This is not a new field. It is a lacrosse wall that will allow for skill practice but won't accommodate a team practice.

How will you conduct a traffic study? How will you obtain the data?
An outside company will be completing it.

It's too expensive. We can't afford it.
No decision has been made to include it in the budget.

Why did the field user fee/restorative committee not meet for 5 years? It's noted in meeting notes 2023 was the first formal meeting since 2018.
Staff changes and COVID.

Meeting Discussion -

LAX Wall – There is a 60' x 60' area
View it like a tennis wall or batting cages. They are for skill development.

What is the surface?
Either Concrete or Blacktop

Resident:
Biggest Concern – Traffic.
There is a light to avoid and people come through from Morris. School busses are also speeding and there is no enforcement for speeding. People just go around speed bumps. In the last three years feels more like a raceway.
Concerned about the children. Sidewalks and crossing guards are helpful, but no way that traffic will not increase. The point of this is for it to be used, so traffic will increase.
My driveway has been blocked. I called the police and then the next day my tires were slashed.
I also notice that 50% of the LAX games, the stadium is not full. You have mothers and coaches, but not families the seating is not full.
I have read a lot of stuff and I do not understand the need. We take our fair share for the community.
And light pollution.

Will a traffic study be done?
Yes. By a professional licensed engineering firm.

Resident: Summit LAX played Seton Hall Prep and the Summit Police looked at the game and viewed the area.

Resident: I am coming down Butler Parkway and there was a car making a right to go toward Morris. A car was illegally parked. There was another car blocking a neighbor's driveway. There has been some action. This was a 4:30pm game on a Thursday. Cars haven't been ticketed. Where the box doing the traffic study didn't account cars going onto Sheridan.

Resident: The box that was there only counted the cars passing by.

Resident: What we need is a licensed engineer. We need them stamping to give approval.

Resident: Parents feel like they need to be with their kids way more than before. Why wasn't the traffic study done upfront?

KS: This is the reason why we are having the meetings now. This is out of the budget. We haven't even done the 2025 budget. Every December, all Department heads prepare budget requests. In 2022, it was taken out of the 2023 Budget. It was taken out.

In 2023, it was taken out of the 2024 Budget. I requested it being taken out.

We are in the exact spot where we were last year except, we are doing community engagement. We are taking the extra steps to be able to have more facts for next year, if it will be included.

The traffic and environmental studies are being done.

We are holding meetings so we can do additional steps if it comes to that.

Resident: The traffic study should be done coming from Route 24. It needs to have a larger radius, is my recommendation.

Resident: The lights should look at what is already there at the Tennis Courts. We would go to Memorial and star gaze. We love the sounds from the playgrounds, and we love the games – but tennis happens after hour. People also come play pickleball. There are already lights there and noise. There is enough daylight, and the lighting pollution and noise are biggest concerns. When you are close, it affects you. It is simply annoying. It will be two times bigger and effect more people.

Resident: Fiscal concerns – we are going to borrow 1.6 million. Will likely be more. There will be repairs and maintenance. How else does this effect the budget? We are going to continue adding to the budget. What other financial requirements do we have? We need to meet affordable housing obligations. Is more going to be borrowed for that? This is in addition to light pollution concerns. We have a nice backyard patio and can look up to blueish tones. This will be gone. If you go by the HS field, what has been done there is shameful. Their quality of life has been effected. I am in favor of turning those lights off.

Where did the 1.6 estimate come from?

We got it from Engineer Tom Miller – who did 2016 lighting study. Got the numbers in 2022.

Resident: Construction costs have gone up 3x since then. How will this be reflecting in the budget?
MO: There would also likely be private donations

Resident: So Council can accept funding from a private organization like the lacrosse wall?

Yes

Resident: They have been talking about lights since 2018. And the flag football coach knows about it.

Mark: These conversations have been happening since 2006 with sports leagues requesting lights.

Kevin: This would need to be a private public partnership.

Mark: This is not my way. This goes through several steps. Last year it was Andy Minegar and Delia Hamlet who reviewed the DCP Capital requests along with the DCP Advisory Board.

Resident: Should and updated number be requested?

Resident: What about updated police OT?

Resident: We were told there doesn't need to be additional police presence.

Resident: Photos from the Relays. I can't leave or go into my neighborhood. Why doesn't this include the need for police?

Resident: Is it possible to rent parking lot at Marco Polo? Or parking on one side of the street.

David: We are also including the Ivy and the Smythe Building going up in the Traffic Study.

Resident: Can I request to have a committee with the traffic study?

David: I believe we are doing that after the studies are done to put a working group together if the project survives beyond the studies.

Resident: seems to be the other way around.

KS: We mentioned that before with extending the radius.

Resident: You are not considering the entirety of the area with the traffic box. You're missing half of it. Perspective and input from the neighborhood may have been important before.

Resident: Who is paying for study.

Mark: We have 50K for light study. Half was spent. It will be coming from that fund. The check is being written by the City of Summit.

Resident: Could we have a third-party review of the traffic study?

David: We will be completing the study and then if neighbors want to hire a third party, they could review – any resident will have the opportunity to review. We will also have a presentation in the fall that will allow for Q and A with the engineers who are completing the study. All the neighbors in the 400' area will be noticed. If resident have items they would like to be considered as part of the traffic and Environmental study include them in the Google Doc.

Resident: Why was the FUF the same for 20 years?

Mark: It was time to increase it.

Resident: If you are in charge of managing the fields, why did it stay the same for 20 years.

Mark: Since 2019, we didn't meet because of COVID. At our first meeting we did increase it.

Resident: Will there be a property value study into what real estate taxes may be? I can see residents asking for reassessment.

Resident: Why pickle never at Memorial?

MO: This is potentially being looked into.

Resident: Will you use the same EIS as Mendham? The football and cheerleading pulled it because of the ordinance.

KS: We will get the tree quotes for this process.

DG: I am not going to comment on other employment.

Resident: we are talking about quality of life.

Resident: Is it my responsibility to offer changes to my life for the club teams? My life is changing because of the sports groups. The noise is another concern.

I would like to request from this day forward that no other clubs be able to use the loudspeaker at the field. I don't understand why it will change after my 25 years. Why does Tatlock need to bear the burden of all of this and other neighborhoods don't?

Resident: There is a difference between private and non-profit clubs.

KS: We are talking about all Summit user groups using these fields. This is not like Glenside that is a County owned park, which is used by other men's groups and private groups. It wouldn't be used by those that are not from Summit.

Resident: Build it and they will come. There are plenty of weekend mornings where 11 v. 11 teams will be there playing.

Mark: Lights will only go on when people are there. Full transparency is that there was no decision made surrounding field use -

Resident: The FUF group states that a 12 month light process at 10pm will meet the needs of the groups. There is not really an audit of who is using the fields and when. What has been done with the maintenance projects to make the other fields more useable. With Wilson Field there were requests – and they might be able to host field hockey and flag football. I don't understand how this is the be all end all of the sports project.

Resident: I haven't been convinced. Convince me why we need it now.

KS: We are at the same place now that we were last year.

Resident: Has our population grown?

MO: This year's Kindergarten is the biggest ever. Next year will too. We have new sports starting. We have new seasons starting. Soccer goes all year. All of the sports are going to that model. There is

nowhere in town to build. At Memorial, there is a retaining wall that has a 12-foot drop to the baseball field.

I would not light any fields that are not turfed because the use of the fields beats them up. There is a baseball and two multipurpose fields. This would cost millions. No lights can be put in the middle of the field.

Resident: What is you just turfed the fields at Memorial?

MO: We are using them now at capacity.

Resident: You are turfing the lower Tatlock now.

KS: That is BOE.

KS: BOE does not need to go to Council for permission. I was ticked off with the trees being taken down. I am going to advocate for the replacement.

Resident: can the other private fields be used?

KS: We have four HS (Oratory, Oak Knoll, Kent Place) using the track and the wear and tear is exponential and, in a few years, we will need to resurface. We will have re-negotiations with the private schools to either have them pay for use of have some reciprocity with the use for their fields/

Resident: is there currently reciprocity?

MO: There is with Oak Knoll. We'll look into agreements with other.

Resident: I'd like to reiterate the sound. I can't read a book. I am also concerned because there is no way to put the genie back in the bottle. There will be no enforcement of any rules. You can only take so much in one area.

Resident: NP has comparable fields. I have been to the Bucks County field and there is no comparison. It is not fair to make comparisons.

Mark: That was an example of old versus new lights.

Resident: Mendham HS, New Providence HS have added lights and moved all of their games to Saturday nights. Our concern is that all of the home games will shift to being on Friday Nights. Everyone will want to get the value out of this project. Most people love the Friday nights lights. There has to be a way to do a test run of Friday Night Lights.

KS: The purpose of the picture was to show the before and after, not showing a field in a neighborhood. It is about the comparison of changes in technology.

Resident: It was irrelevant to neighbors and the impact it would have to them.

Resident: Are the lights at the Upper HS being replaced?

KS: I asked for us to get a quote from Dan Healey to get those lights replaced.

MO: We also have the field on Upper Tatlock lit.

Resident: Add a pole and light the upper field to better quality.

Resident: What about the lights at Tatlock Tennis?

MO: They are the new technology.

Resident: What about Glenside?

MO: We schedule Glenside. They are promising that this will not affect us.

Resident: Is there an example field we can go see?

MO: We will get this from Musco so we can go see.

Resident: September 2022 – There was a bullet to do a survey on needs. I'd like to see the survey that was requested.

MO: Those were just questions. We are working on that now.

Resident: We don't talk about these elements that we don't like them. We have a reasonable expectation that it doesn't go into bedtime. We are not unhappy about what we currently have next to us, we like what us there currently. It is about ending things at a reasonable hour. You are only there for a limited amount of time, these things can all change in the future. The limits you set to help us, but they aren't enforceable in the future.

Resident: Will this eventually go to a vote by the Common Council?

KS: If it is included in the budget.

Resident: Council members have a vested interest.

DG: This has gone to the attorney. We are going to take the summer to get all the answers.

Resident: What about the elements that were proposed by Elaine in 2018? Were there other updates on the items. Like issues with safety at Franklin.

MO: Franklin was approved.

Resident: What is the difference between a courtesy review or full review.

Resident: There's been a lot of questions about the usage. Is there a way to codify it?

KS: No time frames have been set. It can be set in an ordinance now, but we can't bind other Councils to this.

Resident: What about current ordinances

DG: A resident did submit the current ordinance to us, and we are checking with the attorney on the implication.

Resident: Shouldn't the construction/code officials approve these projects? How was the ordinance not followed?

DG: Checking with attorney.

Resident: Anyone can turn the Tatlock lights on at any point.

MO: They cannot go on past 10pm.

Resident: Is the sound interference part of any studies.

KS: Part of environmental. But at Mabie, we met with neighbors and went to NP where they had the same musical instruments. We went back to Mabie and were able to move so there was less impact to neighbors. Speakers are on the home side of the field facing toward Butler Pkwy. I have asked if there can be a consideration to place the speakers going the other direction possibly toward the school

Resident: Are we the only field with sound?

Yes

Resident: Is it possible to have the lights upgraded at the High School where there's more parking and it is already there and fix it at the Upper Tatlock if need be.

KS: The City doesn't control the BOE. We made the request to the high school.

Resident: Maintenance of the fields remains a concern. The same kids are going into the program.

Resident: if HS is upgraded, is the need removed?

MO: No. The HS is on until 9:30 M-F already. And Saturday and Sunday as needed.

Resident: Are teams using it until 9:30? Is it being used at maximum capacity.

DG – This was an ongoing concern – we have apologized for. We should have had the case for need before starting this process. We are working on providing a more detailed schedule that will show current use levels.

Resident: Why isn't conduit going in at lower HS?

KS: There is conduit for a score board.

Resident: It doesn't take much effort to put the conduit in now.

Resident: These seem to be simple questions that should be able to be answered.

KS: This is not a foregone conclusion.

Resident: I have spoken with other Council Members who have stated they didn't discuss it much.

DG: Every council person who has been on the DCP Advisory Committee sat in Committee Meetings where Capital Budget was discussed. Councilmembers were aware of the inclusion of this project in each of Mark's Capital Budget requests.

Resident: It is concerning to hear from a council person that he would light the field for every football and LAX game.

Resident: This feels like it is dividing the Summit Community.

Resident: Our signs are being knocked over by high school boys.

Resident: Ours were stolen.

Resident: People are fighting with us when we ask them to move their cars blocking driveways and fire hydrants. There is a blatant disregard.

KS: Two rocks have been placed to people cannot drive into Tatlock.

MO: Bollards are being placed too.

Resident: People are parking where they do Track and Field, too.