

Proposed Parker Task Force Food Bank Location Fact Sheet

May 2, 2013

Background

Early last December, the Parker Town Council voted to divide Town-Campus property and to donate public property—Town Lot 3—to the Parker Task Force (PTF) for a food bank facility.

The food bank currently operates from the basement portion of old Town Hall, serving residents of Parker, Franktown and Elizabeth. It's open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday from 9 am to 1 pm. Volunteers sometimes work at the site beyond these hours, receiving, unloading and organizing donations.

We appreciate the wonderful work of the Task Force in serving the needs of individuals in the community and will continue to support those efforts. This is not about PTF. Our concern focuses only on site appropriateness.

Rowley Downs (RD) HOA Position

The planned location is not in the best interests of the Town, Parker residents or members of RD. There are better sites for such “commercial” warehouse structures. Based on our conversations with interested residents, conversations with Town representatives, a presentation to the HOA by PTF, and several board discussions, we have determined we should proactively work to see the food bank relocated to a more appropriate site.

Claim: The PTF suggested during a presentation to homeowners that it is being “kicked out” of Town hall.

Reality: The food bank is not being kicked out, but is justifiably interested in having more space.

Claim: The Town-Campus site was the only location available for the food bank. During the presentation the PTF adamantly denied that it was offered other sites. **Reality:** We understand the Town offered at least three other locations and the county, according to County Commissioner Jack Hilbert, offered a site on Park Glenn Way which PTF refused it.

Claim: PTF implied at our meeting that it's a “done deal,” and that all we can do is mitigate its impact on RD.

Reality: Several new members of the Town Council oppose the plan because it doesn't meet the best interests of the Parker community. We believe the council will hear our concerns if we act as a community. If the food bank is not built by 2017, the property reverts to the Town.

In correspondence, the HOA has communicated the following points to the Town:

- 1) The building is essentially a warehouse facility, inconsistent with the quality and uses of other buildings on Town Campus and with its location in the historic downtown and by the entrance to RD.
- 2) Open land, parks and trails attract people to Parker. This specific property has been used for Town fairs and activities and has been an informal nature refuge. Its loss would remove the last open landscape on Town Campus. It also represents the eastern face of the campus, thus impacting Parker's image. Erecting a warehouse facility seems inconsistent with the prominence of the property.
- 3) RD is a unique and historical Parker neighborhood, important in maintaining the quality of downtown Parker. The proposed plan may negatively impact RD property values and downtown Parker.
- 4) The community would be better served if the property was used as open land or community park for the present time and reserved for future Town needs more consistent with the overall purpose of the campus.

5) We recognize Town denial will inconvenience the Task Force, but believe RD, as an impacted neighborhood, should have been included in discussions before the property was deeded to PTF.

Approval Process

To build the food bank, PTF will need the support of the Town through:

- 1) An easement for parking, lighting and landscaping on Town property.
- 2) A waiver from building standards required for structures built in the Historic Center Design District. (PTF suggested that they cannot afford to build the food bank, unless it receives this waiver.)

The Town Community Development department is currently working with PTF to resolve Town and RD citizen concerns before proceeding for Town approval. (RD HOA has communicated its opposition to the Town.) This approval will require a “back and forth” process of indeterminate time duration. RD will be contacted for comment at each “round” in the process.

When the Community Development Department is satisfied, they will forward it to both the Town Council and the Planning Commission.

First: It will be sent to the Town Council for the first reading of a proposal to grant the easement and waiver sought by PTF.

Second: After first reading at Town Council, it will be sent to the Planning Commission for a public hearing (requiring signs to be posted on the property in advance of the hearing).

Third: After the Planning Commission hearing, the proposal for waiver and easement will be read the second time before the Town Council and will be voted on.

How can I help now?

We encourage residents to effectively communicate their opposition to the food bank location. (Again, we support completely the work of PTF. We oppose only the construction of a food bank in an inappropriate location.)

- **Send letters** to the Mayor and to each member of the Town Council as soon as possible indicating your concerns about the location of the food bank. (The HOA has developed a standard letter that you may use as a template, form letter, or to provide input for your own letter.) Quantity of letters is important. (You can visit Parkeronline.org for mailing, email and phone numbers for our representatives.)
- **Send similar emails and place phone calls** to the Mayor and to each member of the Town Council as soon as possible.
- **Attend Town Council meetings**, even when the food bank location is not on the agenda. There is a general public comment segment at each meeting during which Parker residents can state their concerns and discuss their topics of interest. Please take that opportunity to effectively express your concerns regarding the location of the food bank. We have been told that the most effective comments are organized, brief and courteous. We want to establish a presence at these meetings now and maintain them till the Council votes on the easement and waiver.
- **Tell your neighbors** (in and out of RD) about the situation. The more support and the broader the support, the more effective our message and efforts.

Thanks for being such great neighbors!