

# ROXBOROUGH FORUM

## THE COMMUNITY VOICE

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*Welcome again to the Roxborough Forum.*

*The Roxborough Forum is independent from the Roxborough Park Foundation and its Board of Directors. Opinions presented in the Forum are entirely those of the submitting members and the editor.*

*The Forum is here for you and is your voice if you choose to use it..*

*The Forum is a media in which you may ask questions, voice opinions, or make suggestions on important community issues. The Forum will come out about every other week. If you address a question to the editor we will obtain the answer as quickly as possible and send it back to you via email. Then your question and answer will also appear in the Forum's next edition along with the suggestions and comments of other members of the community.*

*We realize that in our busy lives many interested members of the community may not be able to attend board of director meetings. The Forum is here so that you may, at your convenience, voice your questions, comments, and suggestions. We promise that you will be heard and your questions will be answered.*

*We say hello to four new subscribers to the Forum this week. Welcome aboard.*

If you wish to be added to the mailing list to receive future editions of the Forum send an e-mail to [roxboroughforum@earthlink.net](mailto:roxboroughforum@earthlink.net) <<mailto:roxboroughforum@earthlink.net>>

*Dennis Kennedy, editor (PH: 303-948-7538)*

**The largest single hot button issue in our community is the proposed Office Building/Community Center project. The time has come for the community to vote to accept or reject the building. As the editor of the Roxborough Forum I have maintained a neutral position on this project—printing all comments from the membership for or against the proposed building. In my own case I could not make up my mind as to how to vote on this project.. Thank you one and all for your comments over the last few months. They were very helpful in assisting in making our voting decision. You all have had the opportunity in the Forum to express your opinions on the office building project and now it is my turn. My wife and I have agreed on our vote. Below is the how and why of it:**

### **WHY I WILL VOTE FOR THE PROPOSED ROXBOROUGH OFFICE BUILDING**

**The last ten years in the Roxborough Park community have seen numerous failed efforts by residents to build a combined office building and community center. The current effort, which comes to a vote this month, may have the best chance of any to succeed.**

**The main reasons for constructing this building are that it just makes good sense to do this project and that about 90% of the needed funds for construction are already reserved. There will be no additional burden on the residents to construct the building.**

**Comments have been made by some residents that this money has been accumulated at the expense of needed projects. This is not true. Past boards administered community funds to the best benefit of the community. They budgeted and utilized funds to meet identified needs. A few years ago the board did budget and set aside \$150,000 for the construction of the office building. Some anticipated expenses over the last five years have not materialized which allowed for further reservation of funds. It should also be noted that over this same period our former Foundation GM, Joyce Garrett, reduced operating costs substantially.**

**Yes, there are needed projects—culvert and drainage repair, road overlay, and fire mitigation to name the most visible. The current board is working on these needs and I do expect they will find the solutions without heavily burdening the community.**

**You have no doubt seen the recent electronic Echoes newsletter listing the Seven Reasons to vote for the Office Building/Community Center. Even those residents adamantly against the building must agree with one or more of the seven reasons. Two of the arguments are so logical that all should agree they are excellent reasons for constructing the building.**

**Some residents have said that the new building will improve property values in our community. I don't know if this will prove to be true, but there is no doubt that an office building/community center will make it easier to sell a Roxborough Park home or lot.**

**Other communities of our size do contain this type of amenity and they do benefit from having a community center. While this is not an issue of keeping up with our neighbors it does benefit us to pay attention to what is being done in similar upscale communities.**

**I will vote for the proposed Office Building/Community Center because I see this as a step forward for our community, and an amenity from which all of our residents can take some benefit.**

**Dennis M. Kennedy  
Editor, The Roxborough Forum**

**Let's now move on to opinions submitted by community members:**

**SUBMITTED BY X: Hello Fellow Rox Residents,**

I just received the Echoes that contains reason #7 for voting for the new community center. It says in there that I have to vote on this project *before* there are any formal bids to actually construct it. The only assurance it gives me about cost is this statement:

*Your Building Committee and the architects believe that the cost of the structure will be within the budget outlined above, with no significant modifications required.*

This statement is pretty wimpy "assurance". It makes no commitment whatever and only expresses some people's "belief" about the costs.

Why don't we do this: Have a vote on whether to proceed far enough to commission detailed design and construction drawings from which formal construction bids can be made. A vote such as this would probably pass. I have been pretty skeptical about this whole thing, but I would vote "yes" on this. *Then* we could have a vote on the final go-ahead after we have firm, fixed bids on the costs. Otherwise we are being asked to vote on the proverbial pig in a financial poke.

**FORUM COMMENT:** The folks who developed the \$979,000 project estimate are a contractor and an architect. They had further cost inputs from other architects. The project developers know what they are doing and have developed a workable estimate of costs to build. In order to go forward with bids before a vote some fairly large expenditures would have to be made. The majority of the architectural fees, engineering fees, soil tests, and preliminary development costs (total of about \$60,000) would have to be expensed. The project developers have committed to not put the community at risk for additional expense before voting on the general concept. In past attempts to construct an office building some or all of these expenses were incurred before a failed vote. In those cases the money spent in advance of a vote to develop an accurate bid was wasted.

**SUBMITTED BY CRC:** Vote NO on the proposed Roxborough Park Community Center/Office Project. Here are some reasons why you should vote "NO."

**No contractor bids.** The Board has had plenty of time to solicit construction bids for the proposed project. Board members and others are estimating a total cost of almost one million dollars. There is suspicion that the Board did not want to solicit bids because they felt they would probably be in excess of \$ 1,000,000.00 and probably closer to 1.2 to 1.3 million dollars. This was before the recent significant increase of construction costs, due in part, to the high cost of fuel, concrete, asphalt and related construction materials. It does not make good economic sense to vote on a project without knowing what it may realistically cost. Therefore, vote "NO."

The Board has indicated it is prepared to borrow up to \$ 300,000.00 to complete construction of the proposed facility. It has further indicated that local lending institutions would loan the Foundation the dollars at an interest rate of one percent above prime. With the current prime being five and one quarter percent, it would cost six and one quarter percent interest to borrow the money. This proposed borrowing statement was made prior to the recent significant increase in construction costs. The Foundation has NO DEBT. Do residents want to incur debt to fund a project that is "nice to have but not need to have?" I think not. Vote "NO." Most of us do not want to mortgage our future.

The Board has provided information on what the estimated costs of paying office rent virus estimated maintenance costs for the proposed facility. The information estimates that office rent would increase by 8 percent each year. This estimate is unrealistically high in today's market. One could believe that the 8 percent figure was used to more favorably compare with the estimated annual maintenance costs for the proposed facility. The bottom line is that it will cost more than office rent to maintain the proposed facility. Also, there is vacant office space for rent nearby. "Theoretically" there is enough money in the account to pay office rent for the next 20 - 25 years. Therefore, vote "NO" on the project.

The Board has hired a contractor to conduct an inventory/study about the condition and needed repairs to our roads, culverts, drainage and other infrastructure facilities. This was a smart decision by the Board because our infrastructure facilities are showing age. Due to age, we are entering a period of heavy maintenance which can be costly. The residents need estimated cost information on

what it will cost to keep our infrastructure in satisfactory and safe condition. It was requested that this cost information be made available to us. This has not happened. Therefore, vote "NO."

The Board recently indicated that some (a few) residents want a community swimming pool. It has authorized a study to evaluate the proposal. The cost of a swimming pool, with its associated annual maintenance expenses will be high. The Board indicates it would put this proposed project to a vote. However, if the Board gets approval to build the proposed Community Center/Office facility and the swimming pool costs less than 10% of our annual assessment (pool cost less than \$ 120,000.00) the Board could proceed without voter approval. There is too much uncertainty here. Vote "NO" on the proposed Community Center/Office project.

I think we are all aware there is "free" meeting space nearby. The Board was asked if it had knowledge on any meetings that had to be canceled over the last 15 - 20 years due to lack of a meeting place. The answer was no. Therefore, vote "NO."

Douglas County is experiencing significant growth. County elected officials and developers are not very concerned about water. We live in an arid area with a very limited and diminishing water supply. I believe it is a given that over the next few years there will be a significant, if not geometric increase of water rates for all. This additional expense, plus higher property taxes and energy costs will have a negative financial impact on Roxborough Park residents. If the proposed project is approved, we will sooner than later, have higher annual assessments. These cost increases will impact all of the people who live in Roxborough Park. Therefore, vote "NO" on the proposed project.

In accordance with the "governing documents" and the current population of our community, 311 votes will constitute a quorum. If the Board receives 156 "yes" votes and 155 "no" votes the proposed community center/office project will pass. If the quorum of 311 votes is not reached, the Board can proceed with facility construction, regardless of the number of "yes or "no" votes. Therefore, it is imperative that we achieve a quorum. Vote "NO."

The Board has established a calling committee whose job will be to make telephone calls to the approximately 200 absentee lot owners. Many of these people are not aware of the full picture of the proposal and will vote yes when told the project won't cost more than rent. This is another reason why we must vote "NO" on the project.

We are very lucky to have the "Roxborough Forum." It serves as a vehicle to provide both supporting and dissenting viewpoints to our community. The "Roxborough e-News" has not printed any opposing comments, because it is trying to sell the proposed project. Only about 400 residents receive the "Forum." Therefore, it is important that if you want the "NO" votes to stop the project you vote and encourage your neighbors to vote "NO.". Otherwise the "Yes" votes may prevail.

**SUBMITTED BY Z:** Some years ago, the Roxborough Park Foundation Board of Directors announced the construction of a community building/office complex. A resident objected and managed to get enough signatures on a petition to force a vote on the project. It is only fair to recount that, according to my recollection, the project would have necessitated the Foundation taking a large loan, obligating the members/residents to the payment of the loan.

The project was voted against by the members/residents.

In the intervening years there have been at least two, perhaps more, increases in the annual assessment costs to the members.

The Board of Directors of those years ago, as well as subsequent Boards, have chosen to go in through the back door and accumulate large sums in reserve. Thanks to the greatly increased assessments, the Foundation has announced it can now construct a Community building at a cost of \$979,000 *without* obtaining a loan except for the grading and landscaping of the site ... an estimated mere \$150,000

The Board should be commended for submitting the project to a vote of the members ...this time..

Another option would be to return the excess monies collected to the residents.

Yet another option would be to construct a modest office adjacent to the existing maintenance building so that office staff was conveniently available for member/residents and staff could more easily carry out their duties within Roxborough Park. Another concept would be to hire a management company, and do away with employees, buildings et al.

The Board has contracted for a 4-page multi-color print campaign urging a "yes" vote by the members. Upon questioning the justification for that one sided significant expenditure, (plus postage for approximately 980 mailings), the answer was that the Board has deemed the project will benefit all residents and if I dissent, I could conduct my own mailing, try to publish in the newspapers' "HUB", or go to resident Dennis Kennedy's on line forum. So be it.

**FORUM COMMENT:** The Editor has learned that the 4 page multi-color brochure, to be used as part of the building campaign, was developed by two professionals (community residents) who volunteered their services. The brochure will be mailed with the ballot so as not to incur additional postage. The cost of the printing of the brochure was borne by the Foundation.

**SUBMITTED BY Q:** For those of you who are the skeptics on the how often the center will be used versus the cost...let's look outside the box for a bit. Perhaps we should look at the need for our community to be more cohesive and user friendly...more bonding? How could that be achieved...through social activities, movie nights both for children and families as well as film festivals...some go now to the Starz Cinema or Chez Artistes, why not host our own here in our park? As some residents age (remember, you may have that opportunity if you are lucky)! They still want to participate in activities and get out of their houses for interaction and a bit of social repartee...bridge anyone? Or perhaps a Friday night barbecue and cocktail BYO, after all it is our center and we need to have creative thoughts and ideas on usage. For the whiners who complain about the lack of a pool or tennis courts, do we not have those facilities, right outside the park? And let those owners take the burden of the liability suits...instead of increasing our dues (those that you were complaining about). I believe that there are valuable attributes that will enhance each and every one of our properties and it will create a welcome feeling and make a statement that we live in a unique, beautiful but not too commercial area where nature, hiking, and the community spirit resides...a place that we are all very proud to call home, now.

**SUBMITTED BY E:** Hello - I don't recall anyone stating that there should be a marketing campaign to achieve votes for the community center. The marketing campaign was for "overall" Roxborough Park to get exposure for this beautiful area and enhance our property values.

**SUBMITTED BY D:** Recently the Echoes stated:

"Our office has been on Pierce Street in Littleton since that time . . . *fifteen miles from our community and 'light years' away from the needs of our owners, builders and residents.*" Owners have to pass in the vicinity of that office location just coming to and from our homes on a regular basis. Builders too would have to pass that location to drop off proposals and/or plans and they do not visit the proposed property construction site to be developed every time they must deliver something to a Foundation committee for the review/approval process. "Light years away" ~ what a poor choice of words and emphasis especially when owners need to go to Wadsworth for shopping on a routine basis or in the direction of Highlands Ranch - Home Depot is at least that number of miles or more and it is visited substantially more by all property owners in our community than the Foundation office!

"During the months of January and February, a *survey was taken* with the outcome that there would

be approximately 645 meetings a year held at the facility, 150 of which would be private events." We as a property owner in the community did not receive notification of a survey being distributed to all home owners regarding potential meetings or events to be considered being held at the "proposed community center." To whom was this survey routed to for completion and why was it not opened to all property owners? The calendar year is 365 days consisting of 52 weekends and when you calculate a Friday through Sunday as the weekend then you end up with 156 days and this does not include holidays, of which many occur on a Monday. What private events make up that 150 and do those include the use of the facility the during the morning, afternoon, evening or the entire day and with the many hundreds of more than 1,000 property owners that do live in their homes year round how does one lock in a day and time well enough in advance, especially for holidays and weekends, just to ensure the use of the facility?

The proposed architectural drawings referenced parking could be utilized on the road to Haney Park by widening the road and it was even stated to us at that viewing that "the Trash facility site could even be stripped for additional parking." Really! How many total people could this proposed facility accommodate? Let's just say that if this facility, which started out at 4,600 Sq. Ft. and has now grown to 5,000 Sq. Ft., can hold 300 people attending an event and there are 2 people to every vehicle then where is the space to accommodate 150 cars because it was NOT well delineated in any of the proposed plans. Further, should a large event be scheduled to take place during the weekend property owners would have an impossible time just trying to enter and deposit our trash and leave the Trash area because of the congestion of additional vehicles coming and going to the facility plus all the "parked cars" and for those of us who work during the week we only have the weekends to accomplish this task. There have already been several times that the road to the Trash facility was completely filled with cars to attend an event at Haney Park forcing the property owners just trying to drop of our trash to squeeze through what ended up a one way lane and having to wait until it was our turn to either enter or leave the area!

The Budgets distributed specially for year 2005 & 2006 clearly stated there was "\$459,000 set aside to fund the community center/office building." Yet the recent Echoes states "Throughout this time, the cost of the individual plans ranged from \$400,000 to \$650,000 depending on the level of services to be available, the site costs and the cost of construction at the time." And now the Foundation states the proposed project costs will not exceed \$979,000! These numbers don't match do they! And where is the Foundation acquiring the additional \$520,000 to reach \$979,000 figure? We were told when viewing the designs the Foundation has always had the projected building costs set aside. Where and from what other community expense account(s) is/are the monies being taken from especially when we are talking over a half million dollars? There has even been a mention of over \$800,000 set aside for this project but not according to the Budget distributed to the property owners! Even if there is an emergency fund that allows for certain expenditures in times of great need, and we are not aware that one exists, we don't believe that source of money should be utilized for a community center. *Or worse yet are all the property owners going to be levied with a Special Assessment just so this facility can and will be built?* Oh, and what about the cost to decorate and furnish the facility?

We recall a request from property owners to the Foundation to have a walkway path installed from the maintenance facility to Haney Park in order to allow more parking in that area and then the walkway would provide access to the park due to the over crowding of vehicles that occurs quite often. However, the property owners were told that the request could not be met due to the wetlands in that area that are protected and also the water table rises and recedes naturally there causing flooding of the park playground sometimes. A wetland area such as this one indeed would impact any construction to be considered in and near that site resulting in potentially the additional need of a water retention pond to hold the water back from undermining the building support of any structure or foundation. I don't recall that item being included in the construction cost and if the Douglas County Planning Department determines the retention pond must be constructed then we can tell you that too will be quite an extra expense to this project.

**SUBMITTED BY E:** This has probably been addressed already and maybe I missed it so perhaps you could run through it again for the benefit of us that (apparently) haven't been paying attention. For as far back as I can remember it has been a major concern as to what Roxborough Park will do for a water source when our current arrangement with Aurora terminates in 2022 (?). We have been planning, figuring, sweating, fretting, debating, pondering, plotting, wondering, worrying, scheming, hand wringing and headscratching over this dilemma for years and years and years. This keeps coming to mind every time I drive through Waterton Canyon and look towards the Ravenna Project that appears to be even larger than Roxborough Park with water aplenty irrigating their newly sodded golf course. So just how is it that Ravenna was able to breeze in as a Johnny-come-lately with no apparent problem acquiring a water source and here we are some 20 years later with this water matter still hanging over our heads? Why (and how) was Ravenna able to do it so quickly but we seem to be having such a problem with this??

**FORUM COMMENT:** Your submission was forwarded to [roxwater.com](http://roxwater.com) with a request for an update on progress to secure water after 2022. At this date no response has been received. If you or any of the community wishes to inquire direct you can send an email to [www.roxwater.com](http://www.roxwater.com) or call the Roxborough Water and Sanitation District at 303-979-7286. Larry Moore is the general manager.

**SUBMITTED BY J:** There seems to be an increase in construction traffic into the area, especially large semis with heavy equipment. In the past several weeks I have noticed that certain truck drivers feel that they own the road and show no concern for the Roxborough residents. One week ago a semi driver drove through the park at a record breaking 5 miles per hour. He had about 20 cars backed up behind him and refused to pull over to let residents go by. I might suggest that the guards inform the truck drivers that if they are blocking traffic they should pull over and let residents pass. Thanks

That's all for now folks. More in about two weeks. Please continue to send your thoughts, questions, comments, and suggestions to **THE ROXBOROUGH FORUM,** [<mailto:roxboroughforum@earthlink.net>](mailto:roxboroughforum@earthlink.net) and pass the Forum on to your friends and neighbors. We would like to increase our membership.

Bye