

November 6, 2013

**TO:** Scott Whipple, Historic Preservation, Functional Planning

Clare Lise Kelly, Historic Preservation, Functional Planning

FROM: John Carter, Area 3 J4C

**SUBJECT:** Wheaton Recreation Center

In response to your request, the attached text and illustrations describe options for retaining the existing Wheaton Recreation Center. The purpose of this memorandum is to demonstrate the potential for retaining the existing Wheaton Recreation Center without compromising the proposed new facility.

#### **DISCUSSION**

The existing Wheaton Recreation Center is located on Georgia Avenue adjacent to the existing Wheaton Regional Library. The Department of General Services (DGS) has prepared three design options to replace the existing library, and recreation center. In addition, the existing Gilchrest Center would be located in the new facility. This new combined facility is an important addition for the Wheaton Community. Each of the three options prepared by DGS would eliminate the existing Wheaton Recreation Center that has been nominated for placement on the Master Plan of Historic Sites. These options were prepared in August 2013, before the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed the project for historic designation.

#### **Proposed Option 1: New Building**

Option 1 is the DGS preferred design for the new, combined facility. This option orients the new facility along Georgia Avenue and Arcola Avenue to create a strong urban edge. It replaces the existing Wheaton Recreation Center with a small playfield, play area and outdoor amphitheater. Shared use spaces, new recreation facilities and library are located on the first floor. The Gilchrest Center, shared use spaces and additional recreational spaces are located on the second floor. Parking is provided underground and along a relocated Hermitage Drive. Access is provided from Parker Avenue and the relocated Hermitage Avenue.



#### Option 2: New Building with Preservation

As an alternative to DGS Option 1, a second option has been prepared to demonstrate the potential for retaining the existing Wheaton Recreation Center without compromising the proposed new facility. This option would locate some of the facilities proposed on the second floor of the new, combined library and recreation center to the existing Wheaton Recreation Center. The elements of this option could include:

- Reduced amount of new construction and eliminate demolition costs
- Locating the Gilchrest Center into a renovation of the existing Wheaton Center instead of the second floor of the proposed facility to improve direct access for the public
- Retaining the proposed outdoor play area and amphitheater, but reducing the size of the playfield area along Georgia Avenue
- Retaining the new recreation facilities, library and shared use facilities in a new building
- Parking areas remain unchanged



#### **CONCLUSION**

The site plans demonstrate that the existing Wheaton Recreation Center could be retained without a significant compromise to the site plan for the proposed new facility. This option would provide direct public access at ground level for users of the Gilchrest Center. The analysis does not include the cost of renovation as compared with the new construction and demolition of the existing building.

#### **Wheaton Recreation Center**

November 5, 2013

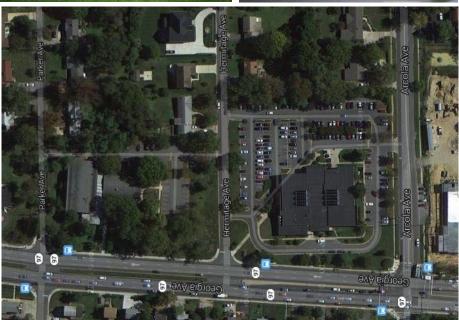
Located on Georgia Avenue in Wheaton, the existing Wheaton Neighborhood Community Center is adjacent to the existing Wheaton Regional Library.

The proposed redevelopment of the entire site would replace the existing library and recreation center with a new, combined Library, Community Recreation and Gilchrest Center. This document identifies an opportunity to retain the existing Neighborhood Community Center with a new use and build a new, combined Library, Community Recreation and Gilchrest Center.









## **Wheaton Neighborhood Community Center**

The existing Neighborhood Community Center is a multi-purpose recreational facility providing activities and events for people of all ages. The Center was constructed in 1963.













# **Combined Library, Community Recreation and Gilchrest Center**

Department of General Services, August 2013

The following drawings illustrate three options for combining the program elements for the proposed Wheaton Library, Community Recreation and Gilchrest Center into a new building.

Option A that is shown on this page has been the preferred option by the Department of General Services (DGS). The next pages describe the program for the new facility. Another option has also been provided for a new building combined with a renovated Wheaton Recreation Center.





Option A: Preferred DGS option with a strong urban edge, green area, and mid-block entry on the front and back.





Option B: Front plaza, one front door, clear entry, green area.





Option C: Maintains front edge, largest green area, limited foot print

#### **Program Elements**

Items		Floor Area	
•	Lobby, meeting and support space	12,838	
•	Recreation center spaces	27,024	
•	Library spaces	23,886	
•	Community spaces	10,350	
•	Gilchrest Center	5,970	
Total		80.068	

#### Option 1:

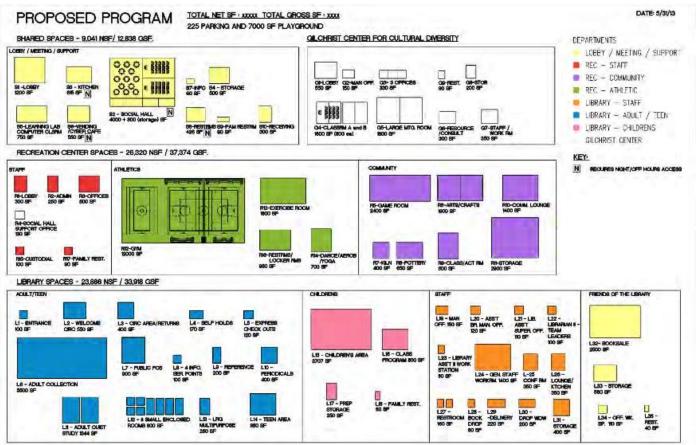
#### **Combined New Library, Recreation and Gilchrest Center** (80,068 square feet)

The new building could include the lobby, meeting and support space, recreation center spaces, library spaces, and the shared use spaces.

#### Option 2:

# New Library and Community Recreation Building with Retention of the Existing Recreation Building (80,068 square feet total)

- New Building (approximately 65,068 square feet of new space)
  The recreation center, library and lobby, meeting and support spaces would be located in a new building.
- Existing Wheaton Community Center (approximately 12,588 square feet of existing space)
  The Gilchrest Center or other community spaces could be placed in a renovation of the existing Wheaton recreation center.



## **Option 1: New Building**

Combined Library, Recreation and Gilchrest Center



**Option 2: New Building with Preservation** 

New Library and Recreation Building with Retention of the Existing Recreation Building

