

Dear Editor,

I am writing to clarify the misinformation being spread with respect to the Sakai Bond measure the community passed in 2015. It is incorrect to claim that the voters voted to approve the construction of a community center at Sakai Park at that time. The bond vote was to secure purchase of the property, provide capital for a planning process, and secure safe public access; all of which have been accomplished. I have attached a copy of the Proposition from the voter's pamphlet for reference.

In 2015, the community voted to approve \$5.9mil funds for the purchase 23 acres of property on Madison Avenue. This was one of the largest parcels of open space left in the downtown core. The proposition authorized the Park District to purchase 22.87 acres from the Sakai Family to provide new park land in the Winslow area including funding for a public park planning process and the development of basic initial improvements to secure the site for safe public access. Upon passage of the bond, the Park District conducted the public park planning process, including multiple public surveys and information gathering sessions to determine what uses the public would like Parks to accomplish on those 22.87 acres. The top ten priorities included trails, picnic shelters, multi-use outdoor complex with lighting, community recreation center, passive use(s), fifty-meter pool, mountain bike park/trails, multi-use indoor complex, tennis courts, playground, passive use(s).

From this process, the Park District consulted with Jones and Jones who developed a plan which included a multi-use indoor complex, estimated in 2019 to cost \$52.5mil. Since that time, building costs have skyrocketed. To begin work on this proposal, the Park District would need to ask the community to vote for an additional \$55+ million bond. From the Park District's perspective, securing a bond of that scale would be very difficult, as there was no consensus on what the community desired from that space. While many were in favor of a large-scale development there, an equal amount of the community preferred to leave the property in a more natural setting. The acquisition of the BAC by the Park District accomplishes many of the goals of the Sakai Park planning process, including providing the community indoor recreation spaces, while keeping Sakai Park in a more natural environment. In addition, the use of an existing facility is the environmentally sound choice, as we would not need to transform the rural feel of the Sakai Park land. Trails have already been constructed at Sakai, providing safe public access as was stipulated in the bond. If you have not yet walked the trails to the pond, I highly recommend doing so, it is a lovely parcel. If the community is interested in building a large-scale facility at Sakai, that is possible, but would need community buy-in as well as asking the voters to float another \$55+ million bond.

I hope this helps clarify the bond measure and what was approved by the voters in 2015 with respect to Sakai.

Respectfully,
Dawn Janow
BIMPRD Commissioner

Proposition No. 1 (voted on in Feb 2015)
Parks and Open Space Bonds

The Board of Park Commissioners of the Bainbridge Island Metropolitan Park & Recreation District, Kitsap County, Washington (the "District"), has adopted Resolution 2014-26 concerning financing for acquisition and improvement of park land. This proposition would authorize the District to finance the

purchase of approximately 23 acres of land (the Sakai family property) and to develop it as a new Winslow area park, including capital costs of planning and developing improvements and securing safe public access. It would authorize issuance of no more than \$5,900,000 of general obligation bonds maturing within 20 years and to levy excess property taxes annually to repay these bonds, all as provided in Resolution 2014-26. Should this proposition be approved?

Yes

No