



Rochelle Municipal Utilities Water/Water Reclamation

To: Edward Carr

From: Kathy Cooper

Date: February 8, 2011

Re: Flag-Rochelle Park District request for a variance to install a “vaulted toilet” at Cooper Park

The Flag Rochelle Park District has requested a variance from the City Code so that they can install a “Vaulted Toilet” at Cooper Park, located at Tenth Avenue in Rochelle. Cooper Park presently has a restroom facility with a sanitary sewer connection. To allow the Park District to disconnect from the City sewer system and install a vault system would be a step backwards.

RMU has cooperated with the Flag Rochelle Park District on many occasions to provide utility service to the park district facilities within Rochelle. The Water Division installed a service for a water fountain on the bike trail and provided water for the ice skating rinks. The Water Reclamation Division has jetted sewer lines, provided a large pump, and given technical expertise for repairs to the lift station at Teen Town.

The Park District has stated that it is more economically feasible to install the vault system, as it would cost \$192,000 to connect to the sanitary sewer system. The quote provided by the Park District was to install approximately 250 feet of 6-inch water main and 1150 feet of sewer main to serve the facility. RMU has never requested that the Park District install a 6-inch water main on Tenth Ave. At present, there are three water services within Cooper Park, and two of them are situated further from the existing main than their proposed vaulted toilet system. The Park District has dismissed all suggestions for an ejector system and/or maintaining their existing sanitary sewer connection, rather than installing the 1150 feet of gravity sewer and 250 feet of service sewer for the park as shown in their engineering cost estimate of \$192,000. RMU, after consulting with local plumbers, has estimated that an ejector pump (small lift station) and force main would cost in the range of \$15,000 to \$20,000.

Should the variance be granted, the Park District would be required, in accordance with City Code, to disconnect the restroom water service from the main, and to plug the sanitary sewer service, as close to the sewer main as possible to prevent inflow and infiltration into the sanitary sewer system. Because of the location of the water main a street opening will be required, and the estimated cost to complete both disconnections is \$7500. The Park District will have the additional cost of razing the existing building.

The Park District gave The Planning and Zoning Commission a list of Park Districts that have installed the vault systems. I contacted four of the communities to ask if the vaulted toilets were allowed in an urban park where a sanitary sewer system is available. All of the communities contacted said that they would not grant a variance for a vaulted toilet system where sewer was available.

1. Tony Conn of Naperville said that they required their Park District to install a 2000 foot force main from a restroom facility in the park to the sanitary system.

2. Terry White of Hoffmann Estates said that they have allowed the vaulted facility, but they required their park district to install an ejector pump and connect it to the sanitary sewer system.
3. Dave Gorman of Lombard stated that the Park District did install the vaulted toilets in the community, but did it without consulting with the city. Had they been asked, it would not have been allowed.
4. Joseph Werner of Blue Island said that he was not aware of any vaulted toilet installations where sewer service is available, and he further stated that, “from a planning perspective, that if a sanitary sewer system is available for use, then a connection is required”.

The State Plumbing Inspector, Jim Brown, was also contacted, and he would not recommend that the Park District be allowed to construct a vaulted toilet system.

I recommend that Council deny the variance.