

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION FACILITIES MODERNIZATION**



2400 East Capitol Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003
(202) 698-7700

October 29, 2010

Dear Kenilworth Recreation Center Community:

As you know, the demolition of the old Kenilworth Recreation Center was halted several weeks ago due to concerns by the National Park Service (NPS)/National Capital Parks East (NACE) about safety and permits. The Office of Public Education Facilities Modernization (OPEFM), working with the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) was able to finally resolve issues regarding the demolition permit and the demolition work was completed this week. At this point, all above ground structures have been demolished – the concrete pad upon which the existing recreation center sits will remain, however, and the site will be fenced off to ensure safety and security.

Now that the demolition is complete, there are still several issues that must be resolved before a new recreation center can be constructed. Although DPR had been moving forward under earlier agreements with the federal government that allowed replacement of the old recreation center, National Parks Service has now made clear that because of current environmental guidelines and restrictions, more environmental assessments will be required before a new recreation center can be built.

We are presently working through the exact environmental procedures that will be required with NPS and other affected regulatory entities, including the DC Department of the Environment and the US Department of the Interior. Previous environmental studies have indicated the presence of “ground contaminants” which were “capped” by an underground clay structure. In addition, a single unexploded ordinance shell was uncovered and removed in 2005. We do not know the exact level of contamination on the site, or whether the site is clear of any additional hazards. We also do not know what level of clean-up will be required in the future. As such, all of these issues will need to be explored further before we can determine exactly how to proceed.

There also remains the ultimate issue of jurisdiction of the Kenilworth Park grounds. The site remains under NPS jurisdiction and there have been several years of discussion and negotiation about transferring the site to District government. The discussions with NPS have resumed in earnest and the District is hopeful that an equitable resolution can be reached soon.

We will provide further update to the community in the weeks ahead.

Sincerely,

Allen Y. Lew
Executive Director, OPEFM

Jesús Aguirre
Director, DPR