

Town of San Anselmo

Staff Report
November 9, 2017

For the meeting of November 21, 2017

TO: Park and Recreation Commission
FROM: Dannielle Mauk, Director of Community Services
SUBJECT: Archery in Marin

Recommendation

That Commission review and file report.

Background

Approximately eighteen months ago Scott Bullard from Marin Archery approached the Recreation Department about the potential of offering archery instruction classes through the Recreation Department. Town staff met with Scott to review possible location options, and to address safety concerns and liability issues. Staff requested that Marin Archery submit a proposal for a temporary archery range.

Discussion

Staff continues to encourage Marin Archery to submit a proposal for a temporary archery range, which is a logical first step. Possible locations could include our tennis courts, a mixed-use field or Sorich Park. To date, we have not received a proposal. The proposal for a temporary range for recreation classes would need to be reviewed by each of the relevant Town departments, including Recreation, Public Works, Planning, Police and Fire. Archery classes could potentially be a good addition to our current programming if safety, liability and location issues could be addressed.

Analysis

Recently, Marin Archery returned with a verbal request to develop a permanent archery range at Sorich Park. Sorich Park is an open space park which is currently used by residents for casual walking/jogging, dog walking and hosts monthly community clean-up days. An archery range would represent a departure from the current passive uses. At this time, no organized programming is conducted there.

Staff has recommended Marin Archery meet with the Town's Open Space Committee to discuss the idea of an archery range at Sorich Park during the month of October before coming to the PRC Commission.

As with any conversion of public parklands to a specific use, the installation of a permanent archery range would require renovations including upgrades to signage, ADA access, and other changes as required by the Planning Commission and Town Council.

Conclusion

In conclusion, staff recommends that Marin Archery submit a proposal to the Parks and Recreation Commission at a future meeting for consideration of a temporary archery range which would be used to offer classes through the Department in partnership with Marin Archery. This proposal would be reviewed by Town staff and require a recommendation from the Commission to Town Council for review.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Mauk', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Danielle Mauk
Director of Community Services

Attachment 1: Information packet submitted by Marin Archery.

Archery in Marin County: Facts, Figures, and Opportunities

What is archery?

Archery is an equipment sport, involving the use of a bow to propel arrows. A bow consists of a string attached to limbs that store mechanical energy, which is imparted by the user drawing the string. An arrow consists of a shaft with a weighted point in front, and fletchings and a nock at the other end. There are many different types of bows and arrows, and a variety of archery activities that make use of each type.

Is archery safe?

The National Safety Council, insurance groups and consumer safety companies consistently rank archery **among the safest sports**. For decades, insurance companies have ranked archery in their **lowest injury risk tier**, along with badminton, bowling and table tennis. The next injury rate group (fishing, tennis, skating and golf) is 2x to 5x higher in injury frequency and severity. Almost all municipalities provide public space for activities with much higher injury rates than archery – baseball (23x higher), bicycling (28x higher), basketball (42x higher). Archery's consistent safety record is all the more impressive given the wide range of participant ages and fitness levels, from elementary school children to senior citizens. As an anecdotal example, the range in Golden Gate Park has operated for over 130 years *with no person-on-person injuries* – and only exceedingly rare instances of park users injuring themselves with faulty equipment.

Why is archery a desirable sport for recreational programming?

Nearly everyone can enjoy success in archery whether or not they are the tallest, fastest, or strongest person around. Adaptive options exist to accommodate archers with muscular and upper and lower limb differences, visually-impaired archers, and others. The sport or discipline of archery is highly inclusive and for many enthusiasts is a lifelong activity. Archery is a diverse activity with a wide variety of formats and styles. Many different kinds of bows, arrows, and accessories, and countless types of targets may be employed. It's also a fast-growing sport, with participation increasing 20% from 2012-2015.

Who participates in archery in Marin County? Where do archers in Marin currently shoot?

Marin once had several ranges (in Albert Park, China Camp, Fairfax, San Geronimo, and Novato). These ranges largely closed to make way for residential development, and for the past few decades, Marin has had no archery shops or public archery ranges. Despite this, a significant portion of the population participates in archery - though the participants are often unaware of each other's existence! Some residents shoot on their own property, while others drive significant distances to get to public archery ranges in other counties, shoot at private clubs requiring annual memberships, or visit commercial indoor ranges, where lane fees can be prohibitive to regular, casual usage. Several youth and recreational groups (Boy and Girl Scouts, 4H clubs, schools) have expressed interest in archery programs, but cite drive time as a prohibitive barrier to participation. While no formal studies have yet been done on archery participation in Marin, it's clear that the shortage of convenient facilities severely curtails participation. If archery facilities were more conveniently available, Marin would likely see participation much closer to the national average of 9.9% yearly participation.

Is a permanent facility required for archery?

Not necessarily: beginning archery classes can be conducted in any gym or recreation center by hanging special netting to protect walls and other property. Tennis courts can be utilized using the same technique.

An open field, such as those used for soccer or football, can accommodate many archery programs.

However, **a permanent facility is desirable** for several reasons:

- **Availability and access:** Archery as a sport requires consistent practice for improvement. While group programs are excellent for learning and keeping motivated, most archers with their own equipment also practice by themselves, on their own schedule. A temporary range, e.g. one in a community center or on a mixed-use field that is constructed and taken down for each session, would not be able to accommodate archers outside of the hours of those programs, limiting public utilization.
- **Environmental Impact:** While the environmental footprint of a permanent range would itself be minimal, it would reduce the need for local archers to drive hours per week to participate in the sport.
- **Safety:** By making a well-designed and safely laid-out range available, fewer archers would resort to shooting at home in less-safe configurations.

Are most archery ranges staffed?

No, most public and private outdoor archery ranges are not staffed. Some indoor private ranges allow members access to facilities via keys, passcodes or similar entry systems.

Where should a range be located?

To provide the most access and opportunity for residents, archery facilities should be considered in and near other common park facilities. These parks should be just as visible as other recreational opportunities and accessible via common travel routes (trails, roads etc.) The best locations are where topography and other natural barriers can be used to improve safety.

How much space is required for an archery range?

A high-quality shooting facility can fit just about anywhere. The space needed for archery is dependent upon available natural or manmade backstops, budget and the types of shooting being considered; the more shooting options available, the larger the range needs to be.

- Beginner targets are generally placed at shorter distances (5-20 yards) to ensure shooting success. Beginners often shoot low draw-weight bows that are best shot into targets where low-velocity arrows will not bounce back from the target. These targets are often slightly different than those used for more advanced archers shooting higher velocity arrows.
- Targets staggered from 10 to 40 yards will serve a majority of recreational archers. Where space is available, longer distances should be considered for target archers (Olympic competition, for example, takes place at 70 meters).

What are some good resources for learning about successful layouts and designs of community archery parks?

Please see the attached *Easton Foundations Archery Facility Planning Guide* and *Archery Trade Association Archery Park Guide*.

What are some other important design considerations for outdoor ranges?

- Oriented due north to shoot away from the sun
- Access limited to the rear of the range for safety

- Sun canopies provided for shooting lines and rest areas
- Located near parking for equipment drop off
- Nearby public restrooms and/or water fountains
- ADA accessibility

How much would a range cost? Where would funding come from?

Costs will depend on the size and scope of the range. By building an outdoor range on public land, cost can be minimized. The majority of the cost of most new outdoor archery ranges is site preparation and maintenance. Funding for public ranges can be obtained from grants, archery industry groups, wildlife agencies, local businesses, community donors, and fundraising. For ranges in Marin, already-pledged community donations will provide sufficient initial capital; this may be supplemented for additional by federal Pittman-Robertson and archery industry grants. Ultimately, a range can be expected to self-fund and generate surplus revenue through programming.

Who would be responsible for maintenance of a range?

The archery community would be responsible for maintenance of any archery-specific equipment, signage, and facilities (e.g. targets), with fundraising, expenditures, and volunteer labor being organized through a non-profit local archery organization.

Why is Sorich Ranch Park the perfect place to put a community archery range?

- Underutilized; irregular terrain not suitable for other recreational activities
- Excellent natural backstops (requiring no site preparation)
- Northern orientation
- Ample parking
- Convenient to Marin’s population centers
- Only 5 minutes away from Marin’s only archery shop
- Range would have minimal visual and environmental impact

What existing uses would be impacted by a range at Sorich Ranch Park?

We anticipate minimal impact to existing uses, such as casual walking/jogging and dog-walking. In the current draft proposal, all current walking paths would be rerouted around the range. While dogs would not be permitted within the confines of the range, gates and fencing would allow dog owners to continue to exercise their dogs at Sorich Ranch Park. Several improvements created by the range would also benefit other park users, such as seating, shade areas, and accessibility enhancements.

What would an archery range at Sorich Ranch Park look like?

We are not ready to present to-scale renderings of a proposal as yet. Several aspects of the range layout and composition are still in development. That said, at Sorich Ranch Park, there are two areas that suggest themselves for use as an archery range: provisionally, we have been calling them Orange and Pink. Orange is the area directly beyond the parking lot as one enters the park; Pink is the open area off to the left as one enters the park. Both options have excellent natural backstops (the hill beyond), and offer the opportunity to set up targets at a variety of distances.

What is the goal of the Sorich Ranch Park Archery Range Working Group?

The immediate goal of the Working Group is to educate San Anselmo's committees and town council about the the opportunity and the benefits of a public archery range in Sorich Ranch Park. Ultimately, the working group will assist the town with range design, construction, operation, fundraising, and volunteer coordination.

How can I help?

Marin's archers need to show that they can not only build a range, but sustain it and operate it in a way that benefits the community as a whole.

- **If you want to make your voice heard in support of the proposal**, make sure you're receiving emails from the Archery In Marin mailing list. If you're signed up, you should have gotten an email invite with the subject "Range Planning Meeting September 10th"). When the time comes to advance our proposal, we'll use the email list to coordinate advocacy efforts.
- **If you want to have input** on range design, advocacy and governance, please consider joining the working group; it's as simple as emailing Scott (stbullard@gmail.com) with your name and phone number, and expressing interest. The working group will be conducting the majority of its business by email, holding in-person meetings as needed.
- **If you have the means to support this project materially or financially**, please consider a donation - especially once we are equipped to receive them on a tax-deductible basis. If you would like to pledge a donation now, to be made once the Working Group establishes non-profit status, please sign the pledge sheet. If you would like to help with with range construction or maintenance, please indicate that on the sign-in sheet.

Let's:

- Encourage discovery of our parks and open spaces
- Foster a sense of community within and beyond the sport
- Provide attractive opportunities for inclusive outdoor recreation,

Together!