

SUN CITIES INDEPENDENT

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Sundial roof: Bonanza or boondoggle?

by Bret McKeand

Repair work will begin this month on the Sundial Recreation Center roof and Rec Center officials are positive the results will please most members.

One member, however, is calling the repairs "excessive" and claims the building could have been rebuilt at nearly half the cost being spent on the current design.

Arthur J. Sullivan, chairman of a Rec Center committee established to look into the repair of the roof, is recommending that the facility be restored to its pre-1982 condition. To do so, he claims, would cost the centers less money and would enable the building to be open in a more timely fashion.

One-half of the Sundial Recreation Center was closed in May, 1986, due to a failing roof. The roof covered the pool area, the men's clubroom, the shuffleboard courts and the arts and crafts rooms.

It was determined that moisture in the building had rotted the wooden beams supporting the roof and there was a good chance that the roof would collapse.

Engineering studies conducted at the time revealed problems in the air circulation within the building. Not only would the roof have to be rebuilt, but to prevent the problem from occurring again in the future, the heating and air conditioning mechanisms would also have to be replaced.

Last fall, the board of directors voted to replace the old roof with a new design. Earlier this year the project was finalized and the corporation began accepting bids for the work.

On June 9, a contract was awarded to W.P. Rowland Construction Co. for \$1,332,000. The entire project is scheduled to be completed sometime this fall.

Louis Grunwald, president of the board, is satisfied with the way the project has been handled. As far as he is concerned, the Sundial roof is an old issue – one the board now feels is behind them.

The plans have been finalized, the contract has been awarded and, says Grunwald, "we're going ahead with the project."

Sullivan, retired owner of Arrowhead Engineering Corp., a civil engineering and land surveying firm, feels a new design of a new roof was not the best option for repairing the center.

He claims the board has not only dragged its feet in

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completing the project, but has disregarded recommendations made by qualified engineering specialists.

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On April 2, 1987, Sullivan's committee, consisting of five Sun City residents with extensive backgrounds in construction and engineering, submitted a report to the board.

In that report, it was suggested that the best option for repairing the Sundial Center was to rebuild the roof as it existed prior to 1982. Also contained in the report was a proposal by a reputable construction company to rebuild the roof for \$610,783 in only 75 days – almost \$700,000 less than the cost of the project approved by the board.

The report was unanimously endorsed by all five members of the committee.

"Mr. Grunwald and the board have not had the courtesy to acknowledge the work of this committee," says Sullivan. "Nor have they acknowledged that with our report, we could save approximately three-fourths of a million dollars and at least 55 days in time," he adds.

Grunwald says that the board did review the report and had, in fact, examined "all options."

He says the board decided against rebuilding the old roof because **"we didn't think it was a good idea to put a failure back together."**

As for the repair price quoted in the report, Grunwald says the board could not accept the figure because it was not collected through the normal bidding process.

"It was an unethical bid because we didn't get it through the normal process. We did allow that company to make a bid on the new design and they weren't the lowest bidder," says Grunwald.

On May 8, the committee met with the board one final time in hopes of convincing them to change their plans and rebuild the old roof. The committee prepared a report which claimed that with the new design – the "esthetics of the building would be lessened."

Sullivan says Grunwald and remaining board members have continually **ignored their recommendations.**

Grunwald says the board has listened to the committee, but that some of their suggestions were unworkable.

"We did look into all these things they suggested," says Grunwald. "But there came a time when we had to say, 'hey kids, we can't do some of these things.'"

Grunwald says the board is certain that, when completed, the majority of members will be satisfied with what has been done. There will always, he adds, be some who feel things should have been done differently.

"As far as we're (the board) concerned, this (the committee's recommendation) is just straw in the wind," says Grunwald.

"We've said all we're going to say about this. We're moving ahead."