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To: Mayor <Mayor@longbeach.gov>; CityClerk <CityClerk@longbeach.gov>; Council District 1 <District1@longbeach.gov>; Council District 2 <District2@longbeach.gov>; Council District 3 <District3@longbeach.gov>; Council District 4 <District4@longbeach.gov>; Council District 5 <District5@longbeach.gov>; Council District 6 <District6@longbeach.gov>; Council District 7 <District7@longbeach.gov>; Council District 8 <District8@longbeach.gov>; Council District 9 <District9@longbeach.gov>

Subject: Today's Council Agenda Items 19 and 20 (20 July 2021 for the public record): Why vote for this?

-EXTERNAL-

Dear Council Members and Mayor:

Today, on these items, City management expects you to vote again (as last week) to rubberstamp their choice of site for an aquatic center (BBAC).

Again, as last week, I join my colleagues in CARP (Citizens About Responsible Planning) to note that the aquatic center project's functional goals – more swimming and other aquatics – are great, but the choice of site – and the needlessly and hugely costly consequences of that choice – are utterly lunatic.

I dare any of you to produce and clearly state even ONE legitimate reason to vote for that choice of site, as versus the alternatives available in Long Beach.

NO such reason has been offered to date – neither by City management nor Council members nor mayor nor public. At last week's Council meeting a couple would-be excuses were hinted, but no clear reason was stated.

Hinted excuse #1. Some folks have nostalgic memories of swimming in the former indoor pool at the proposed site.

Comment. ANY new indoor-pool aquatic center could handsomely support nostalgia for the old pool: just decorate the walls with commemorative murals and legacy photos!

Nostalgia proves nothing as to whether management's site choice is to be preferred versus, for instance, the Convention Center 'Elephant' Lot.

The Lot has far better access for the great majority of city residents and visitors and moreover it can enable far more economical and higher-quality construction and longer facility life, thanks to firmer ground and better protection

from sea-level-rise. (See, for example, sea-level-rise and flood maps in the draft Climate Action and Adaptation Plan presented in January.)

Despite falsehoods in the original BBAC EIR and from management, the Lot could readily accommodate a top-notch indoor-pools aquatic center – and could do so along with other facilities which city officials have proposed be there.

Hinted excuse #2. Opposition to management's site choice is 'racist'.

Comment. *It's management's choice of site that is 'racist' and inequitable.* The site is convenient only to some of the city's wealthiest neighborhoods.

Worse, the site choice is grossly inequitable to thousands of Long Beach residents in another serious regard. The choice imposes humongous construction costs which will seriously drain Tidelands funds much needed for a true priority: defense from sea-level-rise of the city's threatened neighborhoods and their hundreds of homes and dozens of businesses.

Unable to justify management's site choice, some of its boosters misrepresent realities, duck substantive discussion, and sling mud. They pretend that opponents' pro-equity proposals – and even the opponents themselves – are 'racist'. Not content even with that pretense, they also tag as 'racists' folks who live near the site and have legitimate concerns that any facility which brings in massive-scale events will create local havoc, owing to the neighborhood's limited access and parking.

Such tactics are sad and disgusting. And by the way - even when it fits! - the tag 'racist' need not prove much about the quality of a person's most relevant actions or arguments. Most signers of the Declaration of Independence and of the US Constitution likely *were* racists!

CONCLUSION. Again, I dare you to come up with even ONE legitimate reason for preferring use of management's proposed aquatic center site.

Joe Weinstein (Joseph M. Weinstein, Ph.D.)