Ikego community seeks answers at town hall meeting

Compiled by CFAY Public Affairs

The following are questions and answers from the Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka Ikego Housing Detatchement town hall meeting held April 17:

Q: Parking spots near crosswalk leading to Jimmuji gate needs to be better cordoned off and zebra stripes painted for pedestrian safety.

A: Safety is working with Public Works in an effort to properly stripe parking spaces to ensure no vehicle parking. In the meantime cones will be placed in the area to prevent parking. Security will enforce once striping is complete.

Q: Please monitor parking in front of post office. Enforce parking policy better.

A: Security while conducting patrol rounds will monitor the post office parking lot. The post office leadership will notify Security of any unauthorized vehicles parked in this area. Security also encourages any Ikego resident to notify the Security office of any unauthorized vehicles observed.

Q: Are there any plans to upgrade playgrounds?

A: Yes. There are two playgrounds that will be upgraded this summer; one between buildings 682 and 683, and the other between buildings 688 and 689. Next year, three more playgrounds are scheduled for upgrade. For information, all playgrounds are usually renovated every three or four years.

Q: Is there any plans to do something about the slippery floor tiles in the homes?

A: Floor tiles are not slippery if they are properly maintained. The tiles used in our housing units are standard floor tiles that can be found in buildings and homes throughout the world. Kept dry and clean, they do not present a hazard. For information, future renovations to tower housing units will include installation of carpet flooring to help prevent noise.

Q: Can the Ikego NEX (Navy Exchange) stock more meat products such as ground beef?

A: The NEX is working with DeCA (Defense Commissary Agency) to support the NEX Ikego "frozen meat" initiative. The anticipated delivery for our first order is the end of May. We will offer: steak, hamburger, pork ribs and pork chops. As we get additional requests from the community we will work with DeCA to add the requested items. As always the continuation of this program will be based on sales.

Q: There is a rumor that Ikego is getting a Subway. Is it true?

A: NEX is planning to renovate the food service area and there is discussion regarding the addition of Subway at Ikego. Once the decision is made, the NEX will share the updated information with the Ikego community.

Q: Can the NEX sell bundles of wood for campfires?

A: NEX has forwarded this request to their buying office and will alert the community of the decision once it's made.

Q: We are interested in starting a community garden.

A: A location is being sought for a community garden. For this initiative to work it must be maintained by volunteer community members. Once the area is located a "ground breaking" ceremony will be held and community members notified. Interested community members should contact the OIC's (Officer-in-charge) office to volunteer for maintenance and upkeep.

Commander Fleet Activitites Yokosuka Commanding Officer Capt. David Owen addresses Ikego Housing Detatchment residents' concerns during a town hall meeting held in the Asakusa Tower April 17.

Q: When is the Teen Center to be completed?

A: The Teen and Youth Center is scheduled for September 2012 opening. This date is subject to change based on material availability and other factors.

Q: We need more bathroom facilities at campgrounds so campers don't have to walk so far.

A: This matter will be addressed in the Ikego West Valley Joint Use discussions and we will provide information as it is received.

Q: Can we have a single-hole pitch or putting green for golfers.

A: Unfortunately, there is currently no in-house resources (i.e. knowledge, skill and equipment) to accomplish this technical project. In addition, to construct an artificial turf pitching/putting green in Ikego similar to the one on Yokosuka would cost approximately $125K.

Q: Is there a "resource and referral" point of contact for military family members seeking assistance with school related matters, locally and/or transitioning to CFAY?

A: The CFAY source and referral point of contact is the CFAY School Liaison Officer (SLO), Ruth Russell. The SLO is located in Bldg. 1555 (PSD Building), room 300. For more information, please contact Russell at 243-2588 (046-816-2588) or visit the SLO Blog page at http://mwryokosuka.wordpress.com/slo/.

Q: What is going to be done with the old school once the new school is completed?

A: Public Works Department (PWD) is currently working various options for the old school area. The future use of the existing school and surrounding area is tied to the negotiations with the Japanese on the relocation of facilities that are currently in the west area that will become joint use. Depending on what the Government of Japan decides to relocate and where they want to put it will have an impact on what we do with the old school.

As stated in the meeting, a very likely scenario will be to demolish it to make additional room for bus parking and other possible facilities being relocated. However, the other factor at play is that the Government of Japan has already agreed to construct more than 27,000 square meters of community facilities on the Hakkei Hills side of Ikego. That is projected to include space for resident amenities such as a library, assembly hall, all-hands club, food establishments, and other Morale Recreation and Welfare and NEX resources. It will be linked by a tunnel with direct access to Ikego so residents don't have to exit the installation property. The progress being made on Hakkei Hills, once the new school is complete, will also play a role in our decision making as to what to do with the old school.

As you can see, there are several factors currently at play. We definitely recognize the desire of residents to add additional amenities to Ikego and that is a major focus of our planning and negotiation efforts with the Japanese.

Q: Can something be done to prevent vehicles in the "school zone".

A: The School zone enforcement and vehicle control is managed by the OIC's office. Residents who reside in the school zone will be issued special passes from the housing office. During the time period when vehicle traffic is restricted into the school zone, vehicles will be monitored and vehicles without the pass will not be permitted to enter.

Q: Most Sailors can't make the 4 p.m. bus. Maybe slide times to the right 15 minutes or change the route to accommodate Sailors who work on the dock.

A: Regarding sliding time to right by 15 minutes, we analyzed this option and found more issues would develop if this were implemented. Due to the funding reductions, Public Works Department only has one bus that provides transportation for both the 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. times. Beginning the route at 4:15 p.m. would place the bus directly in the middle of 'base traffic' that begins around 4:40 p.m. This traffic delay would further delay the return of the bus back to the base for the 6 p.m. pickup. Shifting the 6 p.m. bus to around 6:30 p.m. would not be fair to those members who now have to arrive home even later because the 4 p.m. bus schedule was altered.

Regarding changing the route to accommodate Sailors on dock, we definitely considered this, however, changing the route would only accommodate a few of the Sailors, and we would still be affecting the rest of the Sailors around the base. After meeting with a few of the consistent Home To Work bus riders, they have stated that they would prefer the route remain the same for situations where they may miss the bus at their stop, but they still have time to make it to one of the other bus stops prior to the bus departing the base.