



APPROVED

**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
May 24, 2011
City Hall
250 Hamilton Ave**

Commissioners Present: Deidre Crommie, Sunny Dykwel, Jennifer Hetterly, Ed Lauing, Pat Markevitch, Daria Walsh,

Commissioners Absent: Paul Losch

Others Present: Council Karen Holman

Staff Present: Daren Anderson, Greg Betts, Rich Bicknell, Catherine Bourquin, Rob de Geus

I. ROLL CALL CONDUCTED BY: Catherine Bourquin

II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS: None

II. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None

IV. BUSINESS:

1. **Approval of Draft Minutes from April 26, 2011 regular meeting** – The draft minutes for the April 26, 2011 regular meeting were approved as amended. **Approved 6:0**
2. **Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan Update** – Chair Walsh briefly described to staff and the public that the presentation would be heard first and then it would be opened for Oral Communication, thirdly the Commission would comment on the item. Staff de Geus introduced Curtis Williams, Director of Planning and Transportation and Jaime Rodriguez, Chief Transportation Officer. Director Williams introduced the plan and discussed the process of the revision. Mr. Rodriguez provided the Commission a Power Point presentation on the status of the Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan and the draft recommendations. (slides attached) Mr. Rodriguez emphasized that the intent of the plan isn't to propose new trails for parks, but improve the street network and the land around it. Oral Communications were taken after the presentation.

Oral Communications



APPROVED

Pamela Radin- Ms. Radin spoke on making Ross Road a priority when prioritizing the Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan.

Mike Aberg – Mr. Aberg described the hazards that exist for families trying to bicycle on Palo Alto roads and would like to see making Ross Road Bike Boulevard a priority during the Planning and Transportation prioritization process for the Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan.

Rita Morgin – Ms. Morgin spoke on the conditions of Palo Alto's roads and emphasized that if the road conditions don't improve, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan will not work.

Linnea Wickstrom – Ms. Wickstrom wanted the PARC to encourage the Planning and Transportation Department to consider connecting the segment between Miller and the new bike path to make it a safe path for kids commuting to school in Los Altos. She also spoke on opening up the easement behind the old Dinah's for access to the new Summerhill Park for pedestrian and bicycle access.

The Commission was given time for questions. The questions and comments pertained to the proposed presentation and the data provided to the Commission. Questions/Comments consisted of:

1. Have they considered turning Homer back into a two way road?
2. Removing the speed bumps on Ross Road.
3. No South Palo Alto connection to the Baylands
4. Make Matadero Creek path an official priority
5. Byxbee Park – remove some of the barriers for better access into the Park.
6. Arastradero Preserve and Foothill – Stanford connection of Old Page Mill to Arastradero was not done well. Review this connection.
7. Bay to Ridge Trail look into another alternate route – is this the best route?
8. Making the map an important resource and include key destinations; include names of the Parks, Community Centers, Libraries, Sports fields, etc.
9. Downtown navigation enhanced with bike lanes
10. Signage
11. Ross Road
12. On-line survey – dates were not correct.

The next plan/timeline is:

June – Finalize DRAFT Plan

July – Plan Available online

Citywide Meeting #2 (Date TBD)

August – Planning & Transportation Committee Recommendation to Council

September – Council Adoption

3. **Discussion on improving connectivity for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians between the Main Library, Art Center and Community Gardens** – Staff de Geus introduced the topic and the presenters Group 4, City Project Manager, Karen Bengard; Arts Manager Karen Kienzel. Chair Walsh opened the item up for Oral Communications.

Oral Communications

Rita Morgin, Gardener at Main – Ms. Morgin spoke on the suggestions that were brought up during the Community meeting on May 5th with the Art Center and Public Works. She referred to the handout and the suggestions that were offered at the meeting diagram #2. The suggestion for adding curve and speed bumps would solve the problem of people speeding through the parking lot. She also felt the suggestion of adding a FULL LOT sign would take care of having the need for a connector road. Ms. Morgin doesn't feel the connector road is justified because it will destroy the garden.

Lawrence Selbach, Gardener at Main – Mr. Selbach spoke on being opposed to the connector road he called the "Cut through". He is concerned about replacing nature with asphalt. That asphalt would take precedence over "nature". He would like the Commission to reconsider this plan.

Pingyu Liu, Gardener at Main – Mr. Liu spoke on being opposed to having the connector road at the Main garden. His son has many happy memories growing up and visiting the gardens. He would like this to be reconsidered as an option to connect the Art Center/Library. Once you take land away in place of asphalt you never get it back. He also feels this would endanger children and pedestrians visiting the garden.

Jeff Levinsky, Palo Alto Resident – Mr. Levinsky spoke on encouraging the Commission to oppose the plan to construct a connectivity road between the Library and Art Center. He added that he has been involved with the Library plan for years and that the plan never included the plan for this road and impacting the community gardens. This proposed plan would reduce parking instead of adding parking and it has no major support for it. The suggestion for a lot full sensor would be a better idea than creating a road cutting through the garden area.

Karen Bengard, Public Works Senior Engineer and Project Manager for the Library renovation started the presentation by introducing the key speakers Karen Kienzel, Manager of Arts, and Dawn Merkes and Jonathan Hartman of Group 4. The presentation included the historical background on the Integration of the Art Center/Main Library/Community Gardens Complex. The purpose of the presentation was to explore possible solutions to way finding and access issues surrounding the integration of the Art Center and Main Library. After the presentation, the Commission was given time for questions and comments.

- Commissioner Markevitch commented on the problem with cutting through the Art Centers parking lot. She suggested that having the timing of the traffic light on Newell changed to less time could alleviate the cut through traffic.
- Commissioner Dykwel commented on the meeting from May 5th. She felt that the presentation portion at Lucie Stern showed more detail on the need for the

APPROVED

integration and connectivity road. Her additional concern was having the connectivity road take away garden space, but the preliminary design using the fire lane showed that no garden space would be lost.

- Commissioner Hetterly accepted the plans showing the removal of the shed but added that some type of buffer should be created between the garden and the road. She also said that she wasn't convinced of the need for the connectivity road.
- Commissioner Crommie felt that the design was not aesthetically pleasing to look at and didn't feel the need for the connectivity road.
- Chair Walsh thought signage should be added directing users to additional parking availability, ie. Hopkins Street in front of tennis courts. She also wasn't convinced of the need for the connectivity road but liked the flow between the Library and Art Center.
- Council Member Holman added that when the project comes before the Council that they need to come prepared with where the extra funding for this design will come from.

Karen Bengard remarked that the Commission basically is an agreement with the other Palo Alto Commissions/Committees that they are interested in the existing design but are concerned with the connectivity road and need more information to support it. Commissioner Lauing remarked that it appears that they are in a catch 22 situation with funding since the bond measure did not include this additional design. Karen Holman added that they will have to be discreet with funding and provide other means of funding sources for the design and construction. She concluded by advising Ms. Bengard when they write the report they included all the public comments and emails that have been sent on this matter.

4. **Preparation for a joint study session with the Planning and Transportation Commission scheduled for May 25th, 6pm to 7pm** - Chair Walsh reported on the meeting that staff de Geus, Commissioner Crommie, and herself attended with the Chair of Planning and Transportation to prepare for the joint study session. The Commission discussed how they wanted to structure the session. They discussed the need to form a process to connect the overlapping issues with the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Planning and Transportation Commission. Chair Walsh would finalize the discussion items with staff de Geus and send to the Commission via email.
5. **Commission sub-committee review, workplans, protocols** – Tabled for a future meeting.
6. **Update on fiscal year 2011-12 budget process** – Chair Walsh reported that the budget is on schedule and staff de Geus announced that the Municipal Fee Schedule goes to the Finance Committee tomorrow tonight, May 25th. The full budget goes to Finance Committee on June 13th and Budget adoption goes to Council on June 20th.

V. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Chair Walsh discussed the availability of the Commissioners for the June, July, and August meetings. It was agreed the scheduling would be confirmed via email.
2. Commissioner Markevitch passed out a handout from Commissioner Dykwel on an upcoming event called Connecting Family and Culture.
3. Staff de Geus reported on an event that occurred over the weekend of May 21st with the Youth Forum.

VI. TENTATIVE

1. Community Garden Rules and Regulations update
2. Developmental Assets results of survey
3. Theft at the Baylands

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 10:40pm