__Approved__

MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
July 26, 2011
City Hall
250 Hamilton Ave

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

Commissioners Absent:

Others Present: Council Karen Holman

Staff Present: Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin, Rob de Geus,

I. ROLL CALL CONDUCTED BY: Catherine Bourquin

II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS: Staff de Geus explained that the nearby Planning and Transportation meeting would end around 8:30 and that moving item 10 to item 5a would allow Planning and Transportation staff to easily attend our discussion on the Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan. The Commission agreed to this agenda change.

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None

IV. BUSINESS:

1. **__Approval of Draft Minutes from the May 24, 2011 regular meeting -__** The May 24th, 2011 draft minutes were approved as amended. Approved 5:2 abstention (Losch) (Crommie absent)

2. **__Approval of Draft Minutes from the June 21, 2011 regular meeting__ -** The June 21st, 2011 draft minutes were approved as amended. Approved 4:3 abstention (Losch, Markevitch) (Crommie absent)

3. **__Recommendation to update the rules and regulations that govern the Community Garden Program__ –** Chair Walsh introduced the item and staff Bourquin, Community Garden Coordinator,spoke on the item highlighting the changes that were incorporated from the Parks and Recreation Commission's June meeting. The primary changes

that were discussed at length at the June meeting with the public input included the following:

- Only two waiting lists, one for Johnson Garden and one for Main and Eleanor Gardens.
- Having a list for those wanting to upgrade to a more desirable plot
- Adding the allowance of a garden plot to one per household
- Removing the option to buy-out a workday
- Compliance notices, after receiving three non-compliance notices within a year licenses will be terminated.
- Volunteer garden liaisons will have their garden fee waived for their service.

<u>Oral Communications</u>
Rita Morgin – Spoke as the Volunteer Garden Liaison for the Main Garden, she was concerned that something should be included in the rules and regulations on constructing fences in the individual plots. She felt that they should not be allowed because of safety issues resulting from pathway intrusion.

The Commission was given time to comment and ask questions. After a brief discussion, the Commission entertained a motion to approve the garden rules and regulations as revised.

Motion: The Parks and Recreation Commission move to have the Community Garden Rules and Regulations approved as revised. Passed 6:1 (Crommie not part of discussion)

4. **<u>Study Session of Regional Water Quality Control Plan (RWQCP) Landscaping Project -</u>** Staff de Geus introduced the item and Phil Bobel; Interim Assistant Director Public Works spoke on behalf of items 4 and 5 on tonight's agenda. He provided some pertinent information that he felt that the Commission should know relevant to the two items. He reiterated that there were still some uncertainties that Public Works was working through on these two projects, but welcomed any comments the Commission had on these related items. Council Liaison Holman wanted to ensure that the Parks and Recreation Commission stays included in any discussion on this item. Assistant Director Bobel assured the Commission if that's what they wanted, then he would make sure they were included.

   Julie Weiss, Environmental Specialist for Public Works presented the Commission with an overview of the current landscaping conceptual designs for the Regional Water Quality Control Plant. She provided the Commission with her presentation and pointed out that item number 4 on the agenda and item 5 are closely related because they are located right next to each other. Her item related to the landscaping of the Quality

Control Plant. The goal is to make the area safe and aesthetically appealing. The target date for construction to begin is fall of 2012 and completion would be in 2013, possibly even 2014.

Oral Communications

Herb Borack – Mr. Borack spoke on reminding staff and the Commission that they follow the correct process such as going through the environmental review board, and public noticing of projects such as this.

Emily Renzel – Ms. Renzel as a member of the Citizen's Advisory Board voiced her concern over the retention of the vegetation, and wanted to ensure that other options would be considered before removing it and starting over. She also wanted to ensure that the pedestrian access off of Embarcadero would be preserved assuming that the Park stays intact.

Discussion

Q: What is the cost of the project?

A: With everything included, the cost is approximately $900,000

Q: Does the project include Art?

A: They have had discussions with the Art Commission on the use of the 1% Art contingency for projects of this size.

Q: Is the funding coming from the City?

A: Funding sources are approximately 35% City and 65% from partners, excluding the 1% for art.

Q: How many personnel are at the plant?

A: 70 – the plant operates 24/7 so staffing isn't at 70 at one time.

Q: How many tours?

A: Tours are happening every month.

Q: Commissioner Walsh commented on the chain link fence seen from the street and how it disrupts the feeling someone gets entering the Park.

A: Staff Anderson spoke to this item and made some suggestions such as possibly adding vegetation to camouflage the fence being careful not to plant an evasive vine, or when the eucalyptus trees grow this would hide eventually cover them.

Q: Will the plans be specific to habitat in the Bay?

A: Staff Anderson replied that the plan being considered would accommodate a wide range of wild habitat.

Q: Commissioner Hetterly inquired on the process for the tours at the Water Quality Plant.

A. Assistant Director Bobel responded and said they could schedule the Commission to take a tour. Ms. Weiss would work with staff to set one up.

Q. Council Holman inquired on the trails that were discussed earlier.

A. Senior Engineer Matt Raschke responded and informed the Commission that the trail in reference is a pedestrian/bike path and it is part of the Pedestrian Bike Path Master Plan that will be discussed tonight.

Ms. Weiss thanked the Commission and advised them if they had any questions or comments to let her know.

5. **Recommendation to consider the Construction of a New Palo Alto Recycling Center and Improvements to the existing Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Facility** - The item was introduced by Chair Walsh and Assistant Direct Bobel made a few remarks introducing Senior Engineer Matt Raschke who spoke on the item. He went through Phase I and Phase II components of the project, which included the improvements to the New Recycling Center and Improvements to the Existing Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Center. He added that the project was being integrated into the Water Quality Control Plant landscaping project. The cost estimate for the project is $525,000 which includes the small recycling center that is still uncertain may be eliminated. He also spoke on the HHW segment of the project saying it was the most expensive part to operate. The next step in this process is to have a study session with City Council on September 19th sharing the conceptual plans to date and all the feedback from the various commissions and boards.

Timeline

The tentative project timeline, subject to change, is as follows:

Activity Estimated Completion Date

Arts Commission presentation Thursday, June 23, 2011
Submit Major Review Application to Planning Tuesday, July 19, 2011
CEQA Initial Study – 20 Day Public Review - Begin Tuesday, July 26, 2011
Parks and Recreation Review Tuesday, July 26, 2011
Planning finalizes Major Review Application Sunday, August 07, 2011
CEQA Initial Study – 20 Day Public Review - End Tuesday, August 16, 2011
PTC Site and Design Review Wednesday, September 14, 2011
ARB Site and Design Review Thursday, October 06, 2011
City Council Site and Design Review Monday, November 07, 2011
Go out for Construction IFB Tuesday, November 08, 2011
Begin Construction Monday, February 20, 2012
End Construction Sunday, May 20, 2012

Oral Communications

Herb Borock – Mr. Borock spoke on his concern related to the recycling center and that the Finance Committee voted unanimously to eliminate that from the City. The second concern he had was that the timeline provided shows the CEQA initial study starting today without having the environmental review done yet.

Discussion

Q: What are the reasons for the cost of having the hazard waste collection?

A: The cost is for the storage capacity for the hazardous waste and to collect more frequently versus the current process where it is collected every Saturday and shipped off the same day.

Q: Why is the city collecting hazardous waste so close to the Bay? Are there other possible sites to do this?

A: Other sites have been considered; such as the former Los Altos treatment site however having it at this location ties into the water treatment plant which already stores a significant amount of hazardous waste.

Q: What is the size of the area for this project?

A: Approximately a quarter acre as presented in the modified version without the recycling center. Without the recycling center there are still items that residents need to dispose of that won't be picked up through the curbside process, items that are hazardous such as old medicine. These discussions and ideas still need to be thought through in the next couple of months.

Q: What is the current program for recycling medicine?

A: Medicine is accepted 5 days a week. We don't want people flushing their medicines down the toilet, so the more convenient we make it, is what we will be striving for. The cost involved for controlling the problem is much more cost affective then what it would cost to clean up after the fact.

Council Member Holman suggested having as much visual material as possible when presenting this project to Council. Also to make sure if relevant information comes up to include Parks and Recreation Commission in the dialogue. Commissioner Crommie would like to see some kind of table that lists what we have and what is needed with cost. Director Bobel replied and said they do have it and would provide it to the Commission. The plant list was also requested. No action was required at this time.

5a. **Recommendation for priorities for the implementation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan** – Chair Walsh provided an introduction to the item and staff de Geus introduced, Chief Transportation officer Jamie Rodriguez who was present to answer any questions that arose on the subject matter. Commissioner Hetterly, member of the Urban and Trails ad hoc committee began the topic by explaining the information that was provided in the Commissioners packet. She explained that the purpose was to take what the Commission felt was of high value and prioritize them to assist the Council when they were reviewing the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. Commissioner Crommie added some information she learned from the consultant from Alta and design related to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. The consultant said the 2011 version of the plan is to encourage interested but concerned bicyclists to utilize the city's bicycle resources as well as pedestrians using the city's trails. The Commission discussed the differences between the tiers as defined in their packets.

Oral Communications

Kerry Kenny – Ms. Kenny expressed her support for the Ross Road bike boulevard in the prioritization of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Mike Aberg – Mr. Aberg spoke on being an advent bicyclist and having Ross Road as a priority for a bike boulevard being the safest route for bicycling with his children.

Pam Radin – Ms. Radin spoke on encouraging the Commission to support the Ross Road bike boulevard priority. Commented on all the community support that has been following this priority for over 3 years.

John Abraham – Mr. Abraham spoke on supporting the Adobe Creek underpass versus the 101 overpass proposal. He felt with some changes the Adobe Creek underpass could be utilized more efficiently and cost effectively.

Jeff Saunders – Mr. Saunders spoke in support of the Adobe Creek overpass proposal and would like to see the plan tie into the Sterling Canal which would make a safer route to Matadero Creek taking bicyclists and pedestrians off of West Bayshore and straight down Sterling Canal.

Steve Sabbag – Mr. Sabbag spoke in support of the 101 Adobe bike overpass proposal.

Discussion

The Commission discussed the recommendation proposal from the ad hoc committee, some of the questions and concerns consisted of having a better understanding of the Ross Road bicycle blvd. Chief Officer, Jaime Rodriguez responded to these concerns. He also added that the Commission and public could access the current plan on line at www.cityofpaloalto.org/bike and submit any questions or comments related to the plan. Commissioner Crommie walked through the tiers in the ad hoc committee report and requested from the Commissioners their acceptance of how it was written. The Commission spent some time discussing the Lefkowitz Tunnel. Elizabeth Ames, Senior Engineer of Public Works responded to questions related to the opening and closing of the Lefkowitz Tunnel. The Commission provided some edits that included changing the wording on page 3; section *Open Space Preserves* under Tier II Priorities:

- Continue to explore options for safe and direct bicycle and pedestrian travel from Core Palo Alto to the Arastradero Open Space Preserve and Foothill Park, including the Bay to Ridge Trail.

Also on page 4; section *Creek trails,* Tier II the word Charleston Road was removed after a comment from Chief Officer, Jaime Rodriquez said that it was not going to be feasible per the Santa Clara Water District.

Motion: The Parks and Recreation Commission move to approve the recommendation made by the Creeks and Urban Trails Subcommittee as edited.
Approved 6:1 (Markevitch)

6. **Discussion on the need for additional parking for the El Camino Park Project –** Staff de Geus introduced staff Anderson, Division Manager for Open Space, Parks and Golf Division. Staff Anderson discussed the options that the consultant Siegfried designed for

the El Camino Park fields to add additional parking to the project. He briefly went over the five scenarios that Siegfried designed using the existing 42 spaces:

A - This would require a removal of a tree, gain 26 additional spaces, parking could be utilized by commuters, Red Cross users, McArthur park customers

B - No loss of trees, difficulty in turning around, parking could be utilized by commuters, Red Cross users, McArthur park customers

C – This would require a removal of tree, gain 22 spaces, the turn around is sufficient, parking could be utilized by commuters, Red Cross users, McArthur park customers

D - By shifting the field further north, this concept would provide the most parking spaces with an additional 38 spaces; the obstacles would be a 40" diameter tulip popalar tree too close to the field, and the potential loss of two coast live oak trees.

Staff Anderson said after reviewing these options with Siegfried, they were able to come up with another option E.

E - This option shifts the field a few feet towards El Camino but avoids any potential problems with the trees. Twenty-nine additional parking spaces will be gained with this option. Access to the parking lot is ideal with this option. The cost is also minimal in compared to option D, more parking spaces adds to the cost.

Staff feels that option E would be the best choice. Commissioner Walsh wanted it noted that some attention to an area for dropping and picking up should be considered when designing the parking lot, even if additional parking space had to be eliminated. After a brief discussion, the Commission concurred with staff and felt option E would be the most acceptable of the concepts. Commissioner Hetterly added as a back up to an alternate concept using the South side of the field, option C would be acceptable. Commissioner Crommie felt because of the cost involved, she did not agree with any of the options.

. **7.** **<u>Debrief joint study session with the Planning and Transportation Commission</u> –** Commissioner Chair recommended, due to the lateness of the meeting that Commissioners review the insert in their packets which references what was discussed in their joint study session with the Planning and Transportation Commission. Commissioner Crommie wanted to add an item related to Byxbee Park. Commissioner Walsh commented that as we move forward we can add to the list. She also added that discussion could continue at the September meeting.

8. **<u>Update on Project Safety Net Community Coalition and plans for 2011-12</u> –** Staff de Geus provided a presentation on how Project Safety Net Community Coalition who worked on teen suicide prevention and youth well being has evolved, where they are going from here. In September the Commission will discuss further what the Commissions role can be in supporting the Project Safety Net effort.

9. **Update on the Comprehensive Plan – Community Services Element** - Chair Walsh commented that the sub committee met a few times and further meetings are scheduled. More on the Comprehensive plan will be forth coming at the Commissions September meeting.

V. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Commissioner Crommie brought up the scheduling of an additional meeting related to the Bicycle Pedestrian 101 over pass meeting. Staff de Geus added that Public Works offered to have a special stakeholders meeting because of the oversight with the scheduling of the meeting tonight. Staff would arrange this meeting.

2. Staff de Geus commented that the Summer Aquatics program was going very well.

VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR SEPTEMBER 27, 2011 MEETING

1. Comprehensive Plan
2. Sub-committee updates
3. Trail development for Byxbee Park

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 11:10pm