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**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
March 26, 2013
CITY HALL
250 Hamilton**

Commissioners Present: Stacey Ashlund, Deirdre Crommie, Jennifer Hetterly, Ed Lauing, Abbie Knopper, Pat Markevitch, Keith Reckdahl

Commissioners Absent:

Others Present: Council Liaison Greg Schmid

Staff Present: Catherine Bourquin, Rob de Geus

I. ROLL CALL CONDUCTED BY: Catherine Bourquin

II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS: None

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

IV. BUSINESS:

- 1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the February 26, 2012 regular meeting** – The Draft Minutes from the February 26, 2012 meeting were approved as amended. Motioned by Commissioner Markevitch and seconded by Commissioner Ashlund. **Passed: 7:0**
- 2. Approval of Draft Minutes from the March 15, 2013 Retreat** – The Draft Minutes from the March 15, 2013 retreat were approved as amended. Motioned by Commissioner Hetterly and seconded by Commissioner Knopper. **Passed 7:0**
- 3. Review and recommend approval of the site and design plan for the Palo Alto Golf Course project** – Chair Lauing opened the item up and staff de Geus introduced Joe Teresi, Senior Engineer for Public Works and Forrest Richardson, Architect for the project. Staff de Geus commented that the project is at 60% design and it was coming before the Commission tonight to receive official approval from the commission to move forward. Mr. Teresi described to the commission what the site and design review



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entailed. He pointed out that the design would be going to the Planning and Transportation for approval on April 24th and then to the Architectural Review Board, it would then come back to the Parks and Recreation Commission again. Mr. Richardson presented the current design and reminded the Commission that this was the Plan that council and the Commission supported noting only specific changes that were made since the last time the commission reviewed the plans.

The item was open for questions and comments from the Commission.

- Commissioner Reckdahl inquired on the length of the golf course compared to the existing one. Mr. Richardson replied that the course is essentially the same they have made it a safer playing area by adding more distance between the fairways.
- Commissioner Crommie asked what has been done to ensure the protection of the wildlife habitat during this project. Mr. Richardson replied that there is an environmental report that is being prepared for this project and on staff is Dr. Froak a habitat biologist who has made his recommendations on areas such as the wetlands. Commissioner Crommie suggested that they review what the City of Mountain View's golf course has implemented for their wildlife areas specifically the burrowing owls. Staff Anderson also commented that he has provided his expertise to this project.
- Council Liaison Schmid commented that the Finance committee had a discussion related to the dogs being used at the golf course for the geese. He advised that this be investigated for the safety of wildlife too.
- Chair Lauing asked to have more information on the tree's being removed as part of this project. Mr. Richardson commented that they have been doing extensive research into the preservation of the trees for this project utilizing Dr. Froak's recommendations. The Site and Design has all the specifics for the trees being removed and replaced.
- Commissioner Ashlund spoke on the trees and questioned if the trees could be planted in other areas of the City to offset the loss of trees at the Golf Course. Talking with the non-profit Canopy to help with finding such areas was suggested by staff de Geus.
- Staff Anderson spoke on how the trees don't do very well at the Baylands but has been working with Peter Jensen, park planner to plant trees where they can.
- Commissioner Ashlund asked about the time period of the cost benefit for this project. Staff de Geus replied to this stating that National Golf Foundation did a study regarding this and would resend to the commissioners.
- Commissioner Ashlund also wanted to confirm that other than the restrooms there were no structures that were part of this project. Staff de Geus replied that there will be a phase II at some point to look at the clubhouse and cart storage.

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Funding sources are not currently identified to fund phase II. There is however some work being done to upgrade the driving range facility staff de Geus said.

- Commissioner Crommie inquired if the location selected for the 10.5 acres to be land banked is the only location to potentially use. Mr. Richardson answered “yes”. He explained the reason behind the location. Staff de Geus commented that during the design phase, it was Council who directed staff explore how we might add acres to be used for athletic fields. Mr. Teresi added that the site and design that they are bringing forward does not specify the use of the additional acres.
- Commissioner Reckdahl asked what the typical life span for the golf course is. Mr. Richardson replied that the drainage portion of the golf course that was completed in the 1990’s is being preserved, which is the most expensive part. The irrigation however has deteriorated lasting only 15 years or less. This is being replaced with HDP and according to the industry has a life expectancy of 50 years, maybe more.
- Commissioner Reckdahl asked what the settling rate is, Mr. Richardson replied that there is some sinking to be expected but with the soil they will be bringing in will significantly raise it up. Commissioner Reckdahl also asked how much height is being added. Mr. Richardson replied that it will vary but in most area’s it will be at least 3feet – to the high of 20+ feet.
- Commissioner Hetterly asked if Mr. Richardson could show on the map where the mounds are.

Chair Lauing asked for a motion to approve the design at 60% as presented. Commissioner Markevitch motioned and Commissioner Reckdahl seconded. There was some discussion after the recommendation. Commissioner Crommie wanted to request that the original recommendation made by the Commission accompany the site and design request as it pertains to the land banking component.

The recommendation passed 7:0.

4. **Review and comment on El Camino Park re-design** – Staff Anderson clarified the intent of the item stating that it was before the commission tonight for review and comments only. He provided some history explaining that the design had to be modified from the original approved by Council and Commission design for two reasons:
 1. By Council direction the Commission was to find an area for a possible dog park. The area that was selected went through environmental review and found that the set back requirement could not be met and the area by El Palo Alto under consideration was not viable.
 2. By Council direction it was requested to redesign to accommodate potentially moving the Julia Morgan Building (hostess house) inside El Camino Park. Design consultants Paul

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Schneider and Bob Norbutas of Siegfried presented the modified designs to the Commission. The Commission provided their comments and questions:

- Commissioner Reckdahl felt that the parking was too tight
- Commissioner Crommie commented that she did not want the Julia Morgan building to be relocated to El Camino Park because it is not compatible with the park.
- Commissioner Markevitch asked if the entire Julia Morgan building is being considered moving into the park, the answer is yes. She also commented that relocating the Julia Morgan building to the Golf Course was her preference.
- Commissioner Ashlund commented that the uses of the building still needed to be understood in order to know the impact on parking.
- Commissioner Hetterly commented that she would not support a dog park with synthetic turf; she was ok for decomposed granite or a different option for material for the dog park. She didn't feel that splitting the dog park between small and large dog areas would be a good idea as the space is too small. She commented that the redesign doesn't make sense, not enough room for spectators, warm ups, or passive use. She was also concerned that compact parking was not going to be adequate for the parking spaces.
- Commissioner Lauing commented on the design taking up the whole park leaving no open space, "What's a park without open space?"

Mr. Schneider interjected that he wanted to remind the Commission of the schedule implications of the project, stating that considering if all the "stars" are aligned we could be looking at an opening date of April 2014 to the worst scenario being 2015, but if the 27 University project keeps influencing the project it could go all the way out until possibly 2018.

Council Liaison Schmid commented that the 27 University is slated to come to Council for review in mid April and that potential implications to the park are not on the radar.

Staff de Geus recommended that the Commission put together a priority list to bring forth to the Council on what they would like to see for the park. Chair Lauing, Commissioner Markevitch and Ashlund would work on a draft and get feed back from the other Commissioners through the proper channels.

5. **Review and recommend approval of the proposed park renovation plan and associated Park Improvement Ordinance for Eleanor Pardee Park** – Peter Jensen, landscape architect for the City reviewed with the Commission the proposed renovation plan designs for Eleanor Pardee Park. There was a public community meeting held on February 27th, there were 10 members of community in attendance. In considering the option for a dog park, none of the attendees were in support of a dog park. Staff recommends omitting the dog park from the proposal. With the Parks and Recreation Master plan in progress, the idea of a dog parks in parks will be explored, bringing Eleanor Pardee Park back for consideration during the process.

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- Commissioner Knopper requested what the concrete bowl is used for; Mr. Jensen replied it is used for group gatherings, the past were for rolling skating.
- Commissioner Ashlund commented on ensuring that the new play structure incorporates accessibility components to the equipment. As well as the new picnic tables be accessible for wheel chair use in the side of the table instead of the end. Mr. Jensen replied that they will be installing rubberized material, spinning feature, as well as bucket seats.
- Commissioner Crommie would like to see water available for play in the tot playground area. Mr. Jensen replied that there is no waterline located in that area to accommodate this feature and it would be a very expensive process to do. The older playground area has this feature already.
- Commissioner Hetterly asked if all the equipment and furniture in the park was being replaced. Mr. Jensen confirmed that yes it will all be replaced.

Chair Lauing asked for a motion to recommend the park ordinance for Eleanor Park.

Commissioner Markevitch motioned and seconded by Commissioner Knopper. **The motion passed 7:0**

6. Cubberley Community Advisory Committee – Review and discuss committees final report – Commissioner Hetterly started off by thanking everyone for coming out to the last meeting. She started the conversation by highlighting the main points of the Cubberley report that incorporated all of the individual committees and their findings. She also provided her thoughts on where the Commission can assist moving forward. She asked the commission for their feedback and suggestions.

- Commissioner Knopper commented that she agreed that a needs assessment was definitely needed.
- Commissioner Markevitch remarked that the committees did a great job and commented that they need to look at the schools with pools or change the graduation requirements.
- Commissioner Crommie commented on the potential loss of fields that would be lost at Cubberley as a way to open the door to talking to the schools with an opportunity to collaborate with the district and get more public access to the high school fields. Definitely supports the dual use between the city and the schools. She also suggested creating a committee to investigate the shared uses.
- Staff de Geus commented on the joint use that is brought up in section K of the report.
- Council Schmid commented on the population increases and how to find fields to meet this growing need.
- Commissioner Ashlund wanted to know the timeframe, adding fields in the long run how does the commission assist with that.
- Staff de Geus commented that the decision was to extend the lease for 5 years during that time to complete the needs assessment; he added that it is going to be hard to

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define. Numerous community groups will have to work together on the needs assessment.

- Commissioner Hetterly requested from the commission where they would like to go from here, either a formal action on the subjects in the report, and endorsement of the plan, etc.
- Commissioner Ashlund commented that possibly conducting a preliminary request of community input on the needs of the community.
- Staff de Geus suggested that the commission possibly take a position on the recommendations for council consideration. He also suggested adding this as an action item on a future commission meeting for a formal recommendation to council on the commission's interest in participating on the needs assessment.
- Council Schmid recommended that the commissioners review the report put out by the Auditors office on the Survey of Citizens.
- Staff de Geus also recommended where to go on the City's website to find various reports that Auditor's office puts out.

Public comment

Phil Mast, phil@mastfamily.com – Mr. Mast shared with the commission his opinion on how the city could utilize the schools for utilizing surplus space to hold various classes and possibly adding this into the 5 year lease negotiations. He used Adult Education classes that are held at one of the schools campuses as an example.

7. Parks and Recreation Commission Ad Hoc Committee and liaison updates –

- Commissioner Crommie commented that she was meeting with staff Anderson to discuss the issue of feeding the ducks and geese at the Baylands.

V. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENT

1. Staff de Geus discussed an item that came out of the Policies and Service committee on banning smoking in the three urban plazas in Palo Alto. The possibility of banning smoking in our parks sized 5 acres or less being recommended. This recommendation will be going forward and will also ask Council to direct the Parks and Recreation Commission to consider a smoking ban on all parks. This will be coming forward possibly in the May PARC meeting.
2. Friends of the Magical bridge letter of intent is set to expire in June or July and will be extended 6 months if needed to provide more time for fund raising.
3. Staff de Geus commented on a new Council Infrastructure Committee. Mayor Scharff leads the committee; they are looking for potential revenue sources to help with the infrastructure needs. Council members Klein, Berman, Vice Mayor Sheppard and Mayor Scharff make up this committee.
4. Athletic field's policy – Staff de Geus commented on a meeting with the AYSO setting up the guidelines and said they were making good progress they will continue to work on it.

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5. Commissioner Ashlund announced an event for the Project Safety Net – Joint event April 25th mental health needs with students with special needs is moving forward. Met today on the reviewing the Bullying policy.

VI. AGENDA FOR NEXT REGULAR MEETING

1. Rinconada Master Plan
2. El Camino park
3. Fee for service study
4. Urban Forrest Master Plan
5. Santa Clara Audubon Society

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Hetterly and seconded by Commissioner Reckdahl.

Adjourned at 9:45pm

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