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**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
March 25, 2014
CITY HALL
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, California**

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

Commissioners Absent:

Others Present:

Staff Present: Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin, Rob de Geus, Peter Jensen, Walter Passmore

I. ROLL CALL CONDUCTED BY: Catherine Bourquin

II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:

Chair Hetterly: Item Number 3, the Draft Urban Forest Master Plan, we are going to change to a discussion instead of an action.

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

IV. BUSINESS:

1. Approval of Draft February 25, 2014 Minutes.

MOTION: Approval of the draft February 25, 2014 Minutes as amended was moved by Commissioner Ashlund and seconded by Commissioner Knopper.

MOTION PASSED: 7-0



2. Discuss March 24, 2014 Study Session with Council on the Palo Alto Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan.

Rob de Geus: There's not really a staff presentation. It's mostly a debrief from what we heard last night and what Council said. There was a change in how the Commission was going to be seated. I thought that was a little bit awkward on the end, having all you guys up there and then not really an opportunity to say anything. I think Council's intent was to try and make it more participatory, to have you up there instead of in the audience. In retrospect, it would have been better to have more time, 1 1/2 hours or even 2 hours, so there could have been comments and questions from all of you guys. Unfortunately, that didn't happen. It was good to hear Council's perspective and each of them to provide that to us as we start this work.

Peter Jensen: Good evening, Commissioners. In respect to what was said by Council yesterday in the study session, it was an opportunity for you to hear where their interests were and where they wanted to focus. As we start to review this, you can reflect on what they said, because it will get to them in the end. There were specific things they said last night that you thought were good comments and things that you felt may not be relevant to the plan. Those are things we can discuss further and get further input on. We can open a conversation about that and what we heard last night. If there are comments about what was discussed or further questions, then we can take those.

Chair Hetterly: Commissioner Markevitch.

Commissioner Markevitch: Council Member Holman, where she said we should make this 100 years out. While that's ambitious, it's unrealistic. Who knows what this town is going to look like then, and I wouldn't want us to try to hold to something that far out. I like the time checks that we have in the current draft.

Mr. Jensen: I did briefly speak with Lauren Schmitt after the presentation. We touched on that a little bit. For some aspects of it, talking about specific facilities to construct and specific projects, that 50-100 years out is a little far for a Master Plan like this. It should set up our general goals and what we would expect our park system to be in 50-100 years, and it can address those overall, broad, general ideas of how we feel it should be developed and maintained over time. There can be an aspect that looks past the 25 years of these hard facts and proposed projects and renovations to address our general feeling of how we want to keep our park system and recreation system in the future.

Chair Hetterly: Commissioner Lauing.

Vice Chair Lauing: I'm glad you raised that. I do think it's a good vision that Council Member Holman raised there. We could do things that cut off options in the 50-year

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81 timeframe. As you're doing this, that forward looking option is what you said, but maybe
82 more specific like 50 years from now we probably do need more parkland so let's start
83 putting away our pennies. The demographics are going to push us in that direction. That
84 kind of thing is very well intentioned, and we should take a look at that. Secondly, she
85 also raised the point, which I happen to agree with, that we shouldn't spend a lot of time
86 on Stanford and things like that. There are just so many things that we can control, and
87 we don't control Stanford. To the extent there are partnerships, that's great. I don't think
88 we can count on that forever. That seemed to be a little bit out of the scope of what
89 you're intending here. Thirdly, as our liaison noted, they like to see more frequent
90 updates at Council. I think we would all welcome that, because then we would get
91 ongoing input to make sure that our input to them is being received and processed and fed
92 back.

93
94 Mr. Jensen: Yes, I would agree with that. Specifically the schedule reflects the times
95 that the consultant is going to be available to us. That does not mean we can't have more
96 periodic updates going on with staff doing that at meetings. That will also have more
97 reporting when the ad hoc committees meet, because they will be reporting on their
98 activities. I would suspect that probably every meeting from here on out would have
99 some type of review of what is going on in the process.

100
101 Commissioner Knopper: I thought it was a great presentation last night. Obviously we
102 had gone through it before. I thought it was overall pretty well received. The one
103 comment that I thought about and wasn't so sure, was Council Member Klein's comment
104 about integrating the school facilities into the whole park situation. I wasn't sure whether
105 that's really relevant or how you would even be able to approach that. They are
106 technically school facilities. I could tell that there were a few other Council Members
107 that probably disagreed with that, at least the two I was sitting next to. One of the
108 comments by Council Member Burt about thinking about seniors and children having to
109 walk or cross large roads and treacherous territory. A lot of the issues they brought up
110 are going to be automatically resolved when the research and due diligence comes back.
111 These are things they are thinking about and it's their personal feelings about what is
112 important to them. I have a feeling, since nothing has really been done since 1965 which
113 is a really long time ago, that a lot of this is just going to be natural information that will
114 come to them. A lot of this will be resolved as soon as the data starts flowing. One thing
115 I really liked, I don't know why I didn't pay attention to this earlier, was Mapita, the
116 interactive mapping. I thought that would be a great tool for us too, for our website, or
117 some sort of feature where you have that interactivity with specific data points on a map.
118 They had a large map in front of them with all the parks. I was just imagining if you
119 could hit the little button and it pops up what facilities are there and how many picnic
120 tables and all the information. I think that would be really great as we're thinking about
121 our interactive website.
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Mr. de Geus: I thought it was interesting, the comment about the school district from Council Member Klein. While we don't have control over the school district sites in terms of rebuilding them, we do use the school sites a lot, particularly the field spaces. They are used heavily for off-leash dog activity and that kind of thing. It is important that we work closely with the school district in thinking about how the public uses their facilities, whether it's gym space or field space. We met with them today; although, I wasn't at the meeting. I think that's what Council Member Klein was getting at, the public use of those sites is pretty heavy.

Chair Hetterly: The other piece of it is that, because there is so much community use of those sites, that's a big chunk of how we serve our needs. In our needs assessment, we want to be able to reflect that presumably we'll continue to be able to use those facilities and we hope to and we need to. We don't want to leave them out of the equation altogether, because they are part of our network. I don't think we need to pay for their development in the future.

Commissioner Knopper: The Rinconada defunct refreshment stand, that's not the first time I've heard about that. I don't know if this is the time or the project to think about for-profit refreshment stands in our parks. New York City's done a really terrific job. The Shake Shack, for instance, was placed in the middle of a defunct park in New York City and now it's one of the most popular parks in Manhattan. I don't know if this is the time to think about if this is a need in the community. This is something that keeps coming up and people are like, "Yes, we want something like this in one of our larger parks." Something to think about.

Mr. Jensen: In conjunction with the overall Master Plan, this is a project that I was hoping would be completed by now, but it's not and should be very soon. We have been working on the Rinconada Long Range Plan. That was one of the main things that kept coming up in community meetings over and over again, this snack shack that used to be there and how it was beloved by the people that remember it being there. That is an aspect of the Long Range Plan. It is recommended to bring that back and build a facility next to where it used to be, that is more up-to-date and can do a little bit more than was done before with hamburgers and junk food. We've already started looking at that and planning to bring it back to Rinconada Park.

Commissioner Ashlund: Although there was some disagreement from the Council last night about whether to include all the school sites or not, I thought it was a good point that Terman was shared ownership and therefore a shared use. That was definitely valid. It might not have to be an all-or-nothing situation. If the Master Plan does dive into that, certainly Terman qualifies as both City and school. That made a lot of sense. The other thing that came up from Lauren Schmitt from MIG right at the very beginning, since so much of the Master Plan is focused on community feedback, she mentioned that all the

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social media channels were already in place and we would be using existing channels. There is one for recreation services and there is one for open space. On Facebook and Twitter, there is nothing for parks. We really need to get it in place. I know it's a lot of staff effort to maintain a third account. It could easily be parks and rec or parks and open space, combining with one of those two accounts instead of starting a third one. I just wanted to be clear that that wasn't in place for parks, and we're relying on a lot of feedback. I wanted to make sure we were able to get that.

Daren Anderson: I'll follow up with open space. It's logical to join that with parks.

Chair Hetterly: Commissioner Crommie.

Commissioner Crommie: I'm glad that several of the Council Members brought up the idea that walking and parks are not the same thing. Where there is a deficit of parks per density of population, it doesn't suffice just to say we can have some walking trails nearby. Our Comprehensive Plan specifies certain ratios of parkland to population. Some of the Council Members might not have been completely clear on that. I'm glad it came up as a strong statement from Council Members Burt and Holman. That idea of the half-mile rule should be taken seriously. I wanted to echo what Stacey Ashlund said about the relationship with Terman. That's an interesting model. I don't understand the origin of how the Terman field has that special status. I know it's used a lot for soccer. Can you explain, is that formerly a park?

Mr. Anderson: Yes. That was once school land; they sold it to the City and then they opened the school back up. The fields, the tennis court and the basketball court are all City owned. When the school opened up, they formed an agreement that allows the school to use it during school hours. When school is over, it's open to the public and on weekends.

Commissioner Crommie: I don't know if that's any kind of model that can be used. I guess that was just a unique situation. There's a little confusion over this Master Plan scope when it comes to open space and how much of the open space we are considering within this Master Plan. When I first looked at the scope, it looked to me like it was just built-out areas in open space. For instance at Arastradero Preserve, there's that new, nature educational center. I assume we're looking at that. Does it cover also the Lucy Evans Nature Center, things like that? We're going to probably discuss this later on the topic of the new park dedication. We need to get some clarification on how much of this Master Plan will look at open space areas that don't pertain to something that's already built, like vision for the open space areas. I'm even confused if that's within the scope of this plan. In some ways I like that the scope was defined as built-out areas, because sometimes these Master Plans can become a development plan. They hinge on that, so I don't think we have the mandate to go in and develop open space as a product of this

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plan. I'd hate to get into that, but I think it's this envisioning of the open space. It comes up when we talk about trail connectivity. If you talk about trails in open space, that is a vision for a kind of development into an open space. As staff members, where do you stand on that definition of the scope?

Mr. de Geus: I think that's a really good question. I understand it's the developed areas, the trails and facilities and roads and that type thing in our open space properties. The visioning of potentially extending a trail, for instance, into an area that's not developed. Is that part of this or not? I actually don't have the answer. I think it's a really good question.

Mr. Anderson: Part of the answer lies in you'll weaken the Master Plan if you ask it to delve too deeply into trails and all of open space. We already have a Trails Plan for Arastradero Preserve, a very lengthy document. It took a lot of time and effort to create it. I don't think you're going to gain the same level of detail in the Parks Master Plan. I think it'd be asking too much to provide the same thing you got out of that Arastradero Trails Plan. It's a higher level view of trails and open space. Maybe it's easier to say what it wouldn't look at. It wouldn't look at what a Conservation Plan would look at. It's not going to look in-depth into habitat. It's not going to look into wildlife. It's not going to look into natural resources. Those things would be beyond the scope in my mind. It'd be looking along those main corridors where there's roads, where there's an interpretative center, where there's established picnic areas. Sites like that call out for, is this the right number of picnic tables. No, you've got too many or too few or you need more grouped ones. Those are the kind of things I envisioned when we asked them to look at it. I also heard you touch on the 7.7 acres. It's undeveloped right now. I always thought this would be a perfect thing to be analyzed by the Parks Master Plan. At our Parks Commission Retreat, that came up. Do we form an ad hoc committee to come up with concepts ahead of time or do we integrate with the Parks Master Plan? At that point, we came to consensus that integrating with the Parks Master Plan was the way to go. Last night with the Council, they deviated from that and said they'd like staff to come with options to the Commission. There was also deference to the Commission, saying "They're the experts. They should be providing the guidance." Part of this conversation is me asking you, "How in-depth do you want me to go in the options that we researched for that 7.7 acres?" Really there's no end to the different things you could put on it. Some of them would be multi millions of dollars. I've heard concepts of picking up and moving the entire maintenance operation back to the area so you'd have a contiguous Los Trancos connectivity. Several millions, maybe \$10 million or more, to do all that work. There's no utilities in the 7.7 acres. What I'm asking is, "How in-depth do you want me to look at these different scenarios? Do you want the ad hoc to meet with us independently before we come to the Commission with options? Do you want MIG to start looking at some of this?" As I was jotting down thoughts last night, one concept was we could ask MIG for an interim plan. The Council was not keen on waiting until

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there is a complete Master Plan before we take any action. The Parks Master Plan will take 1 1/2 years, but there's no reason they couldn't come up with an interim solution that provides limited public access, that doesn't mean building up everything, but still gets people into the area, gets it open. I'm looking for insight into what the Commission feels on that topic.

Commissioner Crommie: I want us to answer that question, Daren, so we're not going to forget that. As you were talking about how we might look at open space as part of this Parks and Recreation Master Plan, one idea that came up during the interview process when we were hiring the consultant was to understand the value the community places on that. That can come up during surveying questions for instance. Just that it's not invisible, because the Parks and Rec Master Plan is really a community assessment, prioritization, community values. Surely we'd want to inquire about that kind of thing. I didn't want to lose that point. As far as direction on the 7.7 acres, I'll let you handle that discussion, Chair Hetterly.

Chair Hetterly: On that question, maybe we can try to gauge the level of ideas that Commissioners have without going into detail about the ideas. If people have a lot to say about it, we should agendize it and have a full discussion. If people don't, then maybe we send it to an ad hoc to brainstorm it.

Commissioner Crommie: So we are clear as a Commission, we are going to keep that as an active ad hoc, on the 7.7 acres. Is this the time to get clarification on how that works or should we wait on that? We have a lot of direction. We still have our own ad hoc looking at that 7.7 acres. Council's given staff direction to develop some ideas. Is staff going to develop ideas along with our ad hoc committee or is it going to be two separate processes?

Chair Hetterly: Our ad hoc hasn't done anything yet. They were lying in wait to see whether this was going to come us. Now I think we can figure out how we want to do that. Pat, you're on the committee.

Commissioner Markevitch: Yeah.

Chair Hetterly: Abbie, you too are on the ad hoc?

Commissioner Markevitch: Yeah, that's right. The best route at this point is just to meet with staff to get a general sense and see where they are. We have time, but I don't want to jump the gun too early on it. It's a beautiful piece of land and it should be given its due. At least, Daren and Abbie and myself to start with. We do welcome any comments from the other Commissioners.

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Chair Hetterly: Maybe the ad hoc meets with staff to start framing some issues and then we come back to the Commission for an agendaized discussion to brainstorm further.

Commissioner Markevitch: Yeah.

Chair Hetterly: Other comments on last night?

Commissioner Crommie: I'm fine. Thank you.

Chair Hetterly: Commissioner Reckdahl.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Overall I thought it was a good discussion last night. I do think the sharing we mentioned earlier, the sharing between schools is very important. It goes both ways. We can use the school's facilities after hours and they can use our fields. We need to have more interaction. There's also cases like cafeterias. You could use some of the school cafeterias for seniors after school hours or something like that. There are things that we're not pursuing right now, but down the road may be useful. Liz Kniss thought the half miles was not very far. For someone who's healthy, that's fine. We have elderly seniors where a half mile is very significant and also kids. Our kids discovered trikes and wanted to take their trike to the park. If it was a mile, it would be very hard for them. Keeping that distance short is a good rule. Pat Burt had a very good point about distance isn't the same as connectivity. Was it approved with the Council, the new bike boulevards, or is that still under work?

Mr. de Geus: I believe that's been approved.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Did Parks and Rec have any input into that?

Mr. de Geus: Very much so, yeah. It was great, very helpful.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Especially for kids, kids use bikes to go to parks.

Commissioner Crommie: That's where we came up with that idea of safe routes to parks. It came out of our work on that plan. Council Member Burt quoted that.

Mr. de Geus: I thought that was great. The Parks and Rec Commission has a fingerprint on the Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Chair Hetterly: I will bring your attention to the front page of the packet on the Master Plan. There's this one page with the heading "PROST Master Plan Discussion." First I want to comment on last night's presentation. The staff report was outstanding. It was

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extremely thorough. It did a great job reflecting our input and also framing all the issues in an understandable way. I don't know who wrote it, but I thought it was very well done.

Mr. de Geus: That's a kudo to Director Betts. He did that and he did an outstanding job and a great presentation also.

Chair Hetterly: Since we have six Commissioners breaking out over three different ad hocs over the next few months, I wanted to have a handy one-pager that we could use as a tool to make sure we're working from the same playbook as we go forward. I included on here the objectives for the Master Plan from the RFP, those first six items. They play out as how we're doing, where we're headed, and how to get there. Then I tried to put it into the context of the rest of our work. This heading of Park Priorities is issues that have been of continuing concern for us for quite some time. I'm sure I haven't captured all of them. In fact, teens might be added to that supply/demand issue. I put public art on there. I recently met with the Chair of the Public Arts Commission, and they are interested in pursuing a Master Plan for public art in the next year or two as well. There may be ways to find efficiencies between the two processes and at least connect to each other. Finally, tie-ins to other work, the Cost of Service Study, our town values conversation, whatever our Commission decides to do about public awareness efforts, the Urban Forest Master Plan, and the future planning for Cubberley. What we learn from that work should feed in and out of the Master Plan as well. I just wanted to spend a few minutes looking at this and making sure that we have everything on it that the Commission would like to have in the front of our minds as we branch out and start working on the Master Plan. Commissioner Lauing.

Vice Chair Lauing: What did you mean by passive park space versus active?

Chair Hetterly: I mean like an open field versus a playground. Quiet space versus active space was what I had in mind.

Vice Chair Lauing: OK. But it's still all dedicated park?

Chair Hetterly: Yeah.

Commissioner Crommie: An example of that is when we redid the section of Greer Park next to the skateboard facility. That was sort of a pastoral park design versus all those playing fields nearby. That was one reason the community really wanted that kind of design. It also relates to even more pastoral experiences of just sitting on a bench.

Vice Chair Lauing: Or similarly the open space that we pounded the table for in El Camino Park versus jammed in fields.

374 Chair Hetterly: Exactly.

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376 Vice Chair Lauing: That's what you mean?

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378 Chair Hetterly: Yeah. Any reaction to this or additions, changes?

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380 Mr. Jensen: I have started working on today setting up the schedule for the ad hocs and
381 how they'll function and the meeting dates. I'll send it to Rob and he'll send it out to you
382 next week sometime, so we can have that information as well.

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384 Chair Hetterly: Thank you. Commissioner Crommie.

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386 Commissioner Crommie: I don't know where to put it. I really appreciate you laying this
387 out for us. How about this idea of supply in the right location? Is there a way to get that
388 captured under supply/demand issues?

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390 Chair Hetterly: Sure.

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392 Commissioner Knopper: She listed it under appropriate balance of programs and services
393 across user groups and the geographic.

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395 Chair Hetterly: I did.

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397 Commissioner Crommie: Thank you. That probably carries it.

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399 Commissioner Reckdahl: That one bullet is pretty dense, the appropriate balance of
400 programs. It covers everything. It's a good bullet, but we do so many things in
401 recreation, after school stuff and summer activities. You might want to call some of
402 those out, because recreation really is broad. Sometimes it takes a backseat to parks
403 themselves. Recreation is a very important part of Parks and Rec.

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405 Chair Hetterly: What are you suggesting?

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407 Commissioner Reckdahl: Talk about teen after school activities, summer activities,
408 summer camps, senior activities. Those all currently are covered by that one bullet, but it
409 is a little dense. It might be good to call those out just to be explicit about that.

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411 Chair Hetterly: So balance of programs and services across user groups based on age,
412 interest ...

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414 Commissioner Reckdahl: I'd leave that bullet as is and then do some sub-bullets just like
415 you did dog parks up there, and specify ...

Chair Hetterly: OK, I see what you're saying.

Commissioner Reckdahl: ... senior activities, young kids' activities, preschool activities, teens' after school.

Vice Chair Lauing: Demographic segments.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah.

Chair Hetterly: Right. Yes, Commissioner Markevitch:

Commissioner Markevitch: The planning documents, the paragraph on page 2. It discussed the Baylands Master Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, Arastradero Preserve, the IBRC report. When the final report comes out and it's electronic, it would be nice to provide links to others such as the Airport Plan. That is a form of recreation for some people. The Got Space or the Field Usage Plan. Those types of things would be useful to have linked to the report.

Chair Hetterly: Is that it? All right. Staff, did you have anything else to cover? All right.

3. Review and Recommend Approval of the Draft Urban Forest Master Plan.

Rob de Geus: We have Urban Forester Walter Passmore here to help with a brief overview of where we are.

Walter Passmore: Thank you, Commissioners. Walter Passmore, Urban Forester. Very quickly I just wanted to go over a few updates of where we've come since the last time we met with the Commission on this subject. We did some major updates to the Development Chapter as requested by the Planning and Transportation Commission. We did some updates to our Communication on Ecosystem Management with some specific mentions to wildlife as requested by the Parks and Recreation Commission. We came up with a February draft which is currently posted on our website. I believe you got a copy of that in your packet. The Planning and Transportation Commission approved that draft and asked that it be conveyed to Council. It's important you understand that. Following that approval, we received some additional comments from Audubon, Native Plant Society, and the Sierra Club, asking for additional language to be added into Goals, Policies and Programs, the action part of the Master Plan, to address open space and wildlife management specifically. We have started to incorporate those. We had a first draft. Since we prepared the draft, we've been asked to revise that again. We're actively working to incorporate those comments into a consensus-based edit of our Goals, Policies

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and Programs Chapter. We intend to come back to the Parks and Recreation Commission in April with the February draft plus an edited Goals, Policies and Programs Chapter. Any comments that you have regarding the Master Plan in general will be based on the February draft. We have established a good model for communication with our stakeholders, with the golf course project. That's where some of the expectation came on being able to incorporate these comments and some of the faith from our stakeholders that we are going to do our best to get everything synthesized into the document. We're not prepared to give that to you at this time, because we're still actively working on edits with that stakeholder group. That will be in your April packet. We are planning to reference the Parks Master Plan and the Open Space Plans that Daren mentioned, the Trails Master Plan, and the Comprehensive Conservation Plan. Those were both items of discussion with our constituent groups, so those will be references when we bring back the edits to the Urban Forest Master Plan. With that, I'm glad to answer any questions.

Chair Hetterly: Thank you. This will come back to us in April and that will be an action item in April, because we are trying to move this along quickly to get to the Council as soon as possible. Tonight why don't we go through any substantive concerns or comments about the draft that's before us. We'll leave the Goals, Policies and Programs discussion for next month. Commissioner Markevitch.

Commissioner Markevitch: I noticed you have photos of 1982 and 2010 of various neighborhoods. Is it all the neighborhoods? It doesn't look like it.

Mr. Passmore: No.

Commissioner Markevitch: Is it going to be either/or? Are you doing it as a sample or are you going to include all the neighborhoods?

Mr. Passmore: It's a sample based on a canopy analysis that was done by UC Davis. We just pulled out some of the more dramatic comparisons.

Commissioner Markevitch: OK, thanks.

Commissioner Reckdahl: This is an amazing report in that there's a lot of data in it. It's very good, very complete. The data is very helpful but also works against you in that it gets overwhelming. You can get lost in it. It makes it very difficult to get to the point. Council probably will not read through the whole thing; they have a lot of reports to read. I think you really should spend four or five pages upfront, do an executive summary and say, "These are the conclusions that are most important out of this report." Just summarize it into a very short package that anyone could pick up and read in a couple of minutes and get the gist of what you're going at. At that point, you've done two things: you've informed the people who aren't going to read the whole report; and the people who

are going to read the whole report will have a better understanding. They'll know where you're going and they'll be able to follow, instead of just wandering through the wilderness. It would be well served to have some type of executive summary upfront. In the report, a lot of times there's data listed and I'm not sure exactly why. Rob, can you pull up the report at all? Is that convenient?

Mr. de Geus: I'm not sure. Is it online?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Mm-hmm.

Mr. Passmore: You might want to keep asking him questions, because it might take him a moment.

Commissioner Reckdahl: In the report on pages 42-44, they have these pictures showing the before and after of the various neighborhoods. In almost all of them, we're losing trees. I found that very interesting. It's a good thing to have in there. I didn't know the conclusion to that. Is it "That's life" or "We can do something to change that"? I don't know why it's important or why we have all these pages saying how we're losing trees. Are we trying to reverse that? Are we trying to just inform people that our trees in Palo Alto are doomed?

Mr. Passmore: A lot of the pictures are showing increases in trees.

Commissioner Reckdahl: A few of them were, but most of them were decreasing. If you look at page 44, you're decreasing. There are spots where there was development and what used to be an empty lot has now been landscaped. Also a lot of the old trees in our neighborhood have gotten mature, been cut down, and haven't been replaced. That may happen with the landscaped areas also. Even though temporarily the new landscaping may make it appear that we have more trees, it isn't necessarily a given that that will stay long term. Again, my point is why are we showing these pictures? Are we stating this is just a trend or are we saying this is a trend that we're going to try to reverse? If we are going to try to reverse it, what actions are we taking to reverse it? What was the purpose of putting that in there? Was it to say that we need to reverse this or was it to just say that we are losing trees?

Mr. Passmore: The pictures show the influences of development primarily. The table on page 48 shows that we've actually increased net canopy during the timeframe between 1982 and 2010. You can see there's some different slices of the City called out, but in all of those areas canopy has actually increased over that time period. In the Goals, Policies and Programs section, we call out that we want to have a goal of no net loss of canopy. We feel like we're at a good spot right now, and we want to be able to mitigate against the loss of further canopy and replace the trees that we're losing. Not necessarily a tree

542 everywhere that there was one before, but strategically thinking right tree in the right
543 place so that we maintain the same level of service from our urban forest that we have
544 now or even enhance that.

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546 Commissioner Reckdahl: That was a really good explanation and I wish that was in the
547 report, because that would make the report much more usable, much more complete.
548 Again, we're seeing a lot of data. Maybe to someone who's a tree expert the conclusions
549 are obvious. To someone who's just a layman reading through here, it gets overwhelming
550 with all this data. What's the conclusion that I'm supposed to draw from this? Another
551 example of that was on page 55, where we have the list of trees. We have two tables
552 there. One of them, Native Species by Habitat, and the other, Street Tree Population
553 Species. What's the conclusion? Why are these charts in there? When I'm reading
554 through here and I see this, is this good news or bad news? Southern magnolia is the
555 number one street tree population by species, is that a good tree or is that a bad tree?
556 Some of these, like liquidambar, I understand is not a good one.

557
558 Mr. Passmore: Right now it's just data. The beginning of the Urban Forest Master Plan
559 is about assessing where we've come from, what's the history, where we are now. The
560 second part of the Urban Forest Master Plan is about our current issues. In Goals,
561 Policies and Program is our future visioning. What are the actions that we need to take to
562 get where we want to go? This initial data just frames where we've been. When you look
563 at the species tables, you can draw a lot of conclusions from those. You can say we don't
564 have a very high population of native species. You can also say we have a very broad
565 diversity of species as a whole. We can also look at it and compare to other
566 communities. There's some general rules about how much of one species or one genus
567 should be dominant in the ecosystem. The general rule is you don't want any one species
568 to make up any more than 10 percent of your population, any one genus more than 20
569 percent. Obviously southern Magnolia is a little bit over the 10 percent rule for a species.
570 There's very few other magnolias, so it's under the 20 percent rule for a genus. We have
571 no other species that are exceeding 10 percent, so our diversity is pretty healthy. We are
572 buffered against the advent of large scale insect or disease outbreaks. The population is
573 fairly resilient in that way. You can also look at the natives and say, "Wow, we really
574 don't have very many natives, so in the future maybe we should encourage more native
575 trees to be planted where we have the right space for those."

576
577 Commissioner Reckdahl: Again, that's a really good explanation. I wish that was in here
578 too, because that would add to that. Looking at these charts with all this data, having
579 some context for that data would be wonderful. What you just said makes this data much
580 more usable to me. Same thing if we look at page 29 where we have these various trees
581 and then their costs and benefits. I can look at this as a layperson and compare different
582 numbers, but someone who's a tree expert is going to give me a much better insight.
583 Boom, we have a whole bunch of data. This is interesting data, but when I look through

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the different columns and compare numbers, I'm not sure if I'm making the right conclusions. It would be very helpful to have the insight put in there, so people who are not tree experts can understand the point. On page 31, this was again a really good chart. I liked all the data comparing Palo Alto to various other cities around the U.S. You can look at some of these columns and as a layperson figure out, "Oh, yeah, that's funny. We have a lot more capital budget per tree than other cities." Well, why is that? I don't know why that is. Do you know why that is? On page 31, why do we have \$33 per capital budget per tree in Palo Alto and hardly anyone has that much? Is it just that Palo Alto values trees more? Is this column showing how much the City is dedicated to trees or is it some other effect that's going on?

Mr. Passmore: That's actually a large part of the reason. We have a more frequent maintenance cycle than a lot of the other major cities on this chart. These are all established urban forestry programs. We're not comparing to just a start-up program in a small community.

Commissioner Reckdahl: In that case, I would toot your own horn and say that this is something to be proud of, that we are putting our money where our mouth is. We believe trees are important and, therefore, that's why that column is high. These different columns are compared to different cities. It would really interest me if we could have important points brought out of that chart on page 31, because there's a lot of dense data there. It would be really good to have someone who knows what they're talking about distill it down, instead of having me as a layman trying to figure out why these numbers are different between the different rows and columns. I went back to the Goals, Policies and Programs. This is good detail in the back. I'm not sure, should the Goals, Policies and Programs be at the back or in the front? That's more of a nit. The one point was that you're working with Canopy to have the online tree library, so I went to Canopy's website. It is very nice. They have different characteristics. One thing they didn't have was where you could choose, for example, what trees are good under power lines. You couldn't say, "I want a tree that's good under power lines, that doesn't take much water." They have different groups, but sometimes you want two characteristics. Right now the current tool does not allow you to choose "ands" in your search. It's just discrete lists. I want the overlap between those two lists. If I want something that's under a power line and doesn't take much water, I want to be able to do that. That would be my one suggestion when you're working with Canopy, to make the search features a little more robust.

Mr. Passmore: Right. You'd like to be able to select multiple attributes.

Commissioner Reckdahl: That would be ideal. That's easier said than done. If they can make a database and ...

Mr. Passmore: One of the programs in the Goals, Policies and Program sections is to develop a preferred and restricted species list. That's relevant to the task that is being assigned with that program, to make that list of preferred and restricted species very accessible and user friendly. Being able to select by attribute would accomplish that. Thank you.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think this report is wonderful. You should be really proud. Whoever has worked on this has done a very good. It's just a little too dense right now. If you had some type of executive summary upfront and some interpretation of these big data tables, it would be a much better report.

Chair Hetterly: Commissioner Crommie.

Commissioner Crommie: Thanks for the presentation and the rewrite. I had been concerned about the inclusion of issues to do with ecology and habitat in the report. I see that you added some information on page 33. One issue that's come up is that type of focus didn't make it into the Goals and Policies section. I really appreciate that you're going to be working with certain stakeholders to include that in the rewrite. I look forward to seeing that, and I really do appreciate that extra work that you're doing. What I have some issues with in this document, and I mentioned it to you at the stakeholders group, is that we have trees in different settings. We have trees on the cityscape, the streets, and then we have trees in parks and trees in the open space. In this report they're not teased apart. It makes it harder to understand the background information that will lead us up to the Goals, Policies, and Programs. You're rewriting the Goals, Policies and Programs to tease apart a different kind of focus that you might take on trees in a park versus trees on the city streets. I hope that you can add some discussion into the body copy that comes before that, unless you just don't think the reader needs to understand those differences. I'll give an example. One of the things that will come out of this report is a preferred list of trees to plant. Do I understand that correctly, that you'll be working with Canopy to come up with that kind of list? The types of trees that we plant on city streets might be somewhat different than the types of trees that we plant in parks, where the emphasis might be on having some of the broad-leafed trees to generate shade and different aesthetics. We'll have different types of trees to provide habitat for animals. Where that confusion comes up is in the survey data. When you surveyed the public, I was very happy to see that the public values trees for habitat. It came up at an 80 percent value, if you look at that survey question, which is lovely. The public also doesn't like trees that make a mess. When you look at the question, what does the public not like about trees, the first ranking item was destroying sidewalk, if I remember right. Second ranking was messy fruit, tree droppings. Those are the very things that wildlife need. The public themselves can't make that connection all the time, that those two things are at odds. You might value habitat protection, but you might not like a mess. Those things go together. That means that you'll be differentiating that when you plant trees. In

certain areas you won't want a mess. Where habitat is not important, you can get away with not having a mess given that our public values that. There will be plenty of places where we want to have trees that create underbrush, they drop things, they drop fruit, they drop branches that don't get picked up, to create that habitat. It's just nice to give the reader some perspective on that as you're going through this document. It's completely missing in the Canopy section. I think it's missing from the very start of the document, a definition of what the urban forest is. I now see it on page 55, a description of that. When people think of the urban forest, I don't know if automatically trees and open space come to mind. It didn't come to my mind when I first heard that term. I just thought you meant cityscape. I would personally like some kind of introduction. If you add in some kind of summarizing statements, that would be very nice to include so the reader gets attuned to the different types of trees and the different settings and that the goals and policies will discuss different needs for these different settings. That might be very helpful even in the Canopy section. The Canopy section is focused on street trees, because of the data collection. I didn't see a discussion of park trees or anything to do with open space. When you speak about canopy, I think you mean trees in those spaces. You need to give your definition. To my reading of this, you're only talking about the street trees, but I think you mean to include everything. It's just that you have the data on street trees. It's very valid; you can't make up data if you don't have it. Just a little introductory statement that these are the data that we have, but we also look toward the future, the needs of these other settings and we're covering those. Some kind of statement so you know you're thinking about them even though you don't know everything yet. The other thing is the Vision Statement. The Vision Statement is so broad that I didn't understand it. I don't mind that it's complex, because this is a complex topic. I was wondering if you could talk about the closing statement, where you say, "Opportunities presented by new development will be optimized and negative impacts of new development will be minimized." What do you mean when you say opportunities presented by new development will be optimized?

Mr. Passmore: If you look at the photos when we're talking about the changing canopy based on changes in development, you can see that when we've done new development, it's actually added trees because that's a requirement of ordinance, of planning and zoning codes. We will continue to have those opportunities in the future. There's even the possibility that we could enhance those opportunities. Every time a new construction project comes through, we can potentially add more trees to that. We can figure out ways to put in trees where maybe we never even had an opportunity before, just because of a construction project. One of the projects that we called out in the message from the Urban Forester is the Klyde Warren Park in Dallas where they built a 10-acre park over the top of the Woodall Rogers Freeway. I was in Dallas and participated in that project when the concept was explored. It seemed wildly optimistic at the time, but now the park is built. There's a 10-acre park over the top of a freeway. I'm not saying that we could do exactly the same thing here in Palo Alto. To a smaller scale, we can be thinking with

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those kind of future, forward thinking ideas on how could we put canopy in places where we never thought to put it before. Those are opportunities for development. Obviously minimizing the negative aspects is minimizing how much green space that we're developing. We have very little of it. Once you develop it and put concrete over it, it's really hard to put it back and it's really hard to restore that natural function. We've learned a lot of good lessons over the last 100 years of natural resources management with how hard it is to restore and how costly that is. Trying to minimize the amount of green space that we develop, focus more on redeveloping space and using that to better efficiency is the goal of the Urban Forest Master Plan.

Commissioner Crommie: Great. Thanks for explaining that. I really do appreciate it. The last thing I wanted to bring up was the tension between trees and the sustainability movement. I'm only just beginning to understand that part of the sustainability movement is focused on drought-resistant trees. Some of those trees don't necessarily give us those broad leaves that we value for aesthetics and for shade. I feel like there's a tension there. I think it's under our purview as a Parks and Recreation Commission. As parks get redesigned, of course we care about sustainability, but we also care about other values that we've come to have in this City and expectations of what we get out of a tree. Is there a section in this document where you talk about that natural tension?

Mr. Passmore: There's actually a whole chapter dedicated to water, where we talk about ideas to optimize the ability of trees to adapt to the environment that they're in, to make sure that they're using the minimum amount of water necessary to thrive regardless of what species they are. There's definitely ways for us to reduce our water usage with trees. It may mean that we change some of the traditional approaches that we've had. It may mean that we don't have turf grass underneath trees in places where we're not using it for recreational purposes. It's a change of mentality, but we can do a lot better in the future with water conservation without dramatically changing our species composition.

Commissioner Crommie: Where does the public weigh in? On the surveying, the public wasn't asked if they would miss having all of this or would they rather we don't reduce the water as much in certain parks. Is there a public piece here where people can give any kind of feedback or is this policy here to stay? I just want everything to be transparent when this discussion comes up. People could be caught off guard by all of a sudden not getting what they're used to getting. They just to need know they're giving something up by getting this and they agree. I don't know how to articulate it exactly. Those kinds of questions weren't in your survey as far as I could tell.

Mr. Passmore: Obviously we didn't ask questions on every aspect of the plan. The plan in total is open to public comment. Until Council says it's adopted, we're taking all the comments and trying to synthesize those into the document regardless of whether they're about water conservation or someone that wants more turf grass. We're going to do our

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best to listen to all those comments, incorporate those that make sense, and present all of that information to Council so that this is a transparent process.

Commissioner Crommie: Did you ever have outreach meetings? I know it comes to the public when it comes to our Commission. I didn't see this document grow up through a public outreach mechanism out all. Have you held a meeting where you bring the public in? You did the online survey. I feel like the genesis of this document has been different from doing a lot of public outreach at. I don't know if the public knows to comment on this.

Mr. Passmore: There's certainly been boards and commission meetings that the document was released to. It's been released through the City website. It's been released to the Canopy list serve of all of their membership. We've released it to partner groups who we've asked to distribute it. We have not had a series of open house meetings. I'm not sure that that's something we've been asked to do yet. We're certainly receptive to that if that's something folks were requesting. At this point, we hadn't got that from our constituents.

Commissioner Crommie: I know it's late in the process to ask, but it's hitting me as someone on the Commission this tension with sustainability. I'm just coming up to speed on it myself. I don't think the general public understands it very well.

Chair Hetterly: Commissioner Crommie, we're running out of time now and we still have some ...

Commissioner Crommie: Oh, yeah, I know it's getting late.

Chair Hetterly: I'm sorry. Did you have any comments?

Vice Chair Lauing: Yeah, I have a couple. I love the historical perspective down to the pipes under the Eichlers. I thought that was very informative, because those are real problems that you don't think about, that are affecting the difficulties with trees in south Palo Alto. That was terrific. Skipping down to the goals. I did read every chapter of your book. I was excited to get to page 131 where I could actually see what the goals were. I concur with my colleague that an executive summary upfront talking about, at least, the overall goals might be better. The other thing that I was surprised about is that there's so much math in the preceding 130 pages and an alarming lack of math in the objectives and goals. I did a lot of detail in Goal Number 1 and then saw there was similarities. When you talk about species diversity with appropriate groupings as a policy, why can't that be quantified? It was in some of the prior history that you put in there. What are the appropriate groupings? You could just put that right there. You even say a greater percentage of native and drought-tolerant species. You use the word

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percentage, but I don't see any percentage there. Is it an increase of 25 percent over the norm? Something like that would be more typical and measurable as we go forward as to what that would be. At one point you say give special consideration to species at the golf course or in parks, preserves and open spaces. Why? That's not quantified. It's not even explained. The second thing I say, which is going to sound like the reverse but it's not, is that in addition to some math to make it clearer, this needs a freelance writer to get it more for the layman and laywoman. When there's phraseology in here, like surrounding species theme or BVOCs, I don't quite know what that is. I don't want to take a lot of time. If it could be reviewed for "is this something that the normal person is going to understand" as opposed to what we know you understand. That would be helpful. I'm not sure who the sustainability plan team is. Is that formulated yet? I saw references to that, and that was news to me.

Mr. Passmore: It's in process. We recently hired a Chief Sustainability Officer for the City. It's in a state of creation right now, how sustainability is going to roll out.

Vice Chair Lauing: You referenced Canopy a lot, but in your oral presentation tonight you say you're expanding other stakeholders, which is really important. That worked quite well in the tree mitigation issue and it will here as well.

Mr. Passmore: Yes.

Vice Chair Lauing: You do emphasize the importance of communication as this goes forward to everyone. I don't like the idea that you say the website's going to be the primary way of doing it. That's very passive. If we have to depend on everybody going to the website, we're going to have similar problems to what we have now of people chopping down trees in their yard. I will stop there.

Chair Hetterly: Commissioner Markevitch.

Commissioner Markevitch: On page 93 regarding shade requirements for parking lots, you used a reference to Cal State Northridge showing solar panels in their parking lot. It would be nice and maybe more powerful if you used a local reference such as Los Altos High School which also has solar panels over their parking lot. That is a better reference for people nearby. Thanks.

Chair Hetterly: Commissioner Ashlund.

Commissioner Ashlund: I agree with other Commissioners as well that an executive summary or even a layperson's summary is very useful as well as community outreach. Not so much that they want to read over 100 pages of an Urban Forest Plan and all this data, but given the reaction to the public of the tree loss on California Avenue, I think it is

worthwhile to look into some form of community meeting or community feedback mechanism just to say, "We hear you. We value trees and this is how we're moving forward." So they have a chance to respond to a presentation and a summary. There's a lot of good information in here about the discrepancy between north and south Palo Alto, for example, that I think is not really accessible to the public but would be well received by the public.

Mr. Passmore: Thank you. We are scheduled to meet with CEAP.

Chair Hetterly: On page 5, you talk about establishing baselines for future monitoring and management and you list challenges, expectations, and monitoring plans for canopy cover, species composition, etc. I'd love to have ecosystem impacts added to the kinds of things that you're monitoring baselines for. On page 25, the discussion of the i-Tree analyses, you say in that second paragraph, "both types of analysis are industry standard and widely accepted as being relevant to City planning," and then you go on to talk about the analyses. A big issue that has come to our attention is that a lot of the habitat, ecosystem-type things that many of the stakeholders are concerned about are not quantifiable. They don't fit neatly into an i-Tree analysis. I would love to see another sentence added in that section to the effect of, "However, it should be noted these analyses do not incorporate the hard to quantify yet critical benefit of trees to the wildlife ecosystem." Something that acknowledges that we have this great analysis tool, but everybody should know it's limited in the scope of what it does. It's not a be-all and end-all. On page 94 under mitigation, "even if discretionary design review does require keeping a tree," I think that's supposed to be "does not require keeping a tree, it might require mitigation for its removal." You talk about mitigation, and the subheading says "replacement of removed trees," but there's nothing in either of those paragraphs about replacement except for the transplanting issues. You talk about transplanting but not replacement. It would be nice to have some information about replacement. Maybe that's just a reference to the tree manual or maybe there are some key issues related to replacement that should be identified there. Does that make sense?

Mr. Passmore: Yes.

Chair Hetterly: On page 128, Urban Forest Benefits Versus Other Priorities. This is a section about large broad-leaf trees. I think I talked about this the last time we looked at this. The second line says, "however integrated sustainability requires consideration of a laundry list of other things that may be inconsistent with increasing broad-leaf tree inclusion." You say at the bottom of that first column, "therefore it may not follow that the goal can be to increase the percentage of large broad-leaf trees or the canopy." That whole section is very tentative. It says, "we want more large broad-leaf trees, but there are all these problems with it, so we might not be able to have that as the goal." I don't understand why it can't still be a goal that is considered in balance with the many other

goals that you're trying to serve through the plan. A goal could still be to increase the percentage of large broad-leaf trees to the maximum feasible extent or in a balanced approach with the interests of sustainability. I don't think integrated sustainability requires exclusive consideration of these bulleted items here. Does that make sense? Do you get what I'm saying?

Mr. Passmore: Yes.

Chair Hetterly: Any final comments? Commissioner Lauing.

Vice Chair Lauing: Would it be possible next time when we see this to get a redlined version, so we can see the changes? If that's not too much trouble, that'd be really helpful. Even if those additions come from other sources, not just us, we can at least see in the 138 pages the deltas. Thank you.

Chair Hetterly: Thank you very much for coming twice to cover this meaty report. We look forward to seeing you next month.

4. Recommend to Council a Park Improvement Ordinance for El Camino Park Capital Improvement Project.

Chair Hetterly: I don't have any public input cards. If there's anyone in the public who would like to speak to this matter, please get a card in to Catherine. This is an action item following our discussion from last month.

Daren Anderson: Good evening. Daren Anderson, Open Space, Parks and Golf. I'm here tonight to ask your recommendation to the Council that they approve the Park Improvement Ordinance for El Camino Park. The Commission has discussed this project for almost four years over 20 meetings. Tonight I'll mainly focus on the recent updates to design which were discussed at that January 21 meeting, which was mainly the lighting plan and a quick update on what that lighting plan change was. It was adding four field lights to the north synthetic field. Previously it had been to stub out the electrical conduit only and then we would come back and add the lights subsequent to public outreach and finding additional funding. Adding two lights to the south field, this is to allow for night play for both soccer and lacrosse since we now have a removable fence on that south natural-grass field. On February 19 staff held a community meeting on that lighting plan. We had field users and residents of the 101 Alma Condominiums present. The participants were generally satisfied that the lighting plan's appropriate for this site. Some of the things we discussed were the merits of the 50-foot versus 70-foot light poles. The meeting participants did agree that the 70-foot pole, the taller of the two options, was best suited for the field users in that it would provide the best lighting of the field and minimize the heat that comes off those lights. For the residents of 101 Alma, the benefit

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was that the 70-foot pole contains the light spillage a little bit better than the 50-foot option. The project timeline is that it will be completed in fall of 2015. I'm available for questions from the Commission. I also want to take a moment to offer my sincere thanks for your patience with this long, long process. I really appreciate it. And for the deep commitment and sustained passion and drive to ensure that we end up with the best design. I really appreciate it.

Chair Hetterly: Any comments or discussion or motion?

MOTION: Recommend Council approve the Park Improvement Ordinance for the El Camino Park Capital Improvement Project was moved by Commissioner Knopper and seconded by Vice Chair Lauing.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I have one question about the lighting. Have you looked into the lights, making them deeper parabolas to prevent spillage from the lights directly into the apartments.

Mr. Anderson: That came up at the public meeting. Paul from Siegfried, the designer, took note of that. I talked to him subsequently. This is the latest and greatest of the designs from Musco Lighting. There isn't a newer or better technique.

Commissioner Reckdahl: There's no such animal to get it ...

Mr. Anderson: Currently that's true.

Commissioner Reckdahl: OK, thank you.

Commissioner Knopper: I would like to make a motion.

Vice Chair Lauing: You did.

Commissioner Knopper: Oh, I did.

Chair Hetterly: To recommend the City Council approve.

Commissioner Knopper: Our Commission, right? What do I have to say? To recommend Council for the Park Improvement Ordinance for El Camino Park Capital Improvement Project.

Vice Chair Lauing: Which I seconded.

Chair Hetterly: All right. All in favor.

MOTION PASSED: 7-0

Vice Chair Lauing: Thanks to your effort too, Daren. The only thing that's wrong in this report is it says 2010. I think it was 2001. It feels like it must be that long ago.

Chair Hetterly: Thank you, Daren.

5. Review Design for the Magical Bridge Playground Capital Improvement Project.

Chair Hetterly: This is a discussion item. Peter Jensen will be presenting.

Peter Jensen: Good evening, Commissioners. Peter Jensen, Landscape Architect for the City for Palo Alto, here to present a magical and exciting project which the Commission has seen before in some early design state. We have focused the budget and have a better design. This evening we want to present the design for the Magical Bridge Playground. Hopefully with some luck and some grace, this summer we'll be constructing that playground. With us tonight we have Cordelia Hill from RHAA. They're the original landscape architecture firm that worked on the design of Mitchell Park in the 1950s, and they are the landscape architecture firm working with the City and the Friends of the Magical Bridge (Friends) to come up with a design. We're going to go through a presentation. Cordy's going to do that, talk about the design, then we can take questions and comments after. Our goal is to come back next month with a Park Improvement Ordinance to send to the Council for approval. That's our timeline. I'll let Cordy take it away.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I have one question.

Mr. Jensen: Yes.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Wasn't there some uncertainty about how much funding there was going to be and there were a couple of designs we were to consider depending on the level of funding?

Mr. Jensen: Yes.

Commissioner Reckdahl: What's the status on that?

Mr. Jensen: Previously we had a more expensive design that was definitely larger in scale than the one we're going to look at tonight. That was estimated in the range of \$4-\$4.5 million. We also had a more defined and smaller-scale design that went along with

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the initial letter of intent for a \$1.3 million playground. Over the last year, the Friends of the Magical Bridge have been raising funds for the construction of the playground. The Friends working with City staff has set a goal for fundraising at \$3.2 million, which is the construction budget for the playground itself. Currently the funds raised are approximately \$2.8 million. It is getting very close, and we feel that within the next month the Friends will have the full amount to construct the playground. That is one of the aspects of the agreement between the Friends and the City, that the funds have to be fully raised before construction can take place. That is a stipulation. The Friends are getting closer. A few months ago when we decided to set the budget, that assisted us. Most projects are built with a budget as the first thing. That wasn't a part of this project, because it was based on fundraising. When we could solidify the amount that the Friends were comfortable raising in a timeframe that they could do so, we set that budget and then looked at the design and reconfigured the design to meet that budgetary number. That's where we are tonight.

Cordelia Hill: Thank you, Commissioners. It's nice to be back. For those of you not familiar, the playground will occur in the southeast corner of Mitchell Park. It's directly adjacent to the second group of tennis courts. The playground will be built in this area. One of the things that we did that set the design was an analysis of the vegetation, topography, circulation and boundary. The view from the existing bridge, you can see that it's a heavily wooded site. Some of the trees will need to be removed not to accommodate play equipment, but because an arborist report found that they were not in good health. The proposed playground area is the large area adjacent to the tennis courts. We developed the design with the input of the community. We presented initially two options. In those two options, it came out that one of the biggest concerns was maintaining the existing bike trail as well as having a fully accessible playground on many levels. From those two options and the input we got, we came up with an initial design where we actually have improved the bike access by widening the curve around the tennis court. We got a lot of feedback that there was a lot of conflict at that corner. By flattening the slope it's easier for everyone to get up over the bridge. This design that you saw last year assumed that we would have new bridge construction. The design that is being shown to you tonight, we are only going to renovate the bridge at this point in time. That's one of the biggest changes.

Commissioner Reckdahl: What does that mean, renovate? You're not changing the arc at all?

Ms. Hill: No, we're not changing the arc. We're changing the approaches to it. The bridge itself is not the issue. The issue is the approaches.

Commissioner Reckdahl: You're flattening that out so it's not quite as steep?

Ms. Hill: Right. It's less than 5 percent.

Mr. Jensen: Currently the approach ramps to the bridge don't meet any type of ADA accessibility. They are way above the grade and incline that they need to be. As far as the bridgework itself goes, renovation to it would focus on changing the deck material, looking at the handrails and replacing those things, just to improve the current bridge. Staff is working on and trying to find grant funding to replace that bridge. It does need to be replaced, because it's of limited size. It's not the length but the width. From handrail to handrail, it's currently about 4 feet 9 inches wide, which is not wide enough to sustain the traffic on it. We would like to change that bridge. Hopefully within the next few years we will change out the bridge as well. The existing bridge will accommodate a new bridge once that is in place.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Thank you.

Ms. Hill: The second major change is to consolidate the playground so that it's financially feasible. We're now holding this as an open lawn area. We think it allows a different type of play to happen. Rather than putting equipment in that area. The playground that is before you tonight is this one. As you cross the bridge, there is an immediate entrance here into the playground, on an upper level into a playhouse which we'll show you in sketches in few minutes. Across to the slide mound which was part of the initial playground you saw. The playhouse and the stage is a new feature of this plan. We had separate stages and separate playhouses and separate forts, so now it's a combined structure. Upon entering here, you can also come down directly into the playground in this fashion separated from the bike trail. There's a second entrance in this area that is off the bike trail. There will be bike parking and an access entry gate through here. The way that the playground is divided now, this is what the perspective looks like now as you cross the bridge. As you cross, this is the tree house and tree walk area. You can see in the sketch what the tree house will look like. One of the key features that we've always wanted to capture in this playground is being up, being in the trees, having children of all abilities be up, to be king of the mountain, to be on top of a fort. Those features are a key part of this. There will be individual things such as binoculars and this feature where you stand on a platform and it slowly descends. There are ways for children from top to bottom to interact with each other, pulleys and some of those other features. We've done this diagram to show you some of the key things that we looked at for all areas. Is it wheelchair accessible? The whole upper area is. In some cases, in special pieces of equipment, it's accessible with transfer meaning that you do need to leave a wheelchair, but it is accessible. Sensory features, in this case it's the trees themselves. Places to retreat, some children need a place to retreat. They can't take the high level of activity of a playground on a constant basis. This is what the fort playground feature is. This is an aerial view above the tennis courts to show you how it all fits together from that perspective. As you go on the lower level, below the

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playground, you're in the stage and nature, play and picnic area. There will be features such as the sensory boxes which are bins where things such as the ground material and pine needles, eucalyptus leaves that children who can't touch the ground can experience them. They allow you to have scent and play. As I mentioned, the stage is now part of this in this area as well as picnic tables. One of the features that we have done is all the picnic tables have center wheelchair access; you're not always on the end. There is going to be a special feature in this area that's being designed. It is a touch and sound feature. This is how there are many levels of play. The climbing and sliding hill is very similar to what you saw before. Three different slides, each allowing a child a different experience. In addition, different types of climbers and banister slides. All of the different types of activities that are available. The music and interactive zone will include all types of chimes, drums and various ways of making music. There's also some experimentation now with some uniquely designed features. Right now they're just placeholders in the design. They're not finished design yet. Again, how it all works together. Finally, the three areas that are on the southern edge of the playground include the swinging and swaying zone. We've allowed a variety of different types of swings. We also have a sway boat which is a feature that a child in a wheelchair or anybody can get in and it moves. It allows that inner ear experience that children need for development without having to transfer. We're incorporating the adult exercise equipment into this area too. Again, how that all works together in terms of meeting all of the needs. The spinning zone features five different types of spinners including such things as the cocoon spinner and the nest spinner for children who need to be enclosed in retreat. The fully integrated carousel, again a child or an adult in a wheelchair can participate. Finally the tot zone has springs, a small slide, climbers, loop climbers, playhouse. These are all designed for 2-4 year olds, so much smaller children, smaller in scale activities. The playhouse climber affords an opportunity to retreat. Also the kinder bells will allow sound use on a much smaller scale. How it fits together. That's the playground now.

Mr. Jensen: Walking through the playground, you can see how it's divided into play zones. The key feature that separates this playground from other inclusive playgrounds is the fact that each zone does pay particular attention to a specific style of play; the spinning, the swinging, the sliding. It provides multiple options for doing that type of play. There should be apparatus or equipment in that area for all users to experience how that play goes. The other interesting aspect of each area is that there is a retreat area or areas designated as a retreat. Children who are new to the playground and have not experienced it before can sit and watch other kids play and take that in before they jump into the play. Kids also have the ability to get over-stimulated while playing, so they can be removed from the play area to calm down in the playground itself. As Cordy mentioned before, the Friends of the Magical Bridge are working with a small committee from Stanford on developing some innovative musical elements that will be incorporated into the playground, specifically into the music area. They will be inclusive but also very innovative, going along with the idea of living in Palo Alto and the Silicon Valley and

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technology. We can meld those things to make unique sound experiences that are not only fun to play with but also soothing. They promote playing together. Those things are very exciting. I hope over the next couple of weeks we resolve all those pieces. There's three to four pieces that that is going to entail. Those will be added pieces to the music element of the playground. With that, I will open it up to any more comments.

Ms. Hill: I just wanted to add there's some other small features such as tactile domes when you're entering an area. If you are visually impaired, you can know you've entered into an active area. There's also going to be a map of the playground in bronze or probably fiberglass, because bronze might be stolen, that allows a child who has visual challenges to orient themselves and figure out where they are and how it all fits together. There are little features such as a cane holder at the top of the slides. We're trying to make sure that all levels are thought about.

Mr. Jensen: I would like to point out we have a representative of the Friends of the Magical Bridge, Emily, is here. We think about the playground as being for children, but it's really for everyone to use. It's not just for kids who have disabilities, but kids of all levels and abilities as well as parents and adults. There are adults who have cognizant disabilities. The playground has to allow all those users to be incorporated into it as well. Cordy did mention that we've added a few adult work-out equipment in the playground for people to work out while they're watching their kids. The location of the playground is also very close to a senior center. We feel providing some of those opportunities would be inclusive to everyone as well, besides just users of the park.

Chair Hetterly: (INAUDIBLE) real broad range and variety of cool stuff with a mere \$3.2 million. When you look at what we're spending on El Camino Park, we're not getting nearly as much variety there. I think it's much closer to the Cadillac version than I ever imagined would be possible. That's very exciting and also seems very consistent with your original goals and obviously reflects a tremendous amount of thoughtful hard work. I'd like to open it to comments and questions from the Commission. Commissioner Reckdahl.

Commissioner Reckdahl: On the north side of the tennis court, that's a path that connects over to the ...

Ms. Hill: Abilities united.

Commissioner Reckdahl: That will have easy access between the two sites?

Ms. Hill: Yes. They'll come this way to meet grade. This is an elevated, as we mentioned, ramp. The slope starts at this point. That's how we've achieved a much flatter slope, by much longer. They'll have direct access.

Commissioner Reckdahl: If we were to replace that bridge, would you lower it down so the peak of the bridge would be lower?

Ms. Hill: No. The bridge has to maintain pretty much where the deck is now for clearance for the Santa Clara Valley Water District. They don't want any possibility of obstruction.

Commissioner Reckdahl: During floods this is or for maintenance?

Ms. Hill: Yes. This is the maintenance path along here for them. It will also function as a play path, but it needs to be clear of any equipment.

Commissioner Reckdahl: But kids will be able to run on that?

Ms. Hill: Yes.

Commissioner Reckdahl: It'll be open. What is a lifespan for this park? How long will the equipment last?

Ms. Hill: It really varies according to the piece of the equipment. There may be pieces that have to be changed out much faster. Fortunately the playground manufacturers have gotten a lot smarter. For instance, the cable structures of which there are two on this, instead of having to replace the entire cable net, you can replace a single strand. A lot of the equipment is the type of thing that you'll see in place for 20, 30 years. Most of it I would expect you'll end up replacing because the safety codes have changed or there's something more exciting.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Is the Parks Department doing all the maintenance or is Friends doing part of that?

Mr. Jensen: The City takes responsibility for maintaining the playground once it's constructed.

Commissioner Reckdahl: It'll be the regular renovation just like any other park then?

Mr. Jensen: Yes. It would be just like we're doing for Eleanor Pardee Park right now in reconstructing the tot lot there. It would be the responsibility of the City to repair or renovate as necessary.

Commissioner Reckdahl: When I look to the right there, there seems to be some space to the right of the tennis courts. Can we move the tennis courts over at all to the right?

Ms. Hill: The tennis courts exist, and so it would be a major expense to move them over. Plus that line, all those black dots are existing trees that act as a buffer between the park and the adjacent property.

Commissioner Reckdahl: For the tennis courts, we periodically resurface. Do you know where in the cycle we are on that resurfacing?

Mr. Jensen: I do not. From just seeing them, they are in pretty good shape. They're not used a lot, but I do see users out there every once in a while. They are in fairly good shape and are usable.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I know at Rinconada we said that the next time we resurface we were going to slide them over 10 feet or some other amount.

Mr. Jensen: Yes. There's two different types of renovations for the courts. Most of them currently are being top dressed, painted. When the base fails at Rinconada, we would then consider sliding the tennis courts over. That would be to do more repairs to the concrete in tearing pieces out to re-pour them. In this case, the sub-base of the tennis courts is in good shape, so it's not going anywhere.

Commissioner Reckdahl: If this tennis court was in bad condition so that it was convenient to move it, would we move it? When I look at this, I see some green space on the right and it looks rather cramped on the left. Are we happy where the court is or (CROSSTALK).

Mr. Jensen: This goes back to our other large scale project, the Parks Master Plan which will look at things like this and look at amenities such as tennis courts and decide if this is a good place for it.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I'm not talking about getting rid of them. I'm just talking about would a Magical Bridge be easier to build if the tennis court was over 10 feet or are we happy where it is right now?

Mr. Jensen: For the equipment that the Friends wanted to place in there and their goals and objectives for the playground, where it is now is OK.

Chair Hetterly: Other questions or comments? Commissioner Crommie.

Commissioner Crommie: It's beautiful. I can't wait to see it. Are you worried at all about bicycle traffic and are there any special safety provisions that need to go in? If

people are entering it from that lower corner, are the children going along on that bike trail alongside bicycles?

Ms. Hill: That was one of the big discussion items all along. That's why we originally came up with the two bridge concept. The potential for conflict is actually at the bridge. This is a 10-foot wide walk now, so at least there's room to jump to the side or move to the side. You can see much better now too. Right now as you come along the bike trail you kind of pop around the corner. If someone's there, it's a surprise. This is not ideal but, as Peter said, the City is looking at replacing the bridge and putting in a much wider bridge. One of the goals on the bridge replacement, which I assume is still there, is to have a bulb out in the middle of the bridge to allow a place of retreat if you feel people are coming at you too much.

Commissioner Crommie: I think it would be nice, once the park is open, to assess the safety and make sure everything is working out right. It can cost money to make adjustments, but I'd like us to be mindful of how it plays out.

Mr. Jensen: We definitely will be looking at that. We've had conversations with Transportation about if the bridge and the ramp should be dedicated to walking only with some of type of sign there to encourage bikers to dismount. If you want those types of things to work, it takes people to monitor them, which is probably not going to happen. It is something we will monitor when the playground opens, how that interaction is occurring between pedestrians and bikes using the pathway. The pathway has heavy traffic before and after school. There could be options of monitoring use during those time periods to make sure that everything is happening OK. Currently the kids go up those ramps and across that bridge next to each other and it's happening and they're making it happen. I would hope with a wider bridge that it would be safer and easier for them to use. Currently it is functioning for what it is. We will definitely keep an eye on it as the playground is built.

Commissioner Crommie: My last question has to do about the canopy that was there. This was quite a natural area before it was renovated to become this park. Did you measure the canopy that was there to start with and then what you're going to end up with and decide has it shrunk?

Mr. Jensen: We are following the recommendations laid out in the Urban Master Plan of restoring the canopy there. We will be planting trees to restore that canopy, hopefully back to its full level within the ten-year timeframe. We are proposing to plant some very large specimen trees in the playground to bring back the shade, because that is a very important feature. As you can see along the edge, those two trees and the tree in the middle are not your typical 15-gallon tree. That's our size, but we're looking at 30-foot tall *Quercus lobata* oak trees to put in there. Not only large trees, but native trees as well.

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That is the goal of the playground itself, to introduce native, large-scale trees. Day one we are providing the shade protection that it has right now. With some luck those trees will grow larger than the trees that were there before. We are taking that into consideration. If you walk around the site, shade is one of the best parts of the existing sites. It has a very mature, large canopy and it is covered very well. That was one of the main aspects that attracted the Fiends to this location, besides it was not being used very much. Unfortunately some of the trees that are there, the structure of them and their particular types, aren't the best for a playground and they do present themselves with a hazard to it. We do have to remove those trees, but we are looking at putting some large-scale trees back to give the shade back.

Ms. Hill: There are two great cork oaks here, which really have a nice canopy. You'll be able to go under those. They have wonderful bark that kids can pull off. It is the bark that's used for wine corks, etc. There's a large pine tree that is remaining. There were three others that were recommended removal because of disease and bug issues. There will be some mature trees as well as the three new ones. This is a line of eucalyptus on the south edge, so there actually is quite a bit of shade on the bottom third of the site.

Chair Hetterly: One other thing worth keeping in the back of our minds for follow-up to see how it plays out over time is the parking situation. Obviously there's a lot of parking in the Mitchell Park parking lot. To the extent that carries overflow from the new library and community center and/or this Magical Bridge Playground, that could become impacted and we're going to want to think about ways to alleviate that.

Mr. Jensen: Yes. That is something that we will be monitoring once the playground is open. There are some opportunities to increase the parking for those cars that have placards. Nothing has been formalized, so I can't really speak on those things. For this plan, we are using the Mitchell Park parking lot. If it is impacted too greatly, we are looking at other options to expand the parking possibilities.

Chair Hetterly: Thank you very much.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I have one last question. How does this drain? It looks like we have a lot of materials here that are impervious to water. Does it drain off the side or where does the rain go?

Mr. Jensen: Currently that area drains to the creek that's there, into the channelized area. Eventually the excess runoff will do the same thing when the playground is built.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Are there drains built into it or are they all canted so it goes off to the side?

Mr. Jensen: The play zones underneath the rubber surfacing have drains. Each area has a drain, so there is a network of drains that's catching all the water. In the spinning zone, the swinging zone, and the tot lot, where the surfaces are level, there is the opportunity to construct the rubberized surfacing without a concrete sub-base that will allow more permeability to those spaces. We are looking at the option to maintain the permeable surfacing that is there.

Chair Hetterly: Thank you very much. It's very exciting. I can't wait for it to come to life.

6. Review Ad Hoc Committee Ideas for Improving the Commission Website.

Chair Hetterly: We put some stuff in your packet for this. The first page lays out our goals to a series of degrees. Item number one is the key things we definitely want to be able to find a way to accomplish. Two and three and four are things we'd like your thinking about, whether it's worth some significant effort to expand to that extent. Then five, six, and seven are the next steps to move forward. Let me focus first on item number one. We want to expand the content of the site in order to better inform and educate the public. That includes highlighting current and recent Parks and Rec Commission issues by linking to staff reports, Commission deliberations, press coverage, other related action and making it findable by topic. We also want to add some tools to provide quick and ready access to commonly sought information, like field and trail closures, park and trail maps and some other things in that parenthetical there. I'd like to discuss tonight what kinds of things you think are key for the resources section, that we would want to have accessible from the Parks and Rec website as opposed to just leaving them within the web of links on other City pages. In order to connect to those tools and issues we would identify the appropriate links with other City websites so we're not duplicating it, but connecting to the same source. We wanted to look a little further at the Community Services Department pages to make sure that the key information, the tools kind of information, that we don't include on our site and that we do include on our site is easy to find through various gateways. If we come up with a list of ten things that we think the public is interested in finding frequently, we don't want them to have to go through five different steps to find it. We want to pull those things out to the front and make them easy to find. Finally, correspondence from the public to the Commission. When they come into the Commission email, Catherine sends them around to all the Commissioners for our review. We don't have a process for posting them so that we can find them later if we've emptied our email box or so that other members of the public can access them and see what comments have come in. We also don't have a process for responding to them. That's something we'd like to address in the website discussion as well. On the second page is the timeline of how we think our work might progress, the work of the ad hoc. The third page is the current and recent topics that we would propose including in that issues section. The next page are two examples of possible formats

1381 within the framework of the existing standard boards and commissions websites. Do you
1382 want to walk through those, Stacey, or would you like me?
1383

1384 Commissioner Ashlund: Yeah. The first one is a two-column layout that's currently used
1385 within the City website. The second one is a three-column layout that's currently used.
1386 We started with what's already there on the City website and are proposing the types of
1387 content and the location of it. That's what we're looking for your feedback on.
1388

1389 Chair Hetterly: You can see up on the board the way the website is currently set up, in
1390 case you all don't look at it regularly. It has this whole big section on recruitment and
1391 what our mission is, then lists who we are, and then links to agendas by date. If
1392 somebody's interested in our discussion on dog parks, if you don't know the date of it,
1393 you have to look through every single one of those things to find the agenda item. Then
1394 you have to go to the next month to get the Minutes for the discussion on that agenda
1395 item. We thought it was really important to pull out the issues. You also have to scroll to
1396 the bottom to get the only source of information there is. That's why we looked at these
1397 different layouts to pull out key items all upfront on the first page. Other things we might
1398 want to add to the tools, things that people might want access to are things like the Master
1399 Plans, the Baylands Master Plan, the Arastradero Trail Plan. All the Parks and Rec
1400 guiding documents should be accessible from the Commission web page.
1401

1402 Commissioner Knopper: May I?
1403

1404 Chair Hetterly: Yes.
1405

1406 Commissioner Knopper: I love that we're going to be doing this, because the current
1407 website is so cumbersome and it just doesn't draw you in visually. Just from a marketing
1408 perspective, there's no pizzazz, for lack of a better word. I really like that it would be
1409 issue specific, because the whole point of having a website is to get information quick,
1410 concise, to the point, and find what you need. This feels like you're lost in a store and
1411 you can't find the right aisle. I love that it would be broken down in pieces. Some of the
1412 things that I was thinking about is how to make it more interesting and relevant, so
1413 people will come back and use it and want to come back. One of the things I was
1414 thinking about was maybe a section on how we want to educate our community with
1415 issues that they find interesting. For instance, if we go back to not feeding the wildlife
1416 and why, if we had a monthly editorial from an expert on why it's harmful to feed
1417 wildlife. Another month we would have fun facts on trees and we'd have some
1418 information about interesting things on trees. In addition to just finding information,
1419 people would find useful and interesting things and go, "It's a learning opportunity. I
1420 didn't know that Palo Alto had x amount of oak trees. If you have an oak tree, this is
1421 what you shouldn't do. You shouldn't have a sprinkler head right on top of it, because
1422 you could overwater it and kill the roots." I just made that up, but that's what I'm talking

about. It is true; I do know that. That was the kind of thing. Just making it relevant is great. The other thing that I wasn't sure about was with regard to the legalities of having comments. You have a question mark with regard to the privacy issues and the strategy for responses. I don't know what that looks like yet, and you don't either. That was definitely something that I questioned, whether that's an issue. I love having the opportunity for having partners that are stakeholders and having them contribute commentary. Bird migration, look for the yellow-tailed swallow something in April because they come through. Something fun. Lastly, I mentioned this earlier in the evening, having some sort of interactive map that's just spectacular, visually spectacular and just so easy. You touch a particular park, it pops up all the facilities that are available at the park, how you rent picnic tables for birthday parties, what's allowed at birthday parties. I had a neighbor knock on my door and say, "I want to put a jumpy house in Eleanor Pardee Park." I'm like, "Nope." People don't know that, but she happens to live next door to me. Think all of that information that we know people want to know. Now I'm done talking. Thank you.

Chair Hetterly: Go ahead, Commissioner Ashlund.

Commissioner Ashlund: I defer to Rob, because I think you're going to say the same thing.

Rob de Geus: What I would be a little concerned about with some of those comments, I agree with all of that, but I'm not sure that it really belongs on the Commission website. It's more related to the parks website. I can show you up here. This is the Community Services home page and there's lots of pages here including a parks home page, recreation, summer camps and all of these things. This can be improved upon and we ought to have interactive maps and some other things there. That belongs here rather than on the Parks and Rec Commission page. I wouldn't want to redo the work so that it's on the Commission page and on the Department page.

Commissioner Knopper: Maybe we're just driving traffic to yours.

Mr. de Geus: Right, yeah.

Commissioner Knopper: So it's a "if you want to know more about hosting a party in the park, click here" kind of thing, and it just drives people ...

Commissioner Markevitch: [crosstalk] goes to theirs, yeah.

Commissioner Knopper: Yeah. The whole point is to keep driving them back to the appropriate page. It's not recreating the wheel; it's just making it more cohesive. If people want information about dogs, they're visiting Palo Alto, or just got a dog or they're

not familiar with the rules, there's different places they can go but they're always driven back to the central source of information. Making it a good user experience.

Mr. de Geus: There's a lot of pages on the Department home page, so which ones make the most sense to link from the Commission page. That was something we talked about and we want to make sure it's not overwhelming, so it's not too many, so it's easy to navigate. I'd be interested in seeing what the rest of the Commission thinks. Maybe that's something you can all do, look at the Department home page and give feedback on what you think is most appropriate to link from the Commission page.

Commissioner Reckdahl: My feeling is that if we're putting links on our home page because the parks website is convoluted, maybe we should fix the parks website.

Vice Chair Lauing: First it's just a superior ad hoc committee report and it's innovative; it's not just the normal stuff. Some real thought has gone into this. I do want to leap immediately down to number five, the strategy to keep the site up-to-date. This is not trivial. Not trivial. Rob's got enough to do, so we really have to think through that one. If you put it up, you've got to keep it up. You've got to keep it up-to-date; you can't just put it up annually and say, "We're going to tweak it." I don't even know where the initial budget or design stuff comes in, if that's CSD budget or what. We would really have to have a strategy for that. There's a way to parse that out for the content that goes up there. For example, this one suggestion about various topics, we could all split that up. There's seven of us and if we did it quarterly, we could get through almost two years with only having to do one. There's ways to do that and we'd all have to cooperate to do it, but let's not underestimate that. The other thing on here that I think we have to be really careful about is if we're having other folks participating on the website that aren't Commissioners. First of all, should we or not? But even the links. If somebody says, "I want a link because I want jumpies in Pardee Park," we have to have a policy that rules that out. It has to be strictly contained to stuff that's happening here, not public comment. Great start.

Mr. de Geus: I think Catherine wanted to say something. She maintains the websites.

Chair Hetterly: Go ahead.

Catherine Bourquin: We do currently have a web page committee. CSD has been working on getting input from everybody in CSD on how and what they want to change in the web page. A lot of your comments tonight are already being incorporated. More to come.

Chair Hetterly: Is that for the Commission web page or the CSD pages?

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Ms. Bourquin: For the whole City web pages, the whole site for the City. There's a committee already in place and they're all going through trying to decide how they're going to make these changes. I'm not sure of the timeline, but we've already had ...

Mr. de Geus: So the Commission's input is probably timely then.

Ms. Bourquin: Exactly.

Mr. de Geus: This would be helpful as they work on the design of the City website.

Chair Hetterly: Commissioner Crommie.

Commissioner Crommie: Thanks so much for getting going on this. I think it's really exciting and thanks for the presentation of the different formats. I tend to like the three-column format. It's a bit more interesting visually. Instead of saying the word "issues," you might say "exciting topics" or "current topics." The word "issues" reminds me of a magazine. I hope we can list our Minutes separately. I didn't even figure out how to get our Minutes for a couple of years. I was missing them and I was trying to go back and look at them. Finally I realized you can click on the agenda. I don't think most people can figure that out. Most people are looking to a link that says "Minutes." It's a little confusing because in past years we have that on the website, then all of a sudden they disappeared. Can we go back to having a separate link for each month for Minutes?

Chair Hetterly: That makes sense. That's how Council does it now as well. It is easier.

Commissioner Crommie: It's more simple.

Chair Hetterly: You don't have to back up a month or jump forward a month, whatever it is.

Commissioner Crommie: It's more consistent with other government web pages. I'd really like to see that. Are we going to have a search box just for our pages? It's going to be our own search box, is that what you're thinking here?

Commissioner Ashlund: We didn't add one. In the header of the entire website there's a consistent search box, in the upper right-hand corner.

Chair Hetterly: (INAUDIBLE) City wide.

Commissioner Ashlund: For the whole website.

Commissioner Crommie: Is it too difficult to make it just for our content?

Commissioner Ashlund: It's functionality, right. It's not just rearranging content; it's just functionality. I'll defer to Rob on that as well.

Mr. de Geus: We have to stick within a certain template that the City uses. That search box remains the same on each page. I don't believe we can do that.

Commissioner Crommie: How would we post our recommendations? That's something really important that comes out of our Commission. What's the concept here for posting them?

Chair Hetterly: The concept would be to sort them by issue or topic. Maybe on the front page we'd highlight three of the hottest topics, stuff we're embroiled in right now, and then have a link to the full list, this current and recent topics list. Someone could look down the full list to find a subject they're interested in and each individual piece. If I just want to know what the Commission's recommendation was about the golf course, I'd look under golf course and click on park recommendation, and that would pull up the paper that we submitted to Council.

Commissioner Crommie: So the park recommendation would be a separate link under each topic if we happen to have one.

Chair Hetterly: Right, if we have one.

Commissioner Crommie: So we're going to have an inner page, an inner web page? When you say more, how is it going to open up to the more?

Chair Hetterly: On the front page, when you first visit the site, you're going to have your three or four highlighted issues. It'll say, "For more Parks and Rec hot topics, click here." That will pull up this entire list. Then you click on each individual item and it'll link to a document. It's not wildly interactive. I don't understand the science of it, but I think there's a difference between linking to a page as opposed to just linking to a document. That Stacey understands.

Commissioner Crommie: So you will have a page display of everything and then links within that take.

Chair Hetterly: It's not technically a new website. It doesn't take you to another website. It just takes you to a list.

Commissioner Knopper: Think of it as nesting. You have the top line and then you have pages or artificial documents nested sequentially under the one topic that specifies

whatever you're specifically looking for with regard to timeline, recommendation and all of these other bullet points that Stacey and Jennifer laid out.

Commissioner Crommie: Right. I like that structure because you can confuse the user sometimes by navigating them too far away. If you're keeping it all contained within our own web pages, I like that. Certainly you'll navigate away to get to some kind of document. I don't know. You guys will figure out ...

Chair Hetterly: They won't feel that they've gone away. They're just going to see the document.

Commissioner Crommie: Right.

Chair Hetterly: They're not going to know that it came from somewhere over there.

Commissioner Crommie: Right. It's just going to open up. Yes. I like that. This is a huge improvement. Thank you.

7. Debrief and Approve Draft Minutes from the March 7, 2014 Commission Retreat.

Chair Hetterly: You have the Minutes in your packet. Any edits, revisions? Yes, Commissioner Lauing.

Vice Chair Lauing: Under oral communications, this is three different sentences and it's listed as one. She commented that there's no need for a cap. That's a sentence. Diminish the park for animals. That's a sentence. Asking not to cap the last five acres. On page 2 on the list of assignments, Lauing was also on Master Plan community meetings along with Markevitch and Knopper. On page 3, just for clarity under CIP, we're arranging an update on a current status meeting 2014.

Rob de Geus: What page are you on?

Vice Chair Lauing: I'm on the top of page 3, the third bit down in CIPs. When it says arrange update on current status with Rob, it's meaning to let us know what's approved, what's going forward. Not looking forward because that's the ad hoc for next year. Then on Arastradero, I think I'm also assigned to that along with Rob, the low impact preserve designation.

Chair Hetterly: Yeah.

Commissioner Markevitch: Ed, under CIP, was I an alternate on that?

Vice Chair Lauing: I think it was just Keith and myself for the ad hoc.

Commissioner Markevitch: The community meetings, you said there was a third and I didn't catch that.

Chair Hetterly: Ed's the third. Are you done?

Vice Chair Lauing: I think that's all in terms of actual corrections.

Chair Hetterly: Any others? Commissioner Ashlund.

Commissioner Ashlund: On the first page, Ms. Kleinhaus' name is spelled two different ways and neither of them are correct. Under oral communications, it's S-H-A-N-I instead of R-I. Under number 4 for business, number one it's spelled S-H-I-R. They're both S-H-A-N-I.

Chair Hetterly: Any others? Do we have a motion to approve the Minutes as amended?

MOTION: Approval of the draft Minutes of the March 7, 2014 Commission Retreat moved by Commissioner Knopper and seconded by Commissioner Ashlund.

Chair Hetterly: All in favor. Minutes are approved.

MOTION PASSED: 7-0.

8. Ad Hoc Committee and Liaison Updates.

Chair Hetterly: Do any of the ad hoc committees or liaisons have updates? Yes, Commissioner Crommie.

Commissioner Crommie: The ad hoc committee on exploring community gardens has met. We met last week, Commissioner Ashlund and myself. We laid out some goals and tasks to complete before we present to you next month. We are now convened.

Chair Hetterly: One other item from the Retreat. I guess this is germane to ad hoc and liaison updates, the subject of a parks and recreation outreach plan, communications plan. We talked about it at the Retreat, but we didn't assign an ad hoc committee to it. Daren had suggested we consult with the City's PR person or communications director, I'm not sure what her title is, Claudia Keith, to come up with a plan for how we can better communicate with our constituents. I would throw that out to see if there are

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Commissioners interested in being on an ad hoc for that or if it's something that we should manage between the Chair and the Vice Chair. What are you all thinking?

Vice Chair Lauing: I'm happy to pace it, if that's something that you'd like me to do. Get with Daren, that's one option. Whatever everybody else wants.

Commissioner Knopper: The only other thing I was going to say is it might make sense to get her opinion on how to integrate that into the website, what we were talking about.

Chair Hetterly: Yes, definitely.

Commissioner Knopper: It just might be something that overlaps with that project.

Commissioner Ashlund: I'm happy to be a backup if you need a second.

Chair Hetterly: OK. You'll take the lead on that?

Vice Chair Lauing: OK.

Commissioner Crommie: I wanted to mention one other thing. This has to do with doing the EIR training. Is this a proper time or shall I bring that up later?

Chair Hetterly: Yes.

Commissioner Crommie: I've done some outreach to various people that I know work on CEQA. I now have a couple of names of people to contact. I'll be able to contact those people. I know we don't have a budget for this, as far as I know. What I heard last time was just a couple of hours. If we run some kind of training on CEQA and EIR, just the basics of reading those kinds of reports, are we thinking a two hour meeting on it? Can I get a little feedback here?

Chair Hetterly: I think that'd be great. I went to a really long one and it was really too long.

Commissioner Crommie: I'll keep that in mind. Would we need the person to come to a meeting in the evening like this or would we run a special meeting for that kind of thing?

Chair Hetterly: My sense from the Retreat was that not everyone was interested in doing a training, so maybe it makes sense to do it separate.

Commissioner Crommie: Sounds good.

V. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Hetterly: Do you have some or should I go first?

Rob de Geus: I don't have a lot actually. I wanted to mention the 7.7 acres, but you all were aware of that. You either stayed last night or watched an interesting development. That will be a big deal for the Commission and the community. A lot of eyes on that particular topic. I'll say something about the golf course, because I know you're interested in knowing what's happening there. I don't have a lot of information other than the City Manager has met with **Bruce Wolf**, the Executive Officer of the Regional Water Board. They had a productive meeting last week, Wednesday, in East Palo Alto to talk about the flood control project and the need to move this along and the golf course project. They had a few follow-up items and they're going to meet again next week to see if the permit application can be reconsidered. We're all hoping that that will be fruitful and that we can move forward. That's as much as I know at this point.

vice Chair Lauing: I used the handy coupon that was given out to us to play golf. I still have \$9 in my pocket that I did not have to pay to the City for the privilege of playing golf. I chatted a little bit with the guys in the clubhouse, and they said that it's getting good uptake. I don't know if that's confirmed with your actual accounting of the receipts. People talk about it a lot, the guys I was talking with said. It's still pretty low play.

Mr. de Geus: It's low play and the discounts are great. The course is playing very well. It's great to play at this point, but it's a challenge to market and promote the golf course when you don't know when we're going to close. We've been saying we're closing May 1st, so we can't book any tournaments. If that gets delayed, it rolls on. It's very hard to market the golf course and be able to turn a profit. If we know we have an extra three months, an extra six months, we can work with that and put a marketing plan together. The unknown is the biggest challenge for us right now.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Is the Water Board giving us any idea what that deadline would be? Under what conditions would they change their mind?

Mr. de Geus: Again, it's not related to the golf course and the golf course design. They're actually very happy for the most part with that. They're concerned about the flood control project specifically. Mostly concerned, I understand, regarding the Faber Tract, which is on the eastern side of the levee that runs toward the airport. As the new channel receives a lot more water conveyance, that potentially can compromise the Faber Tract which is an important property for the Clapper Rail and the salt marsh harvest mouse. Their concern is how the flood control folks can make some adjustments to their design that would either divert water in another way or perhaps widen that part of the channel, which is not part of their design yet. Where the bend occurs at the Friendship

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Bridge and then goes towards the airport, that stretch of the levee system is not changed much from what it is now. One thing we are looking at is a way to make that channel wider and have the levee encroach further into the golf course. There may be some possibilities there, given the way the course was designed. We had already set back quite a bit from the toe of the levee. We think there's a possibility of doing that, at least from the golf course design point of view. We're looking at that. The JPA is looking at the value of doing that for water conveyance. They're studying that and running some models and will be sharing that with the Water Board. They're actively working on it at this point.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Is the ball in their court? We've given them all the information and they're just chewing on it.

Mr. de Geus: Not entirely. We received a letter from the Water Board. They didn't deny the golf course permit, but it was a letter that the application was incomplete. They needed more information. Joe Teresi more than me is working on responding to that letter. There were three or four things in there, most of which were not a big deal and we can respond. The biggest thing that we can't respond to easily is their concern about the flood control project. Until they're satisfied with that design, they're concerned about approving the golf course permit because it may preclude changes to the levee project that could impact the golf course. That's one we can't really respond to unless we know more about what design elements they'd like to see changed. At least we know a little more, that second part of the levee system is an interest of theirs to widen that channel. If that's what it takes, we'll take a look at that.

Chair Hetterly: Other comments and announcements? Commissioner Reckdahl.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I talked to Daren about a few things before the meeting. I'll just give you a quick summary of what it was. The Baylands boardwalk is closed. Most of you have probably heard that. They have some money that they're studying what to do for the boardwalk. The boardwalk repair was a CIP that was cut this year. Originally it was on the final list, and then was not funded. They do have some money to study how to rebuild the boardwalk, whether to repeat what we did before or change the design. They'll study that this year and hopefully next year propose money to fix it. Probably a couple of years before the boardwalk is reopened. The second things was Arastradero. At the Retreat, we talked about adding picnic tables or benches out there. Daren looked at some of the issues: how big the parking lot is, how big the overflow parking lot is, the origin of the low impact park. He put together two pages; he's going to mail that out to us. We'll be able to take a look at that. It looked like there was some study group that said low impact park, and so it's unclear whether that's binding or whether that's just a tradition. Another CIP that was going to be funded this year but was not was fire danger for Foothills Park. There's a lot of unburned fuel up there. If a fire did start, it could burn

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very hot. They've been reducing stuff especially around the roads, so if there is a fire people can evacuate. They still have some money left over from last year and they will be working that. I think they're going to get to the park around April timeframe. Late fall when you have the worst fire, at least we'll be able to get people out of the park. Other parts of the park could have severe fires if a fire started. That's a known risk. The ethics and the financial reporting, I finished my ethics. It took me 1 hour 45 minutes, which is 15 minutes too fast, so I had to do the penalty box and do the second round. I did finish it. I'm not sure if other people still have it outstanding. That doesn't have a hard deadline, does it?

Chair Hetterly: April 1st.

Commissioner Reckdahl: For the ethics is April 1st?

Commissioner Markevitch: No.

Chair Hetterly: No, the form 700.

Commissioner Knopper: I spoke to the City Attorney last night, April 1st.

Commissioner Reckdahl: OK. I think it says something about two years since your last time. I've never done it before, so does that mean I didn't have a deadline? Also the financial reporting is due April 1st.

Chair Hetterly: Right. Is that it?

Commissioner Reckdahl: That's it.

Chair Hetterly: The Board of Education sent a notice to discuss the Cubberley lease negotiations tonight. Let's see what comes out of that. I did submit comments. If you all are interested in seeing them, I'm happy to send them around. The Main Library ...

Commissioner Ashlund: Yes, please.

Chair Hetterly: OK. There was a Council discussion about the Main Library naming. I don't know how that came out. Do you know how that came out? They wanted to name it Rinconada.

Mr. de Geus: I don't know. I know it's been on the agenda at Council. Because of the hour, I think it got postponed to another date. That's what I believe happened, but I'll find out to confirm. The interest of staff and the Library Commission is to rename the Main Library Rinconada Library.

Commissioner Crommie: I think that is so confusing.

Commissioner Markevitch: I agree. Call it Main Library. Leave it alone.

Chair Hetterly: Finally the Comp Plan. The Council, at staff's recommendation, is revisiting the entire process for developing a Comp Plan. Part of that is going to include some kind of citizens' advisory committee, I think, with some commission representation. They're still considering the makeup of that group. The process would entail quite a bit more public outreach and engagement to inform the planning process. That'll be ongoing for the next couple of years. I'm sure we will want to have a role in it some way.

Commissioner Reckdahl: One last thing. Scott Park was approved by the Council eight days ago. Start your training for bocce. I'm not sure when they'll start construction. It's good to get that over with. We had plenty of meetings about that.

VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR APRIL 22, 2014 MEETING

Chair Hetterly: I think it's looking quite long.

Rob de Geus: There's going to be plenty of things to talk about. The Urban Forest Master Plan will come back. Claudia Keith is the Chief Communications Officer; we talked about her before. She's been visiting commissions around this Our Palo Alto values discussion. I thought we'd have her come in April to talk about that and hear Commission feedback. There's two park items coming back as well, Monroe Park and Hopkins, which I believe will be ready next month.

Commissioner Ashlund: Monroe Park and, what was the other one?

Mr. de Geus: Hopkins. They're the four that I had.

Chair Hetterly: The Magical Bridge EIR.

Mr. de Geus: Magical Bridge, right.

Chair Hetterly: The ad hoc may have a report for April or is that for May?

Commissioner Crommie: Community Gardens, we're going to report.

Chair Hetterly: You're going to report next month? So Community Gardens to be added.

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Mr. de Geus: The Master Plan will likely be a standing item on most agendas. Precisely what will be ready next month we'll have to see, but likely something.

Chair Hetterly: Also the dog committee might have something for April.

Mr. de Geus: That's a lot.

Chair Hetterly: All right. I think that's it for the agenda.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Ashlund and second by Commissioner Reckdahl at 9:58 p.m.