



**CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
CREEKS RESTORATION/WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

REGULAR MEETING

November 17, 2010

David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Moldaver called the meeting to order at 5:31pm.

ROLL CALL

Committee members present: Chair Moldaver, Paul Bullock, Betsy Weber, Natasha Lohmus, Daniel Wilson (5:55pm)

Committee members absent: None

Liaison members present: Parks and Recreation Commissioner Chris Casebeer (6:16pm)

Liaison members absent: Councilmember Michael Self, Planning Commissioner Michael Jordan

Staff present: Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager Cameron Benson, Creeks Supervisor George Johnson, Creeks Outreach Coordinator Liz Smith

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion:

Committee Members Bullock/Lohmus to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 16, 2010, the special meeting of July 1, 2010, the site visit of August 18, 2010, and the regular meeting of October 13, 2010.

Vote:

Voice vote 4/0.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

Mr. Benson noted that he would like to reschedule the December 15 meeting for December 8, provided a quorum is available; and, distributed the proposed 2011 meeting schedule to the Committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Thomas Lambert reported that he has discussed with staff the removal of 25 – 30 non-native trees at the Creeks Division's restoration site on Vernon Road over the last three years; expressed his frustration over the delay in removing the trees; and, requested that staff consider moving forward with the removal of some of the trees if funds are not available to remove them all at once.

COMMITTEE MEMBER AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

None.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Benson reported that the Mission Creek Restoration and Fish Passage Project at Oak Park is complete, with new pools and riffles constructed in the creek bed, and native vegetation planted on the banks; and, that during Creek Week, employees from Horny Toad Activewear participated in a planting day at the restoration site.

Mr. Moldaver reported that he attended the Creek Week planting day at Oak Park; asked whether the Creeks Division purchase of the property at 401 Las Positas Road was a willing sale; and, whether the purchase price was within range of the appraisal.

Mr. Benson reported that the property at 401 Las Positas Road was listed for sale; and, that the City obtained an independent property appraisal, and the purchase price was comparable to the appraisal.

8. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Fiscal Years 2012 - 2017 Proposed Capital Improvement Program

Recommendation:

That the Committee receive a presentation about and discuss the proposed Creeks Division Capital Improvement Program for Fiscal Years 2012-2017, and recommend that City Council approve the proposed program.

Documents:

Staff Report – November 2010

Speakers:

Cameron Benson, Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager

Mr. Wilson arrived at 5:55pm.

Mr. Benson noted that Mr. Brian Trautwein of the Environmental Defense Center provided an email in support of the proposed Capital Improvement Program.

Committee Questions:

Committee members asked questions regarding how the Mission Creek Lagoon compares to the Andree Clark Bird Refuge, and whether the Creeks Division should address the problems at the Bird Refuge before the Mission Creek Lagoon; and, whether there has been any update on the Veronica Meadows project on lower Arroyo Burro.

Mr. Benson reported that the Bird Refuge and the Mission Creek Lagoon are different systems, and that the issues at the Bird Refuge may be more challenging to deal with than at the Lagoon; that project objectives at the Lagoon are to improve water quality and habitat, and that enlarging the Lagoon may or may not be proposed as part of the project, but is a possibility that will be studied; and, that the Veronica Meadows subdivision is upstream of the location of the Lower Arroyo Burro Restoration, and that the most recent court hearing on the project was in October, but no ruling has been issued.

Committee members asked whether the Bird Refuge planning process will be open for public participation; and, whether funding from other agencies will be available for the Lagoon project.

Mr. Benson reported that there will be significant public process involved in the Bird Refuge project, which is not scheduled to be funded until Fiscal Year 2014; that staff will want to schedule the first construction phase of the Mission Lagoon Restoration Project to coincide with the Public Works Department's Cabrillo Bridge Replacement and the Lower Mission Creek Flood Control Project that will be constructed by Public Works, County Flood Control, and the Army Corps of Engineers, in order to maximize economies of scale; and, that there are grant funds due to bonds passed several years ago, Flood Control funds, and environmental restoration funds that may be available for the project.

Mr. Casebeer arrived at 6:16pm.

Committee Questions:

Committee members asked whether the property is eligible for Prop 84 funding.

Mr. Benson reported that the project is eligible for Prop 84 funding, and Prop 1E funding, which includes \$5 billion in funding, with specific portions available for flood control projects with ecological benefits.

Public Comment:

No one wished to speak.

Committee Discussion:

Mr. Wilson noted that over the next five to ten years he would like to see staff and the Committee evaluate opportunities for projects in the Sycamore Creek Watershed such as pocket parks; encouraged the Committee to look at every opportunity to collaborate with private property owners in the coming years; and, that it is his professional and personal opinion that to get steelhead back up the creeks, staff will have to invest funds and hard work on private and public property.

Motion:

Committee members Wilson/Weber to recommend proposed Capital Improvement Program to Council for approval.

Vote:

Voice vote 5/0.

Mr. Benson reminded the Committee that the next meeting will take place on December 8 rather than December 15; and, thanked Mr. Casebeer for joining Creeks Division staff for a Mission Creek cleanup from the beach to Canon Perdido Street in October.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

Committee members Wilson/Lohmus to adjourn.

Chair Moldaver adjourned the meeting at 6:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Cameron Benson
Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager