



**City of Santa Barbara
PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

**PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Regular Joint Meeting**

Wednesday, January 24, 2007

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER – The Park and Recreation Commission was called to order by Chair Forsell at 5:01 p.m. at City Council Chambers.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present

Steve Forsell	Park & Recreation Commissioner
Ada Conner	Park & Recreation Commissioner
Beebe Longstreet	Park & Recreation Commissioner
Arnoldo Gonzalez	Park & Recreation Commissioner
Daraka Larimore-Hall	Park & Recreation Commissioner
Laura Spracher	Park & Recreation Commission Intern

Staff Present

Nancy L. Rapp	Parks & Recreation Director
Sarah Hanna	Recreation Programs Manager
Santos Escobar	Parks Manager
Jill Zachary	Creeks Program Manager
Randy Fritz	Street Tree Inspector
Billy Goodnick	Landscape Architect
Kathy Frye	Natural Areas Planner
Jason Bryan	Recreation Supervisor
Karla Megill	Executive Assistant

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA – Ms. Rapp asked that Item 10, Martell Appeal of Arts & Crafts Show Advisory Committee Decision to Not Take Action on Incident Involving Mr. Kennedy, be deferred to the February 28th meeting.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – None

PUBLIC COMMENT – No one wished to speak.

COMMISSIONER COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT REPORTS

Commissioner Longstreet reported on the activities of the Creeks Advisory Committee. She further commented that she attended the Arroyo Burro opening and the CPRS District VIII Installation Dinner where Nancy Rapp was installed as the President. She said the Department won awards for the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program, Food Distribution Program, and Junior Lifeguard Regional Championships held here last summer on East Beach. Ms. Rapp said that the Department was very please to have received the

awards, and further that the Department has submitted those projects to the State organization for State-wide recognition. Ms. Rapp said that the Department also won two certificates of merit for the IPM Program and the Junior Lifeguard event.

Commissioner Gonzalez reported on the activities of the Arts and Crafts Show Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Conner reported on the activities of the PARC Foundation. She added that the PARC Foundation Website is up and there will be a link through the Parks and Recreation Department and the City Websites.

Chair Forsell reported on the activities of the Tennis Advisory Committee and the Golf Advisory Committee. He also reported on the Armory Project Steering Committee.

YOUTH COUNCIL REPORT

Intern Spracher provided that this report. Ms. Spracher said that the Youth Council has been busy with the Teen Center and there are meetings every Monday and Wednesday except the first Monday of the month. She said that the formal grand opening is set for Friday evening, March 16th. She further said there will be an opening for the public on Saturday, March 17th. Ms. Spracher briefed that the Youth Council is seeking new members. She further said she was appointed as the Vice Chair.

- 1. Summary of Council Actions** – Ms. Rapp noted that Council took the Commission's recommendation to designate Oak Park as a park where consumption of alcohol is prohibited except by permit. She acknowledged the work of staff on the effort.

Commissioner Larimore-Hall noted that there was not very good press coverage on the Oak Park alcohol item or the Council meeting during which they made the decision. He acknowledged staff for their efforts in coming up with a very good compromise on the issue that brought the very legitimate concerns of the Festival community and of the neighborhood and came up with a solution that did a very good job of mitigating both. Mr. Larimore-Hall commented that was not reflected in some of the reporting on the issue. Mr. Larimore-Hall said that he wanted to set the record straight for members of the public watching at home and for the record that the views of people in the community around the Festivals were taken and at the heart of the decision. Mr. Larimore-Hall stated that, hopefully, there will be more accurate reporting on items such as these in the future.

- 2. Approval of Minutes:**
 - A. Regular meeting of December 13, 2006.

Commissioner Longstreet moved, seconded by Commissioner Larimore-Hall, and passed 4/0 that the Commission approve the minutes of the regular meeting of December 13, 2006.

Commissioner Conner abstained.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION – None

3. Street Tree Advisory Committee Recommendations

Recommendation: That the Commission approve the following Street Tree removal requests.

A. 716 Juanita Ave. – Devon Lazarus – Cupaniopsis anacardioides

Justification: The Committee and staff determined that removal of this tree is not a significant loss to the neighborhood. In addition future sidewalk repairs would require significant root pruning and destabilization of the tree. The Committee approves removal with the condition that the applicant is responsible for the cost of removal and replacement of the tree with a 15 gallon Quercus tomentella.

B. 328 E. Islay St. – Edward McGinn – Pittosporum rhombifolium

Justification: The Committee and staff determined that the tree is not all that healthy, looks like it is declining and not likely to return to a healthy state. Committee recommended approving removal and replacement with a 15 gallon Cinnamomum camphora.

Commissioner Longstreet moved, seconded by Commissioner Larimore-Hall, and passed 5/0 that the Commission concur with the recommendations of the Street Tree Advisory Committee and approve the tree removal request identified in items 4A & B.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND STAFF REPORTS

4. Projects Status Report

Mr. Goodnick highlighted the following items:

- Bohnett Park Expansion: Project design is about 60 percent completed. The design is expected to be completed in March, and staff anticipates the project will be completed between June and August.
- Oak Park Bridge Replacement: Project is 100 percent completed. Ribbon cutting ceremony is scheduled for January 31, 2007.
- Carrillo Recreation Center Rehabilitation; KBZ Design Firm selected. Design should be completed by July 2007. Construction should begin sometime during 2008.
- Teen Center: Teen Center grant opening is scheduled for March 16th & 17th.

Chair Forsell commented that KBZ is a very good architectural firm.

5. December 2006 Storm Report

Mr. Escobar provided the Commission with a report regarding the December 2006 wind storm.

Commissioner Conner asked regarding the La Mesa Park tree whether it damaged the wall. Mr. Escobar said that it did not.

Chair Forsell asked whether there is an emergency fund for these types of emergencies. Mr. Escobar said no, but we had some salary savings and were able to use those funds.

Ms. Rapp said that last year during the rainstorms and with the beach cleanups, the City submitted a request for Federal assistance, and the City did receive FEMA reimbursement.

Commissioner Larimore-Hall asked whether this means we would be in trouble if we would have been fully staffed. Ms. Rapp responded saying that we are part of a larger City organization, so the City Administrator would look to us first to see if we could cover it within the Department budget. She said, however, that if the expense is substantial enough that it creates a hardship for the Department, then the City has funds that they would draw from.

6. Santa Barbara Zoological Gardens Annual Report

The Commission received the Santa Barbara Zoological Foundation Annual Maintenance Report for the period October 2005 through November 2006.

OLD BUSINESS

7. Santa Barbara Zoological Gardens Master Plan – Commission Findings – For Action (Attachment)

Mr. Goodnick reviewed the proposed improvements. He said that the Commission is being asked to make the following findings.

- A. That the proposed park and recreation improvements are appropriate or necessary for the benefit of the community and visitors.
 - The Zoo has operated since the 1960s and provides important educational and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.
 - The Zoo is committed to maintaining the highest standards in animal care, grounds maintenance and visitor experience.
 - The exhibits are necessary for the Zoo to provide current American Zoo & Aquarium Association recommended standards for lion exhibits.

- Consolidation of facilities for staff makes better use of the land and more efficient operations.
- B. That the proposed park and recreation facilities, including lighting, play areas, parking facilities and associated landscaping, will be compatible with the character of the neighborhood.
- Night lighting will be for emergency/security purposes only, consistent with existing Zoo exhibits.
 - Transportation staff determined that areas of the zoo parking lot will be re-stripped to more efficiently utilize the existing parking area.
 - The construction of the exhibit spaces will be of the same nature as existing facilities, using black mesh, rockwork, and will require minimal grading.
 - The Discovery Pavilion will be designed to match existing buildings in the immediate vicinity, and the service yard will not expand beyond the current location.
 - The Wave will be situated in the same area as the existing arbor.
- C. That the total area of the site and the setbacks of all facilities from the property lines and street are sufficient, in view of the physical character of the land, proposed development and neighborhood, to avoid sufficient negative impacts to surrounding properties.
- The Condor exhibit will occupy the area currently used for the original Bald Eagle exhibit, and the Langur/Lemur and Island Fox exhibits are renovations of the existing facilities.
 - The Discovery Pavilion will occupy the location of existing one-story buildings, and is set back from the north property line.
 - The Wave will be designed similarly to the existing arbor at the hilltop and will use the same trellis motif as the current structure.
- D. That the intensity of park use is appropriate and compatible with the character of neighborhood
- None of the proposed improvements are anticipated to create a significant intensification of current activities.
- E. That the proposed park and recreation facilities are compatible with the scenic character of the City of Santa Barbara.
- The Discovery Pavilion will be designed to blend with existing buildings in the same area of the zoo.
 - Landscaping will provide additional screening.
 - The exhibit enclosure will be a mesh painted black to reduce visibility and blend into the background.
- F. That any proposed structures or buildings are compatible with the neighborhood in terms of size, bulk and scale or location.

- The Island Fox, Condor, and Langur/Lemur exhibits will not expand beyond their current footprint.
- The Wave will expand beyond the size of the current arbor, but will be located far from surrounding neighbors and will retain a one-story height.
- The Discovery Pavilion will be constructed along the northern property line of the zoo and abuts the railroad and Highway 101.
- Project has received positive comments from the HLC
- Project has received CDP and Development Plan Approval by the Planning Commission

Public Comment

Kathleen Weinheimer, Attorney for El Escorial Owner's Association, addressed the Commission saying that over the years, the Zoo has expanded its non-Zoo functions tremendously, with weddings, Zoo Camps, overnights, Dignitarious, etc. Ms. Weinheimer stated that many of those events take place at the Wave and the lawn area, which involve music or amplified sound. She said those events create significant noise impacts for the neighbors. Ms. Weinheimer suggested that in order to make finding #4, "That the intensity of park use is appropriate and compatible with the character of neighborhood", that the Commission impose a limit on the number of non-Zoo activities, especially in the Wave and lawn area, keeping them at the current level. Ms. Weinheimer stated that the staff report indicates that the Planning Commission imposed a condition prohibiting an increase over the present number of special events. She stated that the Planning Commission's minutes have not been completed at this point in time, but she does not believe that that is correct. She said she believes the Planning Commission ordered a summary and an accounting for an establishment of a baseline of events. Ms. Weinheimer stated her belief that is in the purview of the Park and Recreation Commission in making finding #4, and in order to make that finding, the number of non-zoo events need to be limited of a magnitude that are currently in place. She said the El Escorial Owner's Association has no objection to the addition of a lunch facility and things clearly related to Zoo activities.

Chair Forsell asked what constitutes a Zoo event versus a special event. Ms. Rapp said that it would be which is a facility rental and which is an event conducted by a Zoo to support Zoo activities.

Mr. Block said that the Zoo did a very extensive parking and traffic study which included a detailed accounting of private events at the Zoo. He said that the Zoo does not anticipate an increase in the number of events at the Zoo.

Commissioner Longstreet asked whether there are parameters of events in the lease.

Mr. Block said that in preparing the documents for the Environmental Review, they did a very extensive traffic and parking study which included a detailed accounting of the private events at the Zoo. He said that the design of the Wave and the improvements are not in any way intended to increase the number of events at the Zoo, they are merely to make everything work better. Mr. Block stated that he does not foresee or anticipate any increase in the number of events because they cannot; they are already at maximum of what they can do at the Zoo. Mr. Block said that the scope of those events pre-dates any ownership of property in El Escorial, which only went to condominium private ownership around 1990. He said that the scope of activities that the Zoo has been involved with pre-date that; certainly the numbers have increased over the years as more people have become aware of the Zoo, but they are at capacity and have no interest in increasing the number of events.

Ms. Longstreet asked whether the parameters for events are already in place, and whether it falls under the purview of the Commission. Ms. Rapp said that she does not recall seeing language related to events in the lease, but she asked Mr. Block to address the matter.

Mr. Block said that the City Ordinances in place already and are enforceable by the Police Department. He said the Zoo has a voluntary monitoring program in place for sound; they purchased the equipment several years ago, and their security staff monitor decibel levels at the perimeter of the Zoo to ensure they are within limits. Mr. Block said there is one event per year, Zoofari, which takes place the last Saturday in August, that goes past 10:00 p.m., and the Zoo advises the neighbors that the event is occurring. He said that this year, the Zoo will actually invite the neighbors to attend that event at discount admission price.

Commissioner Conner moved, seconded by Commissioner Larimore-Hall, and passed 6/0 that the Commission make the PR Zone findings for the Santa Barbara Zoological Gardens Master Plan as stated in the staff report.

NEW BUSINESS

8. Change Composition of Adapted Advisory Committee – For Action

Recommendation: That the Commission decrease the membership on the Adapted Advisory Committee from 13 members to 9 members.

Ms. Hanna said that staff has had difficulty filling the vacancies on this committee. She said that staff and the Advisory Committee is requesting that the membership be decreased from 13 members to 9 members.

Commissioner Conner concurred with Ms. Hanna that changing the membership would be well served.

Commissioner Larimore-Hall moved, seconded by Commissioner Conner, and passed 6/0 that the Commission change the membership of the Adapted Advisory Committee from 13 members to 9 members.

9. Parks, Recreation, and Public Health: Information from 2007 Cooper Institute Conference – For Information

Mr. Jason Bryan provided the Commission with a report on the 2007 Cooper Institute Conference.

Commissioner Conner commented that it would be great if insurance companies would get behind this and fund it. Mr. Bryan agreed and said there was talk about that at the conference. He said that there was some discussion about insurance rates being based on a person's Body Mass Index (BMI) because that is where the health risk factors.

Commissioner Longstreet suggested this information be provided to the Planning staff, stressing how important it is to have public open space to be used for exercise, and how important it is to have a walkable City. Ms. Longstreet commented that the importance of the Parks and Recreation Department is prevention – prevention of youth violence, etc. She said this needs to have a broader base in the new General Plan Update about why the City should have, and why it is important for us to maintain public open space.

Commissioner Gonzalez commented that while on a visit to China a few years ago, he noted that the Chinese go for exercise every morning. He said that he is interested in using one of the parks as a prototype and attach one of the schools, possibly Franklin School, and make it part of the curriculum to go into the park to exercise and then come back to school. He said that at the same time the City could do a study, so funding could be attached to it. Mr. Gonzalez said that we could follow up with some adult programs. Mr. Bryan said that when he visited Beijing in 2000, he noticed the same thing.

Commissioner Larimore-Hall concurred with Commissioner Longstreet regarding walkability. He said we need to really think about walkability and neighborhoods as the City grows and changes. Mr. Larimore-Hall said that we have a responsibility to do something about these issues. He asked Laura to think about whether this presentation or some version of it could be given to the Youth Council, and thinking done, particularly in designing programming for the Teen Center, about how synergy can be made between more active activities and what is going on at the Teen Center. Mr. Larimore-Hall suggested this might be a conversation that needs to occur among youth leaders in the City.

Ms. Rapp added that these themes are themes that staff have been working at with several of the programs already. She said staff has been working to get more programs for physical activities out to the seniors. She further said there

has been a focus to get more participants in afterschool programs, and having physical activity be a very important component of the programs. Ms. Rapp said that staff continue to offer a lot of different types of classes and introduce people to different types of physical activity to encourage more people to participate.

10. Martell Appeal of Arts & Crafts Show Advisory Committee Decision to Not Take Action on Incident Involving Mr. Kennedy – For Action (Attachment)

Ms. Rapp indicated that Ms. Martell and Mr. Kennedy were unable to attend the meeting tonight. She asked that this item be deferred to the February 28th Commission meeting so that Ms. Martell and Mr. Kennedy may attend.

11. Advisory Committee Appointments – For Action (Attachment)

Recommendation: That the Commission consider the applications of four incumbents and make four appointments to the Adapted Advisory Committee

Commissioner Conner moved, seconded by Commissioner Longstreet, and passed 5/0 that the Commission re-appoint Hillary Andrews and Rick Van Hoorn, representing the community at large; Lorenzo “Rick” Zabala, representing the Department of Rehabilitation, and Libby Whaley, representing the Rehabilitation Institute to the Adapted Advisory Committee for terms ending December 31, 2008.

Commissioner Larimore-Hall moved, seconded by Commissioner Forsell, and passed 6/0 that the Commission appoint Joe Rajkovich, representing the Men’s Club to the Golf Advisory Committee for a term ending December 31, 2008.

12. Election of Chair and Vice Chair – For Action (Attachment)

Recommendation: That the Commission elect a Chair and Vice Chair to serve as presiding officers for the period of January 24, through July 30, 2007.

Commissioner Forsell moved, seconded by Commissioner Larimore-Hall, and passed 5/0 that the Commission elect Ada Conner to serve as Chair until July 2007.

Commissioner Conner moved, seconded by Commissioner Larimore-Hall, and passed 5/0 that the Commission elect Steve Forsell to serve as Vice Chair until July 2007.

COMMISSION AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Rapp formally introduced Jill Zachary, who has been selected as the Assistant Parks and Recreation Director.

Commissioner Longstreet expressed that she is thrilled at Ms. Zachary's appointment to the Assistant Parks and Recreation Director position. She said that although it will be a loss to the Creeks Division, Ms. Zachary will still be overseeing the Division.

Chair Forsell congratulated Ms. Zachary on her appointment.

Ms. Zachary commented saying that it has been wonderful working in the Department and growing the Creeks Division and its staff. She further said she is very please to have been selected and looks forward to working with the Commission and the Front Country Trails Multi-Jurisdictional Task Force.

Ms. Rapp reminded the Commission of the Grand Opening of the Oak Park Bridge on January 31st, 2:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 6:22 p.m., with no further business to come before the Commission,

Commissioner Longstreet moved seconded by Commissioner Conner, and passed 6/0 that the meeting be adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Rapp
Parks and Recreation Director