



City of Santa Barbara
PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Regular Joint Meeting

Wednesday, November 19, 2008

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Longstreet called the Park and Recreation Commission to order at 4:02 p.m. at City Council Chambers.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Commissioner Forsell

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present

Beebe Longstreet	Park & Recreation Commissioner
Daraka Larimore-Hall	Park & Recreation Commissioner
Steve Forsell	Park & Recreation Commissioner
Arnoldo Gonzalez	Park & Recreation Commissioner
Diego Torres-Santos	Park & Recreation Commission Intern

Commissioners Absent

Ada Conner	Park & Recreation Commissioner
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Staff Present

Nancy L. Rapp	Parks & Recreation Director
Jill Zachary	Assistant Parks & Recreation Director
Judith McCaffrey	Recreation Programs Manager
Santos Escobar	Parks Manager
Scott McGregor	Business Manager
Mark Reed	Golf Course Manager
Cameron Benson	Creeks Program Manager
Billy Goodnick	Landscape Architect
Tim Downey	Urban Forrest Superintendent
Rich Hanna	Recreation Supervisor, Aquatics
Karla Megill	Executive Assistant

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: Gene Tyburn addressed the Commission. He provided written comments which are on file in the Parks and Recreation Department

COMMUNITY SERVICE RECOGNITION:

1. Recognition of Richard Chavez, Director of Golf – For Action

Ms. Rapp expressed appreciation for Richard Chavez, Director of Golf, who is retiring after 28 years of service to the Santa Barbara Golf Club.

Commissioner Forsell thanked Mr. Chavez for his achievements and contributions over the last 28 years and presented him with a plaque to express the Commission's appreciation.

Mr. Chavez thanked the City of Santa Barbara saying the relationship has been great. He credited Richard Johns for his efforts in making the Golf Course the best Municipal Golf Course in Southern California. Mr. Chavez thanked Ms. Rapp for her efforts. He also acknowledged the contributions of his wife and his staff.

Ms. Rapp introduced Chris Talerico, New Director of Golf, who won the contract through the competitive bid process.

The Commission welcomed Mr. Talerico, who said he was anxious to move forward and take the Golf Course into the next era.

COMMISSIONER COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT REPORTS:

Commissioner Forsell reported on the activities of the Golf Advisory Committee. He said rounds are down, but Santa Barbara Golf Club is doing well in comparison to many other golf courses. Mr. Forsell said the improvement projects are moving forward.

Ms. Rapp added that several Golf Advisory Committee members commented that the Greens are in excellent condition and they never have seen them look so good. She said the Committee spoke highly of the job he has been doing, and wanted the Commission to know.

Commissioner Forsell confirmed the Committee is thrilled with the condition of the golf course.

Chair Longstreet reported that she attended the Creeks Advisory Committee meeting and the Commission will be receiving a report on the capital budget tonight. She said four of the Commissioners went to the meeting of the Joint Advisory Committee on November 13th, but it had to be postponed due to the Tea Fire. Ms. Longstreet said the meeting is rescheduled for November 20th, 5:30 p.m. at the Westside Community Center. She said the focus of the meeting is youth violence.

COMMISSION AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:

Ms. Rapp provided a brief overview of the Department's role in the emergency response operations for the Tea Fire. She also provided information on the Local Assistance Center.

Mr. Escobar provided a brief report on park properties damaged during the Tea Fire.

Chair Longstreet commented that she went to the Local Assistance Center morning, the people working there are doing an outstanding service; it was good to see the community reaching out to the people who have been most affected.

Mr. Escobar provided a brief overview of the damage to park property. He said over 200 acres of Parma Park was damaged, and staff is currently still assessing the damage. He said there are many flare-ups and fire staff are still stationed in the area. Mr. Escobar said Skofield, Vans Meadow burned, but the defensible space and firefighters saved the park. He said Rattlesnake is currently closed, due to fire damage. Mr. Escobar said the upper portion of Parma Park where hanggliders land burned, but some surrounding homes were saved. He said the following parks are closed: Parma Park, Rattlesnake Park, Trailhead, and Skofield. He encouraged the public to stay away from these areas.

Chair Longstreet asked the status of Sheffield. Mr. Escobar said Sheffield came out fine. He said the Rockwood Creek area had a couple of parcels that burned, but no homes burned in that area.

Chair Longstreet asked whether the helicopter recharging area was used. Mr. Escobar said that he does not know, but at Santa Barbara Junior High, helicopters were dropping water all night long.

Commissioner Forsell asked whether damage to Parma Park will have any affect on the proposed improvements. Mr. Escobar said that staff will be assessing that also.

Ms. Rapp interjected that concerns with Parma Park are with Sycamore Creek area and concerns about flooding. She said staff is working to determine the best strategy in the time left before the rains come. Ms. Rapp said that staff will keep the Commission informed.

YOUTH COUNCIL REPORT:

Intern Torres-Santos reported that the Youth Council is planning a Speak Out for January 8, 2009, at Santa Barbara High School. He said that the Youth Council is fully staffed and now has representatives from all schools. Intern Torres-Santos acknowledged Maggie McDermott, Youth Council member, stating that she was selected as a Junior Congressional Paige and will be moving, in January, to Washington DC. He reported that the Youth Council hosted a Lock-In at the Teen Center for Red Ribbon Week, and it was a huge success with approximately 40 teen participating.

Intern Torres-Santos expressed appreciation to City Council, Commission, and staff for their attendance at the Meet and Greet on Monday, November 17th.

Chair Longstreet commented that she attended the Meet and Greet, and said it was wonderful to meet the Youth Council members, especially the Junior High representatives.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. Summary of Council Actions – There were no comments on this item.
2. Approval of Minutes:

Recommendation: That the Commission waive the reading and approve the minutes of the special meeting (site visit) of October 16, 2008, and the regular meeting of October 22, 2008.

Commissioner Steve Forsell moved, seconded by Commissioner Larimore-Hall, and passed 3/0 to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the special meeting (site visit) of October 16, 2008.

Commissioner Steve Forsell moved, seconded by Commissioner Gonzalez, and passed 4/0 to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the regular meeting of October 22, 2008.

Commissioner Larimore-Hall abstained.

STREET TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ITEMS

4. Street Tree Advisory Committee Recommendations

A. Approve the following Street Tree removal requests.

1. 220 Salida del Sol - Pam Tanase - Eucalyptus ficifolia, Red Flowering Gum

Commissioner Daraka Larimore-Hall moved, seconded by Commissioner Arnoldo Gonzalez, and passed 4/0 to concur with the Street Tree Advisory Committee recommendation regarding the removal of the Eucalyptus ficifolia, Red Flowering Gum located at 220 Salida del Sol.

2. 1900 Lasuen Rd. - Ida Paciano, Suzanne Elledge PPS - (1) Eucalyptus citriodora, Lemon-Scented Gum

Commissioner Daraka Larimore-Hall moved, seconded by Commissioner Steve Forsell, and passed 4/0 to concur with the staff and Street Tree Advisory Committee recommendations regarding items 4A(2) and 4C(1).

B. Deny the following Street Tree removal requests.

1. 1820 Gillespie St. - Susana Lazaro - Koelreuteria bipinnata, Chinese Flame Tree.

Commissioner Steve Forsell, seconded by Commissioner Arnoldo Gonzalez, and passed 4/0 to concur with the staff recommendation concerning item 4B(1).

2. 20 Lorinda Place - Vicky Busby - Washingtonia robusta, Mexican Fan Palm

Commissioner Forsell recused himself from voting on this item because he knows the applicant.

Mr. Downey highlighted this item. He said that the Street Tree Advisory Committee and staff recommend the Commission deny the removal of the tree because the tree is healthy, and the reasons for removal are not valid and do not justify the removal.

Ms. Vicky Busby explained the tree has not been trimmed or pruned for years and is top heavy and very dangerous. She said the palm fronds fall and are hazardous. Ms. Busby said it is unsightly and looks like a telephone pole, is infested with rats, and the neighbors have signed a request to remove the tree.

Chair Longstreet asked if the tree could be banded. Mr. Downey said it is not a common practice to band a tree; he said it restricts the flow of moisture in the outer layers and can cause decline of the tree. Mr. Downey said the tree could be pruned, which will decrease habitat for rodents and other animals.

Chair Longstreet asked about the gas lines. Mr. Downey said the roots of a Palm are fleshy about the diameter of a finger; they grout into the soil and are not designed in such a way that they would push on items. He further said the Gas Company has never expressed any concern with any Palms that run over their line, although he has not made contact with them in this case.

Commissioner Gonzalez asked how old the Palm tree is and whether it was part of the landscape before it was sponsored by the City of Santa Barbara or the neighbors.

Mr. Downey responded saying that it is undetermined who planted the tree. He said the tree is approximately 30 years old.

Commissioner Gonzalez asked what tree he would recommend for the area if the tree were removed. Mr. Downey said the designated specie for that street is the Peppermint Gum Eucalyptus tree. He said he would have to consider whether to plant the Eucalyptus in that area because of the utilities and gas lines.

Chair Longstreet said that Palm trees add to the overall skyline of the community which is the Commission's purview and makes a huge difference in the overall landscape of the community.

Commissioner Larimore-Hall asked what steps can be taken to mitigate the rodent problem. Mr. Downey said rats tend to congregate in areas they can hide during the day; if the lower portion of the palm fronds is removed, it decreases the hideability of the palm tree and it is likely they will seek other locations.

Commissioner Daraka Larimore-Hall moved, seconded by Commissioner Arnoldo Gonzalez, and passed 3/0 to concur with the staff and Street Tree Advisory Committee recommendation regarding the tree identified in item 4B(2).

Commissioner Forsell recused himself.

Chair Longstreet commented that she would like to see the tree put on the list to be trimmed quickly.

- C. Approve the following Setback Tree removal requests.
1. 1900 Lasuen Rd. - Ida Paciano, Suzanne Elledge PPS - (5)
Eucalyptus citriodora, Lemon-Scented Gum

Action on this item was taken with item 4A(2).

2. 514 W. Anapamu St. - Ron Wolfe & Associates/Action Tree - (2) Pinus canariensis, Canary Island Pine

Commissioner Steve Forsell moved, seconded by Commissioner Daraka Larimore-Hall, and passed 4/0 to concur with the staff recommendation regarding item 4C(2).

3. 1233 Alta Vista Rd. - Action Tree for Satterfield Property Management - (2) Quercus agrifolia, Coast Live Oak (Continued from October 2008)

Commissioner Steve Forsell moved, seconded by Commissioner Daraka Larimore-Hall, and passed 4/0 to concur with the staff recommendation regarding item 4C(3).

- D. Deny the following Setback Tree removal request.
1. 3607 San Jose Ln. - John Sutton - Eucalyptus ficifolia, Red Flowering Gum

Commissioner Daraka Larimore-Hall moved, seconded by Commissioner Steve Forsell, and passed 4/0 to concur with the staff and Street Tree Advisory Committee recommendation regarding item 4D(1).

2. 2130 Mission Ridge Rd. - Teri and Eric Gabrielsen - Eucalyptus globules, Blue Gum (Continued from August 2008)

Mr. Downey provided a brief background on this item, which was initially reviewed by the Commission in August 2008. He said the Commission asked that staff bring the item back when they obtained additional information regarding the feasibility of moving the wall into the public right of way and whether doing so would jeopardize the designation of the wall as a historic landmark. Mr. Downey said it is feasible through negotiation to obtain an easement to move the wall into the public right of way; however, moving the wall in to the public right of way would jeopardize the changes of having the wall designated as a historic landmark. He said that staff believes the roots of the tree can be pruned, and the wall put back in place, but that will jeopardize the future of the tree and risk the wall further damage.

Mr. Jaime Limon, Planning Division, provided comments from the Historic Landmarks Commission. He said there is concern about the recommendation to keep the tree in place, and the majority of the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) feels the wall should be preserved for future land marking and the eucalyptus tree should be removed and replaced with an attractive skyline tree at an appropriate location which would be less invasive and not affect the wall. Mr. Limon said there are extensive historic resource reports that identified the Marymount Academy Campus and associated estates and indicated that the walls represent one of the earliest and best examples of masonry construction in the neighborhood, if not the City, and the walls are the most extensive and elaborate construction of their type in the City and represent an important visual component of the built environment. He said that given the history, there is a preference of the HLC to designate the wall in the future. Mr. Limon said he cannot report that the walls are designated, but the criteria could meet National Register significance, and given that, he wanted the Commission to know that the preference of the HLC is to have the wall not be relocated. Mr. Limon said that if the wall is relocated, it could lose its National Register criteria eligibility, but could possibly still be designated as a local landmark, but the location would not be authentic.

Mr. Downey advised that the Street Tree Advisory Committee and staff revisited the site with the new information and the Committee upheld their decision that the tree not be removed.

Chair Longstreet expressed concern about root pruning on a tree that size.

Sharon Sumrall, Landscape Architect and contractor for the applicant, spoke in favor of removing the tree. She said Eucalyptus live an average of 60 years, they are known as widow makers, and are an impact as fuel for fire. Ms. Sumrall said the wall has a great deal of local history and will last hundreds of years. She encouraged the planting of other trees and to preserve the historic value of the tree.

Eric Gabrielson, applicant, talked about the historic nature of the wall and his reasons for wanting the tree removed. He said branches of the tree could fall on parents or kids from Marymount school. Mr. Gabrielson asked the Commission to consider his request to remove the tree.

Lauren Troiani, Marymount College, expressed concern that the school not endure any unnecessary financial hardship with the resolution of this matter.

Frank Hotchkiss, 2141 Mission Ridge Road, spoke in favor of removing the tree, because if it comes down, it would fall on his home.

Craig Buzzell, Business Manager, Marymount College, said he has concerns about trimming the roots, because the tree is so large, and he does not want it to fall.

Ms. Rapp clarified that the applicant is the neighbor to the property where the tree is located. Mr. Downey said it is unusual, but both parties have been involved in the process, have provided information, and are aware of it.

Ms. Rapp said that should the Commission agree that the tree be removed with the understanding that the wall be moved forward through the City's process to be identified as a historic landmark and be repaired back to an acceptable state. Ms. Rapp said that if the Commission was leaning in that direction, the two things should be tied together. She said that normally in these cases, the property owner is the applicant, and that person would be assuming the fiscal costs. Ms. Rapp suggested that if the Commission decides to go in the direction to remove the tree to protect the historic nature of the wall, they may want to tie the removal very closely into approved plans for the repair of the wall and landmark status.

Mr. Downey said the tree is a setback tree and the cost would be that of the applicant, which is the Gabrielson's. He further said he understands the Gabrielsons and the School have been in negotiations regarding this matter.

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Commissioner Forsell clarified that moving the wall would jeopardize obtaining the landmarks designation. He commented that this is a unique situation; it is a bit absurd to move the wall to save the tree. He said he is not in favor of that.

Chair Longstreet concurred. She expressed grave concerns about root pruning due to the size of the tree. She agreed the tree will not be removed until the plans be approved and the Commission know the wall will be repaired. Ms. Longstreet suggested a motion be crafted that has this matter move forward through HLC and as soon as the process is underway the tree could be removed.

Mr. Limon suggested it would be premature for the Commission to direct that the wall be designated a historic landmark, that is the Council's purview; however, in the past when applicants have pursued a development or proposal there has typically been a condition that states the applicant will not object to the initiation of the designation process; something to that affect would be appropriate, because the City would not want the applicant to remove the tree and then object to the designation proposal that HLC would move forward with. He further said that if the Commission wants to tie the removal to the designation date, that could conceivably be months away, as there is a referral process and priority on designations.

Chair Longstreet asked whether the Commission could turn the matter over to the HLC for them to guide the process.

Mr. Limon said it would be appropriate for the Commission make a motion to approve the tree removal and refer it to the HLC for appropriate approval of the reconstruction and repair of the wall and then the designation process can be pursued.

Commissioner Larimore-Hall said the historic designation is secondary to the wall being restored. He further said the Commission has a general idea of where the school is coming from within their internal process, but does not have an official position on the matter, it is abstract for the Commission to vote on the issue at this time. Mr. Larimore-Hall said that any motion passed tonight he would like to see contingent on seeing a plan from the property owner and/or the neighboring property owner that a tree is being removed so that a wall can be restored and repaired, etc.

Chair Longstreet suggested a motion to recommend approval of the removal of the tree contingent on presentation of a plan to restore the wall with the Historic Landmarks Commission, and, further that the tree will be removed at the time of restoration of the wall.

Ms. Rapp commented that the Commission's purview is the tree removal, and she is concerned that they are making a decision based on an argument to preserve a historic wall. She said they are trying to tie the restoration of the historic wall to the removal of the tree. Ms. Rapp said the issue of who is going to pay the costs is not the Commission's concern; that is between the applicant and the school.

Commissioner Daraka Larimore-Hall moved, seconded by Commissioner Steve Forsell, and passed 4/0 to defer item 4D(2) until such time that the applicant is able to present the additional requested information.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND STAFF REPORTS

5. Los Baños Deep End Wall Replacement and Re-Plastering Project

Mr. Rich Hanna and Mr. Deane Carr provided this report.

Intern Torres-Santos commented it was great to see the process and results.

Chair Longstreet thanked staff and all of the partners who helped out to make the processes work out over the summer months.

6. Capital Program Update and Proposed Fiscal Years 2010-2015 Capital Improvement Program

Ms. Rapp acknowledged Ms. Zachary, Mr. Goodnick, and Mr. Strasburg for their efforts in putting together the Department's Six-Year Capital Program submittal.

Mr. Goodnick provided this report.

Intern Torres-Santos asked regarding the Westside Park area whether staff is going to repair the grass. Mr. Goodnick said it is a small area; considering that and the large gopher population, it is a huge maintenance impact to try to create a viable lawn. He said that staff met with the neighbors in that area and the consensus was that the area would be better served having tall trees, making it a little more park like, with shade so parents can sit and watch their children from the south side of the playground. Mr. Goodnick said that trying to keep the gophers out of that area does not fit the sustainability approach.

Chair Longstreet asked the status of the Carousel. Ms. Rapp said the Carousel owners have notified the Department that at the end of their contract, they would like the City to purchase it or they are going to relocate it to another area. Ms. Rapp said the City is very challenged financially, but are in discussions to determine what our options are. Ms. Rapp said that it has been included in the Capital Program for the proposed purchase price, but it is not funded. She said there will be more information forthcoming.

Ms. Rapp commented that there have been problems with concrete at Cabrillo Pavilion, and that work is planned for Fiscal Year 2010 for \$310,000. She said there is a plan to rehabilitate the doors and windows at the Cabrillo Pavilion for \$400,000 in Fiscal Year 2011. She said the Department would also like to replace the sport lighting at Dwight Murphy Ball Field for \$200,000 for Fiscal Year 2010 and 2011.

7. Creeks Division Fiscal Year 2010-2015 Proposed Capital Program

Mr. Benson provided this report.

Ms. Rapp talked about the Infrastructure Financing Task Force recommendations and how it relates to the Capital Improvement Program. She said the Commission has been provided a copy of the IFTF Report and encouraged them to read it.

Ms. Rapp reviewed the Six-Year Capital Improvement Program funding proposal. She stressed this is more of what is needed to protect and preserve the parks and recreation facilities and add to the facilities to meet community needs. Ms. Rapp said she expects very little of it to be funded. She said clearly the discussion of other financing vehicles is critical. She suggested the Commission keep the two reports together.

Chair Longstreet commented that she read the document, and it raised many interesting points that are operational, and it would be interesting to discuss them in a work session after Council makes their recommendations.

Ms. Rapp said staff has discussed bringing the document back to the Commission after the Finance Committee has taken a stab at it. She said staff will look at setting up a work session.

Commissioner Larimore-Hall said it would be important to have brainstorming session from staff concerning revenue producing ideas.

Ms. Rapp said staff has begun to have discussions and are looking at reductions this year and for years to come. She said there will be early work sessions with

the Commission. She said we are possibly looking at some significant reductions.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

ADJOURNMENT:

At 6:25 p.m., with no further business to come before the Commission,

Chair Beebe Longstreet moved, seconded by Commissioner Steve Forsell, and passed 4/0 to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Rapp
Parks and Recreation Director