

City of Santa Barbara PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION Special Meeting

Wednesday, April 14, 2010

Minutes (Amended)

<u>CALL TO ORDER</u>: The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. in City Council Chambers.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Chair Longstreet

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present

Commissioners Beebe Longstreet, W. Scott Burns, Chris Casebeer, Ada Conner, and Lesley Wiscomb

Commissioners Absent:

Commissioner Daraka Larimore-Hall and Commission Intern Diego Torres-Santos

Staff Present:

Community Development Director Paul Casey, Assistant Parks & Recreation Director Jill Zachary, Parks Manager Santos Escobar, Bettie Weiss, City Planner, Barbara Shelton, Project Planner

PUBLIC COMMENT: No one wished to speak.

1. Draft General Plan Update and Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Plan Santa Barbara – For Action (Attachment)

Recommendation: That the Commission review and provide comments on the Draft General Plan Update and Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Plan Santa Barbara.

Documents:

- Staff Report
- Staff PowerPoint

Speakers:

Staff: Jill Zachary, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director, Bettie Weiss,
 City Planner, and Barbara Shelton, Project Planner

Commissioner Questions/Comments:

Commissioner Casebeer

- In Council goals, what is meant by "pedestrian-scale"?
 [Ms. Weiss Human scale of buildings in relation to space; definition in the City's Urban Design Guidelines.]
- What period of time is associated with the assumptions for land use buildout?

[Ms. Weiss – The Plan and build-out analysis is for 20-year period to 2030 (actually 22 years from 2008). A longer-term evaluation closer to full build-out was also done in DEIR for 2050.]

Did you look backward in identifying these build-out assumptions? [Ms. Weiss – Yes, past trends of last two decades of ~100 unit/year build-out were considered, but also looking ahead to policy objectives for future housing.]

• To generate more housing downtown, is there consideration of converting commercial-zoned areas to residential? [Ms. Weiss – Yes. General Plan and zoning designations would remain commercial, which allow residential use as well. Given growth management policy limitations on commercial build-out, we would expect a continuing trend of mixed use and more residential on commercially-zoned properties in the core areas.]

Commissioner Wiscomb

- Among the key policy drivers is Public and Community Health. Where are the associated policies in the GP document?

 [Ms. Weiss This is a new policy directive and there are relevant policies included in various places, such as: Land Use Element Goal-Public Health, LUE Policies LG4.4-Mobility and Active Living; LG 5.2 Open Space, LG7.1a-Community Priority Development; LG12-Healthy Urban Environment; LG13.3-Building Set-Backs; LG17-Sustainable Neighborhood Planning; OP1.5 Community Gardens; ER 19-23-Food Policies.]
- What is the intention in developing sustainable neighborhood plans?
 [Ms. Weiss Referred to outline in LG17. There has been interest and work by some neighborhoods already, e.g., Mesa, and Coast Village Road. We encourage initiation by the neighborhoods, and then at some point they need to become City processes as well to incorporate plan guidelines into City planning policy.]
- There is need for more neighborhood parks. The policies indicate this could be planned as part of sustainable neighborhood plans. And may have needs that are not articulated because they don't have organized neighborhood groups.
 - [Ms. Weiss Plan policies include providing for parks either through neighborhood plans or general City park programs. For example, see policy

OP1.4-Public Lands, which cites identifying public property as potential park land, as part of updating Recreation Facilities Master Plan or neighborhood plans.]

Commissioner Longstreet

- When is further development of Open Space, Parks, Recreation, & Trails Element expected to occur?
 - [BW Outline of policy direction is provided now as part of Plan Santa Barbara update process. Don't know yet what priorities and timing for the many follow-on implementations identified for subsequent phases.]
- Development of park standards is discussed in the DEIR (p. 14.8 and chart on p. 14.19). The DEIR analysis combines acreage of different types of park needs to conclude that overall there is adequate amount of park space. This doesn't really address the needs for individual types of open space and parks.

A program to establish more detailed park needs standards is addressed in Open Space & Parks Element (OP1.1, 1st bullet). I agree with the bullet description. We need better metrics. There are different needs in different neighborhoods, so need a neighborhood by neighborhood assessment. For example, the need for space is different in neighborhoods with or without yards. In areas with small apartments, maybe there is a need for dog parks. Need to identify how much and what types of additional parks are needed in different areas.

Favors the sustainability policies; this is going in the right direction.

Commissioner Burns

 Another example of park needs is the study at Elings Park that there is not an adequate amount of soccer fields. We need to figure out how to increase that type of recreation.

Commissioner Longstreet

- Also need a component of funding to maintain park resources. For example, the Street Trees USA program requires \$2 per capita to qualify.
- How will we fund additional parks?
 [Ms. Weiss Refer to policies in OP2 for park acquisition and maintenance funding; for example, establishing a Quimby Act fee program for development to help fund parks.]

Commissioner Conner

Can Quimby fees fund roof-top gardens?

[Ms. Weiss – Quimby fees are for public open space, not private. So could only fund a roof-top garden on a public property, such as a parking lot.]

L. Wiscomb

Agree with the policy to establish Quimby Act funding, which has been very

successful in other jurisdictions. It is especially needed for denser areas that need additional facilities. Would like to see it explored.

Commissioner Longstreet

- In Housing Needs section of plan, I suggest identify needs for seniors with dementia. There is not enough capacity in this area; they have to go to Los Angeles or Santa Maria.
- As part of the connectivity and transit policies, I suggest that review of new development should consider transport to high schools to limit vehicle congestion.

Commissioner Burns

• With the policy focus of the Plan on affordable housing, don't forget about parks.

Commissioner Conner

• Appreciate the extensive work represented by the Plan.

Commissioner Wiscomb

- The Plan policies are going in a good direction, including identifying desired neighborhood characteristics, such as enhancing physical and social connectivity, open space enhancement, local community centers, and pedestrian improvements.
- I suggest a stronger connection in the policies between the neighborhood planning items, and more specifics in the overall General Plan park policies.

Commissioner Casebeer

 There is a need to prioritize parkland acquisition in under-served neighborhoods. Could connect park needs with police information to help identify priorities. The City needs to invest in these areas.

Commissioner Longstreet

- Need to push priority for the Sustainable Neighborhood Plans as identified on page 150.
- Some issues are likely to be controversial with the changing City political face, such as connectivity and access improvements.

ADJOURNMENT: At 6:50 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill E. Zachary
Assistant Parks and Recreation Director