



Park and Recreation Commission Meeting
Minutes

Wednesday, July 28, 2004
7:00 p.m.

Meeting Location
Council Chambers Garden Room,
Community Center
7007 Moeser Lane, El Cerrito

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Management Assistant at 510-559-7000. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the city to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (28 CFT 35.102-35.104 ADA Title II).

1. **Roll Call**

Park and Recreation Commissioners: Ken Lerch, Chair; Greg Lyman, Rosemary Loubal, Michael Sommers

Commissioners Excused: Jawad, Wittenberg

2. **Commission / Staff Communications / Announcements**

Commissioner Lyman reported that the restroom at Arlington Clubhouse does not have a paper dispenser, solid waste accumulated over the weekend was overflowing the dumpster and refuse containers, and there was a tremendous amount of turf damage next to the building.

Commissioner Loubal reported that there has been continuing interest in the petroglyph at Canyon Trail Park. There has been a suggestion from archaeologists to bury the rock to protect it.

3. **Oral Communications From The Public: None**

4. **Council Liaison Report:** Councilmember Janet Abelson

Councilmember Abelson reported that an open space ballot measure has been mailed to property owners. Because the City owns three parcels, the City Council received and voted on this open space measure. Council voted in favor of the measure. She also reported that there is a diversity forum scheduled for October 16. The theme this year will be sports.

Council approved the Cerrito Creek Greenway project, the area from the Ohlone Greenway to Pierce Street. The City is eligible to receive \$191,000 in grant funds. There is a requisite match of \$8,000. The grant and matching funds will cover the project through construction.

Council also set the rate for the Measure A parcel tax as it does every year. For a single family residential the rate is \$38.61 per year.

Commissioner Sommers asked if there has been any action to fill the vacancy on this Commission. Councilmember Abelson stated that the Council has been interviewing candidates, and should make a decision the third meeting of August.

Commissioner Loubal announced that the Friends of Baxter Creek will be meeting August 11, 2004, at the Senior Center, 6500 Stockton Avenue.

Chair Lerch read an e-mail addressed to Monica Kortz and the Park and Recreation Commissioners from Richard Schwartz (Attachment 1). He directed Staff to send Schwartz a copy of the packet Schwartz distributed at the Park and Recreation Commission on April 28, 2004.

Norman Laforce, 802 Balra Drive, former councilmember and mayor of El Cerrito: Laforce stated that the City should spend money planting trees and not a lot of money on consultants.

Chair Lerch responded that the City had hired a consultant, Marcia Vallier, to prepare an inventory of the greenscape in the parks. With the Vallier Report, there also came a recommendation that the City prepare an Urban Forest Plan. The City Council has allocated \$50,000 for an urban forest plan. Commissioner Loubal asked if the \$50,000 to start an Urban Forest Plan included a demonstration plan. Bradshaw explained one of the first steps of the Urban Forest Plan will be an open forum, a discussion of where we want to be in twenty years and where we want to put our resources.

5. **Approval of the Minutes:**

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as they stand.

Tanaka Design Group Presentation of Conceptual Designs for the Ohlone Greenway: Bruce King, Maintenance and Engineering Manager and Bob Tanaka, Tanaka Designs

Bradshaw stated that the Greenway is an important consideration in the City's transportation element and is used by pedestrians and bicyclists. Tanaka explained the process, which includes a presentation of a concept plan, incorporation of input from this Commission and the public. A preliminary sketch will be submitted to staff to be used as a grant seeking tool. He also requested a copy of the Vallier Report. He noted some areas of concern: frog habitats, conflicting uses of pedestrian and cyclists, soil erosion onto the path, and blind spots created by Bart columns. Some of the recommendations are to relocate the pedestrian path from the columns, and widen and straighten the path.

In the area between Lincoln and Stockton, near the Fairmont Clubhouse, the proposal is to move the pedestrian path adjacent to the bike path, making it a wider access, and install a secondary pedestrian path with a more meandering route. Commissioner Lyman suggested relocating the restroom closer to the clubhouse for security and maintenance access, rather than the proposed location near the play structure.

The proposed improvement for the area between Schmidt/Portola is a new dog run location. Commissioner Lyman recommended putting a dog run where there is dense housing.

The proposed improvements for the area between Manila/Potrero area are a new play area, picnic area, and restroom.

Chair Lerch asked what criteria was used to decide which paths to change to dual paths and why some paths are reduced to one. Tanaka explained that those changes were made because of the space. He stated that he is advocating the use of decomposed granite for the surface of the pedestrian path. He explained that in the area of a severe cross slope, there is only one pedestrian path. To increase security, Tanaka suggested more pedestrian paths, and mid block access to improve usage of the Bart path. He stated that increased usage was the best way to improve security.

Commissioner Loubal noted: the edges of the path are crumbling; the edges of the walkway need striping; the planks of the bridges tend to be slippery; and there need to be toilets at Baxter creek and at Moeser Lane.

Other suggestions were: moving the Itaya playground closer to Manila, installing emergency phones near restrooms, increasing signage and striping at Del Norte Bart pedestrian crosswalk at Hill Street, adding a dog run by Gladys and Potrero, and developing a dog run placement criteria. Discussion followed regarding how bike path location and Bart bike lockers relate to creating a bike friendly environment.

Discussion about decomposed granite followed. Tanaka explained that this surface costs the same as asphalt, but repair is easier. Commissioner Lyman testified that he found decomposed granite to be a satisfactory walking and running surface.

Other issues that were mentioned were; 1) Commissioner Lyman stated that it seemed that the bulk of amenities are at the south end, more than at the north end; 2) Commissioner Sommers suggested coordinating with Berkeley and Albany about toilets, to avoid duplicating efforts; 3) whether the par course is used enough to justify replacement/repair. 4) how

security phones work; and 5) requesting developers to “face” future developments to the Greenway to give a better view to Greenway users.

7. **Discussion Regarding Inexpensive Restroom Designs:** Rosemary Loubal

Commissioner Loubal introduced the design of the Cordinices Park restroom. She explained the advantages of the design, with the space at the base of the wall so that an occupant’s feet could be seen.

Discussion about funding, the need for an encroachment permit from Bart, and other public restroom designs followed. Bradshaw volunteered to have staff collect information on public toilets.

8. **Staff Update:** Bruce King, Maintenance and Engineering Manager

a. Cerrito Vista Tennis Lights: PGE installed a meter and met with the contractor, El Cerrito Electric. All the lights except one were operational.

b. The Dynamo Open Golf Tournament is Monday, August 30th.

c. The City recently awarded a new maintenance contract to Rubicon Enterprises, who will be doing tree trimming for trees under 15’, picking up litter, and will be sensitive to areas such as frog ponds.

9. **Items For Next Meeting**

a. Bill Savage from the Kensington school relocation

b. Possibility of Tanaka Design’s preliminary plans for Arlington Park.

10. **Adjournment**

Commissioner Lyman moved, and Commissioner Sommers seconded a motion to adjourn, which passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Attachment: Letter from Richard Schwartz