



**ALAMEDA RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR SPECIAL MEETING**

DATE: Thursday, October 29, 2015
TIME: 5:30 p.m. Called to Order
PLACE: City Hall Council Chambers

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Ruben Tilos, Vice-Chair Bill Delaney, Commissioners Ron Limoges and Adam Trujillo. Commissioner Mario Mariani absent.
Staff: Amy Wooldridge, Recreation and Park Director / Interim Assistant City Manager

2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, AGENDA:

No non-agenda items presented.

3. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:

Council received two letters in support of the Cross Alameda Trail from Alameda residents Sherry Stoll and Diana Verhalen.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. Review and Recommendation on Design of Cross Alameda Trail through Jean Sweeney Open Space Park

The Recreation and Park Commissioners requested this meeting for further clarification. Chair Tilos brought up concerns of what the original grant proposal was and what the acceptable path of sharrows versus dedicated lanes are in respect to the "gap closure", which is the street section on Atlantic Avenue between Constitution Avenue and Webster Street (Atlantic segment) that will be a connection point between two sections of the Cross Alameda Trail.

Amy Wooldridge, Recreation and Park Director and Interim Assistant City Manager, gave a detailed overall presentation of the history and design which is at 60% completed. A few changes in the present design will include a wider walking path instead of the decomposed granite jogging path, the internal plaza was pushed over so it will not run into the garden and an irrigation system will be installed. Landscape will be added at a later time as funding is available. The main Open Space area of the park includes trail striping and signage for pedestrian and bicycle safety and a one-mile jogging path.

Amy Wooldridge explained the grant process and timeline. The project is funded by the Active Transportation Program (ATP) which includes both state and federal funds. The City also received the regional funding which allows the City to work through both the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Caltrans which can extend the timeline. She also explained the sharrows is an acceptable solution for the Grants parameter to stay within the Grants timeline, however other options will also be looked at and considered. The improvements of the Cross Alameda Trail projects can be coordinated to happen at the same time as construction of the Atlantic segment. The Transportation Commission will be making the final recommendation to the City Council.

Rochelle Wheeler, Transportation Planner and Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner with the Public Works Department gave an update report of Public Works' part in the project. Public Works has been creating conceptual designs and options for a permanent solution to the Atlantic segment which was completed in June 2015. Public Works is doing the traffic study/analysis with the goal of creating a comfortable and safe trail for walking and bicycling in the best interest of all Alamedans. The gap closure is between Atlantic Segment that connects the corner of Constitution Way and Atlantic Avenue which is a very complex section without a lot of right of way. Measure BB funds of \$200,000 will supplement the ATP grant for the Atlantic segment bicycle improvements. The Transportation Commission will be the lead Commission for reviewing and giving final recommendation at their January 27, 2016 meeting. Vice-Chair Delaney asked what the Public Works guidelines and definition are around safety and is the objectives to reach 100% safety level. Rochelle Wheeler said safety is considered to be the most separation between bicycles and cars for a moderate volume street, going through some high volume intersections and with a busy driveway. Amy Wooldridge said we will design the most protected bike trail possible for all concerned within the given constraints. Commissioner Limoges expressed concern about doing the Jean Sweeney Park justice by keeping it safe while coming and going so that people will want to use the Park. He also requested that the Recreation and Park Commission be updated with the progress in January before the Transportation Commission meets. Chair Tilos spoke about the importance of keeping a balance between the bicycles, pedestrians and cars to keep everyone safe.

Amy Wooldridge requested that the Recreation and Park Commission vote to approve the trail as proposed and approved by Caltrans to ensure we do not jeopardize the Grant and to keep the project on schedule to allow it move forward in the suggested timeframe.

Speaker Cynthia La Croix agreed with moving ahead with the Grant we have received for the Jean Sweeney Open Space Park.

Speaker Jim Sweeney, of the Jean Sweeney Open Space Park Fund, complimented Amy Wooldridge for doing a great job in putting the project together and urged the Commissioners to follow her recommendation.

Speaker Joseph Woodard was happy to hear about the coordination and effort between Recreation and Public Works Departments to carry out the completion of trail without jeopardizing the Grants and hopes that the Commission will approve the proposals presented.

Speaker Audrey Lord-Hausman, of Bike Walk Alameda, said the park will be an incredible asset to the City of Alameda. She hopes there will be creative solutions for the gap to be safe for all in conjunction with the motorist, pedestrians and bicyclists. She commended everyone for their willingness to work together and find a good solution as soon as possible.

Speaker Lucy Gigli, Director of Advocacy for Bike Walk Alameda, thanked the Commissioners for asking for a more thorough report on this project. She is happy the City staff is looking at more options than just the sharrows option. She is hoping that a protected bikeway along Atlantic Avenue is completed at the same time as the other Cross Alameda Trail segments in order to keep everyone safe.

Speaker Doug DeHaan, of the Jean Sweeney Open Space Park Fund, thanked the Recreation and Park and Public Works' staff for all their hard work. He pointed out the Jean Sweeney steering committee has made the trail the backbone of the park. He is in agreement of moving forward with the project.

Speaker Dorothy Freeman, of the Jean Sweeney Open Space Park Fund, spoke about both projects, the Park and the Alameda Trail, are very important projects to the people of the City. She is sure we can come up with a resolution without bringing harm to either project and is in favor of moving forward.

Chair Tilos expressed being satisfied with all the information provided and thanked everyone for coming together for solutions.

Vice-Chair Delaney made a motion to approve the Jean Sweeney Open Space Park bike trail designs as described and defined with the involvement of Public Works to develop a safe and comfortable environment for all citizens who use the area of Webster Street and Atlantic Avenue known as the "gap." All Commissioners present were in favor.

5. ADJOURNMENT: Chair Tilos adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.