



## **ALAMEDA RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSION MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING**

**DATE:** Thursday, November 14, 2013  
**TIME:** 7:02 p.m. Called to Order  
**PLACE:** City Hall Council Chambers

### **1. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Chair Bill Delaney, Vice Chair Lola Brown, Commissioners Ann Cooke, Joe Restagno and Bill Sonneman

**Staff:** Amy Wooldridge, Recreation & Parks Director

### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Approved minutes of October 10, 2013 regular Recreation & Park Commission meeting with edits (to add why thank you note was sent to Barbara Rassmussen).

M/S/C Commissioner Sonneman/Vice Chair Brown (4-0-1 Cooke abstained)

### **3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, AGENDA**

Chair Delaney thanked Commissioner Restagno for the great job serving as Chair.

### **4. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

Director Wooldridge reported there were two communications received regarding the open space at Alameda Point. One from resident Irene Dieter stating her concerns and a response from Jennifer Ott, Alameda Point Chief Operating Officer.

A letter was received from Mayor Marie Gilmore in response to the Commission's letter to City Council regarding the McKay Avenue property adjacent to Crab Cove (Attachment 1)

Chair Delaney thanked the Mayor for the letter she sent to the Commission.

### **5. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Alameda Beltline Production Garden Feasibility Report & Recommendations,**  
Presented by Doug Biggs, Executive Director of Alameda Point Collaborative

Mr. Doug Biggs made a presentation to the Commission on the feasibility report (Attachment 2). He suggested the garden space be a community type garden instead for the production garden proposed.

Commissioner Restagno asked about the Food Bank location, connecting the garden and whether that area is large enough. Mr. Biggs stated the site on the west end of the property could be a starting point with the possibility of expanding the garden.

Vice Chair Brown commended Mr. Biggs on the presentation. She stated there will be responsibilities with oversight and is concerned with who can take on that responsibility. Mr. Biggs stated there are many working examples, such as the Bay Eagle Garden.

Commissioner Cooke asked about the number of people who would be involved with overseeing the project and if Mr. Biggs would take on that responsibility. Mr. Biggs stated that this isn't a normal project for APC and they would not be overseeing it. Their focus was on completing the feasibility report.

Commissioner Sonneman stated he had a concern with lots of energy in the beginning and then it drops to a couple people every weekend. He mentioned there have other groups representing growing food have been made presentations to this Commission. Mr. Biggs stated that community gardens are self-governed and self-managed so everyone is responsible for the entire project. This has worked well at APC.

Chair Delaney commented that within the community workshops and public comments a community garden came in as the fourth item on the priority list. He asked if other community gardens secure their gardens. Mr. Biggs stated some gardens are fenced and locked. The APC community garden is open and it is a problem. He suggested a prudent fence with posted hours might be enough.

Chair Delaney asked about the testing of the soil and will additional testing be required. Director Wooldridge stated grant funds from DTSC will help with determining not only what is out there but the cost estimate and next steps. She anticipates having a report by February.

Commissioner Cooke asked if there is any value for the old railroad ties. Director Wooldridge stated there is research needed for recycling or reconstituting those ties.

Chair Delaney asked about the urban area in Berkeley which is stated in the report. He said they have done a tremendous job and suggested a tour. He thanked the public and Mr. Biggs for the input on this report.

## **B. Jean Sweeney Open Space Park Conceptual Design**

Director Amy Wooldridge presented the draft Master Plan (Attachment 3).

Commissioner Cooke stated that she is excited about the project getting started and asked which part of the plan will be first. Director Wooldridge reported there are several things that need to happen before park components can be built. The first issues are cleaning the soil, installing infrastructure such as utilities and safety lighting, and building the Cross Alameda Trail for safety access. This area needs to be deemed safe and secure before fences can come down.

Commissioner Sonneman agreed that looking at the big picture is ideal instead of looking at the size of the restrooms. He likes the flow into the shopping area for neighbors. He asked about police and fire weighing in. Director Wooldridge stated this has been reviewed by the City's design review team, which includes police and fire.

Vice Chair Brown is very pleased with the detail and design of the conceptual plan. She agreed with the neighbor concerns and the security issues.

Commissioner Restagno likes that there is no proposed use for concerts or loud events. Do we really need 180 parking spaces, and where did this number come from? He commented on the different uses and it seems like the BMX park shouldn't be part of this open space area. Director Wooldridge stated the number came from a couple factors, one being the community garden and number of plots. As part of the CEQA process, the transportation and parking will be reviewed. The exact number of parking spaces may change. She stated the BMX park is actually conceived as a pump track for all bikes.

Chair Delaney is concerned with the continued dumping that is reported, and asked about the lock on the gate. Director Wooldridge reported the fence is continually repaired and there is a locked gate. However, the fence is often broken into and it's difficult to keep up with the repair.

Chair Delaney agreed with Restagno in that the concept of true open space should be preserved, with native vegetation. He agreed that the security for the neighborhood is critical. He asked that Amy thank Mr. Koster for the amazing work he has done.

Commissioner Sonneman dismissed himself from the meeting (8:09 p.m.).

Speaker, Ms. Sherry Stoll, stated she lives one house over from the property and has been involved in a number of things going on with the property. She thanked Mr. Koster for conceptual plan, she felt this seemed too busy and was a disconnect from original open space plan and the concept of bringing back nature. Director Wooldridge stated that since the plan does not show specific plant details, any place you see green is natural vegetation.

Speaker, Ms. Dorothy Freeman, objected to the size of the community garden and felt it is too wide. She thinks the area should be a more inviting park from Thau Way.

Speaker, Mr. Peter Wolfe, Architect, stated the pro bono effort is amazing. He stated concerns with the security in openness and visibility throughout the park. This will be a great asset to Marina Village and he suggested partnering with MV somehow. He commented on the utilities being expensive with any development. He thought a more passive environment was the thought or feel of the community meetings. He commented on a pond being high maintenance.

Speaker, Mr. Joe Woodard, said thank you to the conceptual plan efforts. He hopes the interests of the public continues. He stated there seems to be a limited number of community gardens and suggested involving public schools and Mastick Senior Center as a communal effort.

Speaker, Mr. Jim Sweeney, thanked Amy for the effort. He likes the general layout, but it comes back to Jean's vision of a public quiet park. The six uses are very compatible with quiet and native plantings and animals. This is what the people want, community garden idea was 'for the people'. He is opposed to a production garden, but a community garden is a good thing.

Speaker, Mr. Aaron Thies, stated he looks forward to riding his bike in the park. He commented on the pump track which is labeled as a BMX area. He asked if the current small hills will be kept in place or will they be leveled for something else.

Speaker, Mr. Kurt Peterson, stated he is pleased with the naming of the park, and has been a neighbor of the Sweeneys. He stated that Jean's vision of the area was open space, but she also was aware of the financial health of the city. He wanted the Commission to keep the area natural and open which will be less cost.

Speaker, Ms. Debbie Brown, thanked all involved with getting the project to this point. She wants an area to walk and meditate and would like the open space to be natural without a large lawn space. She would like to help plant natural plants.

Commissioner Restagno asked that they make sure there is enough open space with natural flora and fauna. This is important to keep that perspective. The other five items are important in a more passive open space park.

Chair Delaney stated there are many spaces that will stay open space.

Commissioner Cooke reminded everyone this isn't a detailed or finished product, and this does have to be secure and safe.

Vice Chair Brown thanked the public who came out to speak. She agreed the open space is the primary concern.

Director Wooldridge stated there will be another final draft that incorporates all public comments. This will be brought back to the Commission in early 2014.

### **C. Annual Recreation and Park User Fee Schedule**

Director Wooldridge reviewed the 2014 user fee schedule, and a comparison review of similar fees at other local cities. The new schedule will fees will start in January every year, although some are noted to match the school year calendar. Adjustments are very minor for 2014.

The Commission discussed the large group fee that was changed back to \$150/day from \$50/hour. Director Wooldridge explained that with the increase of the large group fee, combined with the new picnic fee rental structure and added jumper fees, the total fees became prohibitive for non-profit organizations hosting events in the parks. Commissioner Restagno stated that he felt it should only be reduced for non-profit organizations.

Director Wooldridge asked the Commission if they wanted to provide oversight for fee waivers or fee reductions on rentals. After some discussion, the Commission asked her to bring that issue back as a separate item at a later date.

Motion to Recommend to City Council, the 2014 Recreation and Park User Fee Schedule, with the Large Group Fee remaining the same and an added Large Group Fee for Non-Profit Organizations at \$150/day.

M/S/C Commissioner Restagno/Vice Chair Brown (4-0-0)

**6. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. None**

**7. REPORTS FROM RECREATION COMMISSION AND RECREATION & PARK DIRECTOR**

**A. Recreation Commission Reports:** None

**B. Friends of the Park Report (FOTP):** None

**C. Mastick Senior Center (MSC) Report:** None

**D. Recreation and Parks Director Report:** Estuary Park design RFQ was published and proposals are due Dec. 12.

**8. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, GENERAL**

**9. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA:** None

**10. SET NEXT MEETING DATE:** Thursday, December 12, 2013 is canceled  
M/S/C Vice Chair Brown / Commissioner Restagno (4-0-0)  
Thursday, January 9, 2014

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

9:15 p.m.