

MINUTES
ALAMEDA COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION AND HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

Thursday, November 5, 2009
East Bay Regional Park District,
2950 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland, CA
(Approved December 3, 2009)

I. Call to Order – Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 3:40 p.m. by Commissioner Minard, Chair.

Commissioners Present:

James Loughran
David Sadoff
Kevin Liebig
MaryAnn McMillan
Dennis Waespi
Al Minard
Samuel Kang

Commissioners Excused:

Harry Francis
David Tam
Marie Cronin
Ellen Wyrick-Parkinson
Commissioners Absent:
Annalee Allen
Stephen Sanger

Staff Present:

Liz McElligott
Angela Robinson-Piñon
Nilma Singh

Guests:

Jackie Kurtz-Beggs, Dry Creek Cottage
Kathleen Wade, Save Our Hills
Lesley Emmington, Save Strawberry Canyon

I. CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Commissioner Sadoff made a correction on page 2 and Commissioner Waespi made a typo correction under Commissioner Report, District. Commissioner Sadoff made a motion to accept the October 1st Minutes as corrected and Commissioner Waespi seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

III. OPEN PUBLIC FORUM - Any member of the public may address the Commission on a matter not on the regular agenda. No discussion or action may be taken on these items.

Jackie Kurtz-Beggs stated that she and Kathleen Wade both have concerns about a project in front of the historic Dry Creek Cottage, also known as the Meyers Estate. This project will compromise the historical status of the cottage. The cottage, the garden grounds, and the estate are owned and operated by East Bay Regional Park District. A historical report by Woodruff Minor & Bruce Anderson deemed it eligible as a historic district and also indicate that any big building near/by it will compromise it's setting and historical status (page 31). This project is proposed immediately in front. Ms. Kurtz-Beggs further submitted copies of a site map pointing out the location of the Meyers estate, the proposed development, and the closeness to the cottage/gardens.

Kathleen Wade, representing Save Our Hills, explained that Masonic Homes owns these three parcels and is now proposing a development including townhouses, family homes and retirement living. This open space area has been in protection by the Union City voters since 1996. To remove these parcels from the protection of the Hillside Initiative Protection, the

development will go on the November, 2010 ballot. On Parcel A, directly in front of Dry Creek cottage, the proposed building height will be 35 feet with retail space in the middle and further south, towards Mission Boulevard, it will be 55 feet. Ms. Wade submitted a copy of the development plan to staff, copies to be made for the Commission. Save Our Hills would like to retain the parcels as agricultural and open space. In response to the Chair, Ms. Wade indicated that an EIR is in the process with a completion date of end of April. She hoped that a letter from this Commission in opposition would be submitted by Spring 2010. The Chair explained that the Commission will not be taking any action at this meeting since the matter is under Open Forum but the matter could be agendaized next month.

Open Forum was re-opened after New Business. Lesley Emmington Jones, representing Save Strawberry Canyon, submitted a letter to the Commission, copies of the original site map completed by the Olmsted Brothers, and fliers. Although the land is still owned by the University, the canyon is a public gateway into the East Bay Parks lands and is a historic component of the natural landscape. Save Strawberry Canyon is requesting this Commission to request Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory to notify this Commission and other agencies for future projects that are intended to be constructed in this significant hillside area. There are several projects planned and their association is in litigation, requesting that the EIR needs to look at alternative sites.

IV. CHAIR and STAFF REPORT(S): *These items include information and discussion by the Commission:*

A. CHAIR REPORT – *None*

B. STAFF REPORT – *Updates to the County's General Plan*

Ms. Robinson-Pinon announced that the Final DEIR for the Eden Plan, the Revised Draft of the Housing Element as well as copies of the letter to the communities are available for review. The HE is also available on CDs.

V. OLD BUSINESS – *All old business will include information, discussion and/or action by the Commission.*

A. Historic Preservation Ordinance- *The Commission will establish an ad hoc subcommittee to evaluate the draft Historic Preservation Ordinance.*

Ms. Robinson-Pinon presented the staff report. In response to the Vice-Chair, Ms. McElligott added that although there are no additional funds to hire a consultant, staff time is available to work on the Ordinance. Staff is recommending that the subcommittee meet publically due to the public responses. A discussion followed regarding an ad hoc committee, committee meetings--public/private meetings, Brown Act issues and flow of information. The Chair recommended night meetings with a neutral moderator, some type of security and experts on some issues, such as Mills Act and Vice-Chair Sadoff suggested easy public contact with the Committee, perhaps via email. Staff said she would check with ITD personnel and suggested perhaps a member from Oakland Heritage Alliance to discuss City of Oakland's Mills Act Program. She will check with Commissioner Allen for contact information. Ms. McElligott recommended Work Sessions with public feedback at the end adding that staff will do a research on experts. Commissioner Waespi suggested staff from the Assessor's Office and the Chair recommended hearings to commence in January/February due to the holidays. The Chair and Commissioners Sadoff and McMillian volunteered for the ad hoc Committee.

Commissioner Waespi made the motion to accept the ad hoc Subcommittee and Commissioner Liebig seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

VI. NEW BUSINESS – *All new business will include information, discussion and/or action by the Commission.*

A. 16600 East 14th St. - *The Commission will discuss a proposed demolition of a structure over 50 years old.*

Ms. Robinson-Pinon presented the staff report and introduced Bill Lambert, Assistant Director of Redevelopment Agency, Economic Development. Mr. Lambert added that new auto related uses are not allowed at this site, it is under-utilized, a blight and the Agency's plan is to purchase the property and improve the physical and economic conditions. Although there is no proposed plan, there is a push for some commercial use.

Commissioner Sadoff stated his appreciation for the detailed information contained in the staff report. Commissioner Waespi complimented the Agency for the work in this area, E.14th Street/163rd Avenue but said that he could not support the proposal although he was in support of a demolition. A private owner would be required to complete a historical assessment and the same should be required of the County. Staff noted some examples where the Commission had not required such an assessment and Commissioner Sadoff pointed out that this is a business, not a private residence and thought the report was adequate. Although there was a lot of information, the Chair felt that the report was still incomplete--lack of building and, event and ownership significance, and felt that a historical analysis should be required until an Ordinance is in place. A discussion followed regarding future historical assessment requirements, development of a process/form required before issuance of a Demolition Permits; and inclusion in the Ordinance. Mr. Lambert indicated that this is a time-sensitive issue. Commissioner Waespi re-iterated that although he supported the demolition, the County should also be required to do a historical analysis. Ms. McElligott pointed out that this could be used as a template for future applications and Commission McMillan said that there is a need for a criteria. Although he agreed with the Chair, Commissioner Kang felt that Mr. Lambert had done an adequate research. *Commissioner McMillan made the motion to accept the report and allow demolition. Commissioner Sadoff seconded. Motion carried with the Chair and Commissioner Waespi dissenting.*

VII. COMMISSIONER REPORTS – *Commissioners will report on areas of concern and/or informational items concerning parks, recreation and historical preservation issues within the supervisory districts they serve.*

District 1: Haggerty – The Chair announced the upcoming cleaning event at San Lorenzo Pioneer Cemetery, 9 am – 12pm, to bring gloves and gardening equipment; and reported that he had attended Day of the Dead display at Meek Mansion which is a great show; and the new adobe building in Pleasanton is open to public.

District 2: Steele – *None*

District 3: Lai-Bitker – Commissioner Loughran reported that AC Transit wants to build a traffic corridor in the middle of the street to create two lanes to isolate the traffic. All residents oppose this proposal. The Home Association held a meeting last Wednesday at Jefferson School.

D. District 4: Miley - Commissioner Sadoff announced that the grand opening of the new Castro Valley Library last Saturday was attended by approximately 2,000 people. There is a small historical display with several books over 100 years old on the history of Alameda County.

Commissioner Waespi said he had also attended the grand opening and noted the small park around the library and the opening of the creek. HARD had a public meeting regarding the Meek Estate West Terrace and concerns, similar to those raised by this Commission, were voiced. Alternative uses were also submitted and discussed. He recommended that Commissioners should attend these meetings.

District 5: Carson - Commissioner Kang stated that some organizations have been trying to fund the Girls and Boys Club in Alameda with Measure WW funds. But, they are now facing oppositions by open space advocates. He asked if this Commission would like to weigh on this issue and requested that this matter be agendaized.

VIII. ADMINISTRATIVE

A. Agenda Items for future meetings

Commissioner Sadoff proposed the following items: 1) the production of an interim (informational) historical checklist form for demolition permits to be made available at Zoning Counter to provide some direction to the applicants. Although the list outlined on page 3 (staff report on the Redevelopment item) is a good start, he recommended adding resources at the library and a Goggle check for potential events. The Chair suggested the applicant make a list of all searches completed; 2) The Strawberry Canyon.

The Chair suggested Dry Creek Cottage and staff added the possibility of an up-date on HGH EIR and Meek Estate.

X. ADJOURNMENT: There being no other business, Commissioner Sadoff made the motion to adjourn and Commissioner Liebig seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 5:35 pm.