



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMISSION

MINUTES

March 5, 2003

Burgess Recreation Center, Room 112
800 Alma Street, Menlo Park

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Theo Keet at 7:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Theo Keet, Frank Carney, Deirdre Digrande, Mary Kenney, Mark McBirney

Commissioners Absent: Kevin McCarthy, Laura Teksler

Staff present: Dianne Dryer, Environmental Programs Coordinator
Justin Murphy, Principal Planner
Walt Fujii, Contract Arborist

Public present: Todd Adair, Duke Rohlen, Ken Hollen, Harry Harrison, Margaret Petitjean

A. PUBLIC COMMENTS None.

B. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dianne Dryer announced that the City Council will hold a Study Session about active recreational uses at Bayfront Park on April 1 at 6:30 p.m.

Dianne Dryer reported that the City is evaluating the option of filling the City Arborist position with in-house staff. In the meantime, Walt Fujii will remain on contract.

Theo Keet and Mary Kenney reported on the recent meeting with Council members and Commission chairs and vice chairs. The Council seems to want to hear from and get feedback from the Commissions. Commissions will probably make annual reports to the Council. There may be more interaction between Commissions. The Environmental Commission may want to review its activities and plans for the year at the next available meeting. It was suggested that the Commission might want to consider preparing environmental guidelines with recommended sustainable practices for other Commissions to consider in their project planning and recommendations to staff and Council.

C. BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1. Approval of Corrected Minutes of February 5, 2003:** The name of Margaret Frueth was corrected to Margaret Petitjean. M/S: Carney/McBirney. Approved.
- 2. Arbor Day**

Dianne Dryer is checking on possible locations in the Belle Haven neighborhood. Frank Carney suggested planting a tree in the parking lot next to the tennis courts at Burgess Park or in the south end of the parking lot at the main library.

3. Heritage Tree Removals Proposed for Development Project at 110 and 175 Linfield Drive

An overview of the proposed development project was presented by representatives of Olive Hill Development and Taylor Woodrow Homes. The location of the project is on the two parcels on the northwest and southeast sides of Linfield Drive, approximately 500 feet west of Middlefield Road. The proposal includes the demolition of two office buildings on the two parcels at 110 and 175 Linfield Drive and the construction of 59 residential units. The proposal includes 47 single-family detached homes and 12 attached homes. This equates to 10.2 units per acre. The proposal includes removal of 65 heritage trees, including 5 onsite relocations, and 150 trees to be planted as replacements.

A revised listing of trees to be removed or relocated, measured according to the City Heritage Tree Ordinance, has not yet been supplied by the developer. The City's arborist has evaluated all of the trees on the property. Staff and the City's arborist discussed a site plan showing the existing site and trees, noting significant trees on the property. A preliminary determination by staff and the arborist is that 13 additional trees should be considered for preservation, although they are proposed for removal or relocation by the developer.

Commissioners discussed the density of the proposed project and the small amount of open space and space for trees. Would there be enough space for all of the replacement trees? The "grid" design seems to minimize the flexibility for preserving and planting of trees. Might some trees to be preserved be damaged or compromised due to their close proximity to structures? Are the relocations feasible and necessary? The proposal includes the relocation of one large oak ten feet in order to accommodate a home. Some Commissioners thought that an EIR would be necessary and that the City should be compensated for the street abandonment. There was a brief discussion about the possibility of narrowing Linfield Drive beyond the project area. It was also suggested that the developers minimize impermeable surfaces and use green building materials and solar panels to the greatest extent possible.

The review of the project was continued to the April 2, 2003 Commission meeting at which time the developer and staff will have more accurate data on the numbers and sizes of heritage trees on the site. Staff will make further recommendations at that time.

D. INFORMATION ITEMS

None.

E. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.