



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

June 1, 2005

Burgess Recreation Center
700 Alma Street, Menlo Park

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Dan Kocher at 6:37 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Doug Scott, Mary Kenney, Dan Kocher, Bob Swezey

Commissioners Absent: Frank Carney, Rick Stevens, Sarah Granger

Staff present: Dianne Dryer, Environmental Programs Coordinator
Juan Alvarez, City Arborist
Ruben Nino, Director of Engineering

Public present: None

A. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

B. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ruben Nino explained the terms of the new street sweeping contract: increase to weekly sweeping during late fall and winter, cut back to once a month in the summer, bi-weekly in spring, no sweeping on Thursdays (garbage and recycling service days). Mary Kenney announced that the Environmental Quality Awards will be presented at the Council meeting on June 21. Doug Scott suggested that next year perhaps the business awards could also be presented at a Chamber of Commerce meeting.

C. BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1. Approval of Minutes of May 4, 2005:** Motioned (BS/DS); approved unanimously.
- 2. Review of Revisions to Street Tree Master Plan:** Ruben Nino and Juan Alvarez showed maps with dots indicating locations of street trees as of August 2003. West Coast Arborist has since surveyed the street trees and compiled a database (including stumps and dead trees). The total number, including trees in parks, is over 20,000 trees. At least half are street trees, with maintenance funded by the Landcape Assessment Fee on private properties. The General Fund is used for tree maintenance in parks and on medians. The cost to maintain the trees annually is about \$600,000. Only a very small percentage are irrigated by the City (property owners are relied on to water in front of their property). City crews or contractors evaluate every tree at least once every five years, and trim, or remove and replace if necessary. The property owner is consulted as whether he/she wants a

replacement tree and about the type of tree to be planted. Instructions for care are left on the door after the planting.

The Commission reviewed and commented on the list of newly proposed replacement species. It was suggested that the description of each include water requirements (drought tolerant?), space requirements (easement width needed), and whether a native species or not. It was noted that only 3 of the proposed species are suitable under power lines, and that redwoods are inappropriate unless there is a very wide easement. It will be necessary to combine the newly proposed replacement species list with the old list (modified) to finalize the replacement list. Trees on the old list should have full descriptions like the new list. Staff hopes to bring a revised draft Plan to the Commission in September and get input on a "reforestation plan" (removal of older trees to phase in new trees). Commissioners suggested prioritizing removal of hazardous and poor condition trees first, and then trees in areas with high visibility (vehicle and pedestrian usage). New developments are now required to plant street trees for non-conforming lots. Perhaps other types of developments should have the same requirement. The Commission asked for a list of unacceptable trees commonly planted in the past and why they are not considered appropriate street tree species now.