



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMISSION MINUTES

Regular Meeting
Wednesday, January 4, 2012 at 6:30 p.m.

701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025
Arrillaga Family Recreation Center
Elm Room

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kuntz-Duriseti at 6:39 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Daniel Kocher, Kristin Kuntz-Duriseti (Chair), Adina Levin, Douglas Scott, Mitchel Slomiak, Christina Smolke

Absent: None

Staff present: Rebecca Fotu, Chip Taylor, Rachel Grossman

A. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

C4. Well Project for Sharon Heights Golf and Country Club (Commission Chair Kuntz-Duriseti prepared section C.4 of the minutes)

NOTE: This item was moved to the beginning of the agenda for public comment. Chair announced to the public that the EQC would not be deliberating on this item until the next meeting, which will take place February 1, and was listed on the agenda to update Commissioners on the delay as it was previously scheduled for regular business in January.

Public Comment

Marjorie Zimmerman expressed concern about the long term use of a community resource and felt the decision was premature.

Citing the EQC mission statement, David Alfano wants to preserve the integrity of the open space, which shouldn't be compromised to provide infrastructure, especially when a public resource is being co-opted for private use. He remarked on inconsistencies and incomplete information in the staff reports. The public benefit needs to be more clearly articulated and adequately compensated. Mr. Alfano questioned how the possibility of adjudication of the aquifer will affect future resource management.

Joanne Wilkes has three main concerns: 1) sufficient financial benefit to override natural resource use, 2) potential for precedent for inappropriate resource encroachment, and 3) regional implications. Ms. Wilkes shared a presentation document with the commissioners. ([Presentation](#))

Robert Wilkes donated time to Joanne Wilkes.

Mary Kuechler underscored the importance of open space to the community especially in a developed urban environment. The integrity of the designation should be respected in principle; even underground use is an encroachment.

Don Ellis reminded the Commission that this is not the first time that Nealon Park has been annexed (i.e., T-Mobile phone station) and reiterated a concern with the precedent.

In sum, community residents expressed concerns that:

1. The decision to allow the groundwater well at Nealon Park is premature (especially weighing the short run versus long run costs and benefits) and lacks complete information;
2. Staff reports are inconsistent and lack necessary details;
3. The act violates the protection of the designated “open space;”
4. Granting approval for the well project risks setting a precedent for future encroachment of the open space, with implications for zoning laws and “special use” exemptions;
5. Public resources are being appropriated for private use, in principle, and/or are not adequately compensated;
6. The project does not provide sufficient financial benefit to compensate for natural resource use; and
7. There are regional consequences for use of local groundwater, and that these may have future legal implications, if the aquifer is “adjudicated” for future regional resource management.

B. REGULAR BUSINESS

B1. Approval of the December 7, 2011 minutes

ACTION: Motion and second (Kocher/Slomiak) to approve the minutes with amendments passes unanimously.

B2. Informational presentation by City staff on Draft Environmental Impact Report for Facebook, Inc.

Staff presentation by Rachel Grossman, Associate Planner and Chip Taylor, Public Works Director.

ACTION: No action.

B3. Approve a Communitywide Greenhouse Gas Reduction Target Recommendation to City Council

ACTION: Motion and second (Slomiak/Kocher) to forward the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Target Recommendation Report presented by the Climate Action Plan subcommittee to the City Council for consideration in their upcoming study session on setting a communitywide greenhouse gas reduction target passes unanimously. In addition, Commissioner Slomiak, or another commissioner will also present the report to the City Council on behalf of the EQC when the study session is held.

B4. Select Commissioner(s) to coordinate Arbor Day Event

ACTION: Motion and second (Kocher/Scott) to appoint Chair Kuntz-Duriseti to coordinate the Arbor Day for 2012 passes unanimously.

B5. Elect a new Chair and Vice Chair

ACTION: Motion and second (Kocher/Scott) to elect Commissioner Slomiak for Chair and Commissioner Smolke for Vice Chair of the EQC passes unanimously.

C. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following updates were received by the Commission:

C1. Environmental Quality Awards

C2. Capitol Improvement Plan Update

C3. Polystyrene Education Campaign

C4. Well Project for Sharon Heights Golf and Country Club
This item was moved out of order to the beginning of agenda.

C5. Open Commission Seats

D. ADJOURNMENT – 8:00 p.m.

Prepared by: Rebecca Fotu, Environmental Programs Manager, and Commission Chair Kuntz-Duriseti