



PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

Regular Meeting
September 16, 2009
6:30 p.m.
Burgess Recreation Center
700 Alma Street

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: J. Tooley, K. Blythe, K. Breisch, N. Naclerio, P. Watkins

Absent: A. Kirkpatrick, P. Maurano

Other Present: Susan Holmer – Interim Community Services Director,
Ruben Nino – Assistant Public Works Director,
Steve Ritchie - South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project Executive Project
Manager,
Jennifer Heroux - Park Ranger/Interpretive Specialist

A. PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

1. Patricia Watkins Presentation

Jim Tooley presented a plaque to Pat Watkins in recognition of eight years of commitment to the Commission and Menlo Park residents. P. Watkins expressed her pleasure with the work that the commission had accomplished and her hope that someone from the Belle Haven neighborhood be appointed to the commission.

2. Bedwell Bayfront Park Storyboard Project

S. Holmer presented the three story boards that were installed in September 2009 along the walkway of the parking lot near the entrance to the park. They were designed by artist Kathy Switky and installed by the city.

B. COMMISSION VACANCIES, APPOINTMENTS AND REPORTS
SUB COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Commission Appointments

New appointments to the commission are currently scheduled for the 22 September City Council meeting.

2. Burgess Gymnasium

Naclerio reported that the City Council approved the project EIR. The work of creating additional parking places has begun in Lot 6. The City is planning to have the drop-off zone in front of the gym reconfigured for better traffic flow. It was agreed that the Gym Sub-Committee would contact the Library Commission to work together on any parking lot issues.

For a future agenda it was agreed to plan a meeting which would invite other commissions, i.e., Transportation and Planning, to come and join in a discussion about the gym

3. El Camino Visioning Process

K. Breisch handed out flyers for the upcoming El Camino Visioning Workshop – Phase III, and gave an update from the previous workshop she attended. The focus of the meeting was a review the results from the previous meeting and a preview of what would be presented at the third and final Community Workshop on September 17.

4. Commission Appreciation, September 24th 6-8 pm.

The Commission Appreciation dinner will be in front of the Council Chambers on September 24th. Please RSVP if you have not done so already.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT #1

None

D. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Approval of the minutes dated [May 20, 2009](#), [May 21, 2009](#) and [June 17, 2009](#).

Motion (P. Watkins/K. Blythe) to approve the Minutes of May 20, May 21 and June 17, 2009.
Motion carried unanimously.

E. PUBLIC HEARING

None

F. REGULAR BUSINESS

1. Presentation and Discussion of the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project.

Steve Ritchie, Project Manager, presented a report on the project to date. The South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project is the largest tidal wetland restoration project on the West Coast. When complete the project will restore 15,100 acres of industrial salt ponds to a rich mosaic of tidal wetlands and other habitats. California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Coastal Conservancy launched the four- year public process to design a restoration plan for the property. The final plan was adopted in 2008 and the first phase of restoration started later that year. Permits are completed and Phase 1 started in 2009 which begins to restore the marsh and construct the habitat for shore birds.

Richie is working with the City of Menlo Park to finalize the design of an interpretive display which is expected to be ready by the end of 2009. There will be one park orientation panel and three interpretive panels at the northeast corner of the park overlooking the vista of San Francisco Bay. Some basic seating, possibly using large boulders, will be installed in the future. There might be minor design changes to the panels as requested by the city.

Jennifer Heroux, Park Ranger, added her comments about the importance of informing the public about this important natural resource.

Discussion ensued regarding inclusion of the name of Friends of Bedwell Bayfront Park on the panels and how all groups and individuals involved in work on the park could be recognized.

Richie said that feedback from tonight's meeting will be conveyed to the City Public Works Department and the final version of the panels will be designed.

Comments from the public:

Elizabeth Lasensky with the FBBP pointed out the group's involvement with the park and that their work should be honored that by putting the FBBP logo back on the info panel.

Further discussion between the Commission and City staff ensued regarding designating one group as the major contributor to the park. R. Nino, Assistant Public Works Director, pointed out that many individuals and groups have helped in the establishment of the park and that it would be very difficult to name them all. Discussion continued on the various means that contributors could be acknowledged in the future.

Motion (J. Tooley/P. Watkins) to go forward with the panel installation, to make room for more signs in future and to consider creating a seating area. Motion carried and unanimously approved.

Recommendations for a Future Agenda:

- To discuss the City's policy about recognition for work on city projects and how to recognize the groups involved in the bay front park project and,
- Plan a field trip to the site.

2. Review and Discussion of the February 2009 commission workshop Future Project List

Items that were identified at the February 7th workshop were discussed. They included Burgess Gym construction and Kelly Field renovation, a study of playing field usage and policy, the Burgess Pool and the contract for its use by Team Sheeper, and an overview of the programs offered through the Community Services Department.

The Commission members agreed to invite the groups involved in the Gym-Library parking lot issue to come to one of the Parks and Recreation Commission meetings and discuss how to communicate better. The groups to invite: Library Commission, Transportation Commission, and, Planning Commission. Breisch suggested inviting groups from other sports organizations, i.e., AYSO, Pop Warner, etc., to come to meetings and share information about their organizations and their use of/need for city playing areas.

The Fields sub-committee will work with David Hill, Program Assistant, to learn more about the leagues that are using city playing fields, and what the future needs for space will be. A formal policy on field usage priority should be completed quickly as several fields are being renovated or planned for renovation in the future.

3. Bohannon/Menlo Gateway Project

K. Breisch reported that Bohannon/Menlo Gateway Community meeting she attended which was held to inform all city commission about the work being done on this project and to avoid miscommunications. Bohannon/Menlo Gateway is a private development which is going thorough the Planning Commission and City Council hearing processes.

4. Menlo Children's Center

The commission's recommendation to monitor the revenues received by MCC, prepare an RFP for outsourcing the service, and report back to the City Council in February was presented to the City Council and accepted. Commission members questioned whether the RFP should also include the afterschool program and decided that the RFP should be in two separate parts one being childcare and the second being afterschool care. Potential bidders could choose to bid on just childcare or childcare and afterschool care.

Motion (J. Tooley/K. Blythe) to form a subcommittee and elect two commissioners to work with the City on reviewing the fiscal performance of MCC and to develop the RFP. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion (J. Tooley/K. Blythe) to elect Nick Naclerio and Kelly Blythe to be on the MCC Subcommittee. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote (5/0)

5. Menlo Atherton Performing Art Center

S. Holmer reported that the Grand opening is scheduled for the weekend of October 9th. Some City staff has had the opportunity to tour the Center. Because of the City's contribution to the cost of construction it will be a venue for city events for no less than 55 days annually.

There will be fees charged for custodial service and to have a technician present for city programs.

6. Kelly Park

S. Holmer displayed the 60% design plan. Blythe asked for details about the project timeline and if a copy of the plans could be made available to him.

7. Discussions with San Mateo County about renovation and use of Flood Park

City engineers met with San Mateo County, and discussed several options. One of them was that the City of Menlo Park uses the park and carries all the maintenance. Holmer will check with the Engineering Department to find out what conclusions were reached about use of Flood Park.

G. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

None

H. PUBLIC COMMENT #2

None

J. ADJOURNMENT at 8:50pm.

ATTACHMENTS

None