



(705)

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION**

Wednesday, October 8, 2008
7:00 p.m.
Huntington Beach Civic Center
2000 Main Street
Huntington Beach, CA 92648

Chair Kreitz called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m., McGough led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Bloom; Albert Gasparian; David Hubbard; Susie Jones; Jay Kreitz; Cathy McGough; Dan Moss; John Myers
MEMBERS ABSENT: Allan Pogrund (excused); Buddy Roberts(excused); Barbara Steel (excused);
STAFF PRESENT: David Dominguez; Mary Loadsman

PRESENTATIONS – none.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – See Administrative Item G-1.

MINUTES

MOTION:

Moved by Bloom, seconded by Moss, to approve the August 13, 2008 Community Services Commission minutes.

AYES: Bloom, Gasparian, Hubbard, Jones, Kreitz, Moss, Myers
ABSTAIN: McGough
ABSENT: Pogrund, Roberts, Steel

Motion passed unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS – Dominguez welcomed Cathy McGough and reminded commission the November 12, 2008 meeting is being held at Huntington Central Library – Room D. He noted the committee assignments were included in the commission packets. Dominguez reported the new City Administrator, Fred Wilson started working for the city at the end of September.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS -

Huntington Central Park Enhanced Raptor Habitat Plan – Dominguez gave a presentation overview of the Enhanced Raptor Habitat Plan, noting the proposed five-acre site was located west of Goldenwest Street at Talbert Avenue within the 14-acres of undeveloped park property, south of Shipley Nature Center and north of the proposed senior center. He explained that the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the senior center project indicated a mitigation measure requiring mitigation for any potential project impacts to raptor habitat, either through dedication, conservation or enhancements (mitigation measure 4.3.2). He further explained the mitigation measure requires impacts to foraging areas be mitigated on a 1:1 ratio. The proposed senior center will utilize five-acres of undeveloped park land and the proposed habitat area will consist of five-acres. The 14-acre undeveloped park property which includes the proposed senior center area has been identified as a raptor habitat. Dominguez introduced Ron Walker, Senior Scientist – Permitting/Wildlife Biologist with PBS&J (consultants hired to develop the Enhanced Raptor Habitat Plan) to complete the presentation and answer questions.

Walker described the components of the habitat plan noting planting of native trees, shrubs and grasslands will aid increase of small mammal population in the foraging area. He added that perch poles and nest boxes would be strategically placed inside the habitat area, and proposed a cable and post boundary to surround the habitat area. Walker showed slides of the existing conditions and samples of a completed enhanced habitat area to better enable visualization of the plan. He also presented the conceptual plan for site improvements. He explained the idea is to take the currently barren area, fill it with native plants and vegetation, place signage indicating “enhanced raptor habitat, please respect the area” or other public notification of similar nature, and surround the area with an “open feel” post and cable boundary. As required, the improvements to the area will not only benefit the aesthetics of the area, but enrich and enhance the current raptor foraging habitat.

Scott Thomas, Conservation Director, Orange County, Sea & Sage Audubon Society, submitted a letter dated October 8, 2008 for distribution to commission members. The letter outlined areas of concern with the Huntington Central Park Enhanced Habitat Plan. He said there are ten-acres of good foraging natural habitat at the proposed site and expressed his concern the habitat was being reduced to five-acres. He asked to meet with the consultant, staff, and Friends of Shipley Nature Center, to better understand the plan and mitigation efforts.

Karen Jackle, a resident of Huntington Beach, expressed concerns about the habitat location, asking if another location may be better suited for the project, and to save the proposed area for future use. She also mentioned the cable and post boundary was a good idea.

Norm Westwell, said he is attending the meeting as a resident and individual. He spoke in opposition of the plan, saying it was a surprise to citizens. He also commented that the senior center may not get built and did not want to start "staking off the area". He said, "parks are for people", and expressed concern with having fences in the park.

John McGregor, a forty-four year resident, was amazed to learn that there is a plan to develop the area. His expressed fiscal concern for the city in times of economic instability.

Juana Mueller, a resident and a representative of The Friends Shipley Nature Center, said her comments were not on behalf of Shipley, however, she would like to have meetings with Shipley staff, city staff, the consultant, and Audubon representative to better understand the proposed plan. She commented that within the 14-acre site, previous plans proposed a tot lot, picnic area, and parking lot.

Michael McGloin, a resident of Huntington Beach, said he grew up going to the park. He said he is disappointed with the proposed changes and would like the area to stay as it is.

Shirley Dettloff, a resident of Huntington Beach, said City Council has approved the area for an enhanced raptor habitat. She said she was heavily involved in the senior center process. She said it is logical to have native planting and enhancements performed, however, felt that representatives from Shipley Nature Center, city staff, consultants, and the Audubon representative needed to meet to better understand the plan.

Mark Bixby, a resident, said he agreed with the Audubon comments, adding the senior center is destroying five-acres of the habitat area. He said the EIR recognized the entire 14-acre area as a raptor habitat and proposed a solution of cleaning up the gun range area north of Sully Miller Lake for the habitat plan. He said the gun range area is ideally a better location and would not be a loss of public access to the park.

Kreitz commented that he appreciated the public's input and reiterated the senior center project was voted on by members of the community, and that the EIR was approved by the City Council through the proper process. He said he is not aware of the biological numbers for raptors in Central Park and recommended that staff, consultants, Shipley Nature Center, the Audubon representative, and interested public meet to review the draft plan and obtain answers to questions.

Kreitz asked if Park, Acquisition and Develop (PA&D) funding for the project is budgeted. Dominguez confirmed that PA&D is the funding source for the proposed project and is part of the current fiscal year budget.

Moss commented that utilizing the gun range option as a mitigation area may be too lengthy for the timeline, as well as too costly.

McGough asked for clarification on why the location was chosen as the mitigation measure. Dominguez reiterated that the 14-acre site was identified as raptor foraging habitat area, that enhancement to the current area would satisfy the mitigation requirement.

Hubbard commented the Friends of Shipley Nature Center and outside groups share a common interest in the area. He agreed that information needed to be shared with the public, that comments from the Sea & Sage Audubon be taken into consideration, and that he would reserve comment to the appropriate time. Dominguez explained that individual notifications were mailed to residents and businesses within 500 feet of the park and sent to others on the new senior center list, the draft mitigation report, meeting agenda, staff report and conceptual plans were posted on the city web site.

Moss said his concerns are that commission should not get sidelined from the task at hand; this was voted on by members of the community and approved by city council. He said this includes the new senior center at the park, and if the 1:1 mitigation ratio is part of the requirement, then commission should move forward.

Bloom commented that due to the questions commission, Shipley Nature Center, Sea & Sage Audubon and the general public, he recommended the motion be deferred.

Myers agreed with Shirley Dettloff of Shipley Nature Center, noting that City Council has approved the plan and there should not be a hesitation in the process. He is in support of the recommendation.

Motion:

Moved by Bloom, seconded by Hubbard, to defer the motion to recommend City Council approval of the five-acre enhanced raptor habitat plan in Huntington Central Park as presented, to a future commission meeting.

Ayes: Bloom, Gasparian, Hubbard, Jones, Kreitz, McGough

Nays: Moss, Myers

Absent: Poggrund, Roberts, Steel

Motion passed.

INFORMATION ITEMS –

Worthy Community Master Plan – Dominguez reported staff has started working with members of the skate community for possible funding and design options. He said staff is waiting for Charter Section 612 “Measure C” determination from the city attorney’s office.

Moss asked if the vision for the Worthy Park Plan is towards a smaller skate park. Dominguez reported his dealing with the skate community included Worthy Park, the former Gun Range, and Edison Park, for three types of skate park options. Moss noted he was in favor of a smaller skate park area at Worthy Park.

Huntington Central Park Encyclopedia Lots – Dominguez reported that all but 53 of the encyclopedia lots are now owned by the city. He said more people are coming forward and that the Economic Development Real Property division is working with the opportunities.

Pier Buildings – Dominguez reported that staff is working with an architect on the design concepts for the permanent buildings on the pier. He noted the architect has come up with design options, basing concepts from the existing structures on the pier and surrounding area. He added the design concepts would be brought before the Design Review Board and City Council for final approval.

Central Park Sports Complex / Eighth Ball Field – Dominguez reported that Hanson Recycling has returned the site to its original condition, prior to Hanson moving on site. He said the next step is to construct the area per the previously approved plans, advising the plant establishment period would take some time before the field would be on-line.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION – None.

COMMISSION COMMITTEE REPORTS – Kreitz commented that some of the committees could use more representation and asked members to consider additional assignments.

Youth Sports Grant Committee – Moss reported the committee met to review the Youth Sports Grant Application for 2008/2009, noting the changes commission requested had been incorporated into the application process.

COMMISSION AND STAFF COMMENTS –

Commissioners and staff welcomed Commissioner Cathy McGough.

ITEMS DISTRIBUTED

Project Self-Sufficiency Newsletter for September and October 2008.
Council on Aging (COA) Bright Outlook for September and October 2008.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Community Services Commission regular meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Submitted by:

DAVID C. DOMINGUEZ
Secretary
Community Services Commission

By: Mary Loadsman