



(713)

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION**

Wednesday, January 13, 2010
6:00 p.m.
City of Huntington Beach
Civic Center – Council Chambers
2000 Main Street
Huntington Beach, CA 92648

Vice Chair Moss called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m., Tomaino led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Albert Gasparian; David Hubbard; Jay Kreitz (Late); Cathy McGough; Dan Moss; Allan Pogrund; Brian Rechsteiner; Nick Tomaino
MEMBERS ABSENT: John Myers (excused); Susie Jones (excused)
STAFF PRESENT: Jim B. Engle; Dave Dominguez; Luann Brunson; Rob Frizzelle; Janeen Laudenback; Mary Loadsman; Vickie Nuse

PRESENTATIONS –Youth Sports Recreation Coordinator, Rob Frizzelle, introduced League Managers Mimi Kaneko and Tim Ngo to present the Youth Sports awards for volleyball and flag football champions, and the Harry W. Montague good sportsmanship award, representing programs held at Edison Community Center, Murdy Community Center, and the City Gym. Frizzelle thanked the League Managers for their dedication and management of the volleyball and flag football teams, and thanked the commission, staff and community members for their ongoing support of expanding youth sports programs offered to the community.

After the Youth Sports Award presentation concluded, Vice-Chair Moss called for a break and turned the meeting over to Chair Kreitz.

MINUTES:

Moved by Tomaino, seconded by Moss to approve the October 14, 2009 Community Services Commission minutes.

Ayes: Hubbard; Kreitz; McGough; Moss; Tomaino
Absent: Jones; Myers
Abstain: Gasparian; Pogrund; Rechsteiner

Motion passed unanimously.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – none.

DIRECTOR'S ITEMS –

Engle thanked the commission for attending the ribbon cutting ceremony held at Pier Plaza for the new pier buildings and Visitors Kiosk. He also thanked the school district representatives for their assistance with SANDS distribution information.

PRESENTATIONS

Worthy Skate Park – Engle reported 15 years ago, Huntington Beach High School (HBHS) originally asked the city to assist in building a skate park at the school. He explained that last year, the Huntington Beach Union High School District (HBUHSD) demolished the skate park as part of their expansion project of the HBHS school stadium and supported the city building a skate park at Worthy Community Park. The HBUHSD offered to offset the loss of the skate park with the caveat that the new skate park be constructed within a three-year period. Engle added that as a result of the request from the school district, staff proceeded and moved forward with Commission and Council to modify the Worthy Community Park master plan, by conducting public input meetings on proposed uses for the former Pay-N-Play racquetball facility, including a skate park as one option. A new restroom facility was also part of the master plan. Both the skate park and restroom were approved by Commission at the August 13, 2008 meeting and subsequently approved by City Council on September 2, 2008. Engle introduced Brian Moore of Site Design, to give the presentation on the design process, noting that no action was being taken at the meeting.

Moore provided background on Site Design displaying the locations of skate parks within the United States they have designed, emphasizing the Etnies Skate Park in Lake Forest as a more recent, local skate park. He explained the design process, indicating that public input meetings and community workshops would be conducted during the design development stage, with data and design results posting to the Site Design secure website. Moore presented a “sample exhibit” for Worthy Community Park, explaining the entrance to the skate area could include a beginning skills area, followed by an intermediate skills area and ending with an advanced skills area. He noted aspects of design should provide “line of site” for security, proper park signage, and the need for community involvement to develop a design that enhances the park amenities and meets the needs of the community.

Engle added that when the original skate park was built at the high school, the youth in the community were brought on board to help with the design process. He commended Site Design for having such a well defined process, highlighting that having “new tools” such as 3-D modeling and interactive web capabilities, truly enables the community to take part in the park enhancement process.

Kreitz opened the public comment period noting that no action would be taken at meeting, that comments are the first step in the process.

Richard Connett, a 20 year resident of Huntington Beach, said it was good that things were moving forward with Worthy Community Park and supported having three levels for the skate area. He said the improvements would be beneficial for everyone.

Jason Ross, Assistant Principal at Huntington Beach High School, said that the High School District Superintendent's position is that a skate area should not be built next to the high school. He said a meeting with school representatives and Mr. Engle would take place to address safety concerns if a skate area was located by Huntington Beach High School. He said the high school was concerned that minor students should not be subjected to unwanted influences. He said Huntington Beach High School is taking back their portion of the park. He said the PTA voted to make a declaration against the park. He said he was not against skate boarders, but that a skate park should be built at a different location.

Jake Reuter, a Huntington Beach resident, said the skate park design should meet the needs of all types of skaters.

Billy Williams III, a Huntington Beach resident, said he was in favor of a skate park similar to the skate park in Costa Mesa.

Riley Mailman, a Huntington Beach resident, said he wanted to talk about why a skate park is beneficial and commended Site Design on doing a good job. He said he thought that having the ability for a skate park to make money is also an important factor.

Brendan LaBolle, a Huntington Beach resident, said he was glad to see that the community would be involved in the design effort for the skate park.

Chris Alsop, a Huntington Beach Resident who was born at Huntington Beach Hospital and involved with working with the youth in Huntington Beach, spoke in support of the skate park. He said Site Design does fantastic work and that he supports designing a skate area that is designed with the family and community in mind.

Adam Grant, a resident of Solano Beach, is a supporter of skate boarding and the benefits that children experience in skate boarding. He said "Surf City" should have a skate park and hoped the concerns of HBHS did not impact the project.

Rich Pariseau, a 40 year resident of Huntington Beach, said he was in favor of a skate park in Huntington Beach, but concerned about a skate area in a community park setting. He said he understood the neighbors were not in favor of a skate area at Worthy Park. He supported bocce ball as a design feature for Worthy Community Park.

Kasey Hayes, a resident of Huntington Beach, said she is not sure what the school witnessed at the former skate park, but that the school comments are a public issue not a skate park issue. She said developing Worthy Park can be a family environment and hoped that people would have an open mind. She said she agrees with the proposed plan.

Dustin Woodard, a resident of Dana Point, said he felt the skate park was important and attended the meeting to support the youth. He said he hoped that everyone would keep an open mind that a skate park is a good way to stimulate the economy and have a place for kids to go.

Ron Troxell, a resident of Huntington Beach, said he lived behind Worthy Park and was aware of littering and beer cans after high school events and softball games. He said he does not see any difference in having a skate park and that children love to skate. He added that the park is used by everyone, including city workers, ball players, and cheerleaders. He said it was unfair that the high school picked on skaters and that the park should be for everyone.

Todd Gan, a resident of Huntington Beach, said he lived across the street from Worthy Park and would love to see a skate park, however, was concerned about noise and traffic. He said the skate park should have restricted hours, commenting that another location may be better suited for a skate park.

Julian Scholl, a resident of Huntington Beach, said that designing a good skate park would bring good skaters and discourage mischief. He said having a good park is having good fun.

Kreitz closed the public comment period, and asked for commission questions and staff comments.

Engle expressed his disappointment in learning the school district had taken a different direction than what was previously understood. He explained that the school district owned 5/12ths and the city owned 7/12ths of Worthy Community Park. He noted that the location of the proposed skate park is on city property and that the master plan can move forward. He said staff would be meeting with district representatives before any public meetings and that he would continue to keep commission informed on the progress.

Gasparian asked what size the Costa Mesa skate park was in relation to the 10,000 square foot area intended for the skate area. Engle responded he thought the Costa Mesa skate park was around 15,000 square feet. He explained the intent of the project was to create a reasonable skate area for a community park.

Moss asked if the 10,000 square foot area in Worthy Park was viable space for a skate area. Engle confirmed saying the HBHS skate area was around 6,000 square feet.

Pogrund asked if there was any data available from the consultant on liability issues for skate parks of a comparable size, as well as what concerns the high school encountered with the HBHS skate park. Engle responded that there is protection on liability issues that all cities have for skate parks by utilizing proper signage and that HBHS concerns were already expressed by Vice Principal Ross during public comments.

Pogrund asked for clarification on the monies offered by the school district, how the \$75,000 figure was proposed. Engle advised that the district took board action to offer the monies to the city with the understanding the funds would be used within the three years. Engle added that the city would look to extend the deadline when they meet with the district in the coming weeks. He reiterated that he hoped that the city and district would continue in the spirit of cooperation they have enjoyed in the past, since ultimately the main goal is to help support opportunities for youth in the community.

Pogrund also commented that there appears to be concerns with the residents in close proximity to the park. Engle responded that at the previous public meetings, commission took the citizen concerns into consideration and advised that fencing, line of sight for public safety, and proper signage would be implemented into the project. He said the idea would be that the skate area would be fenced, that to use the park would be a privilege, and that any abuse would result in closure of the park for a short period of time. He said staff has surveyed other cities to research how they addressed concerns and concluded that "self policing" was an effective approach. Engle reiterated that the idea for the improvements at Worthy Park is to create an area for the community where families can enjoy the park, watch their kids play in the tot lot, the children skating, enjoy a picnic, or utilize the other park amenities. He explained that the improvements would include a new public restroom and that the consultant would conduct the community workshops to help address the design features.

Pogrund commended staff for their efforts on the project, their contact with the community through public meetings, the research with other cities, the selection of an extremely reputable consultant, and following direction from the City Council and Huntington Beach Union High School District. He asked if other sites for development of a skate park were considered. Engle responded that the school district and public sentiment supported a skate area at Worthy Park and that additionally, there is some consideration for a larger level skate park near the Sports Complex. He added that in order to build a large park near the Sports Complex, it would need to be funded through a sponsorship effort. Engle also explained that the city has smaller skate parks at Murdy and Oak View parks and that there are plans for a skate park at Edison Community Park. He added that the community supported the replacement of the skate park that was lost due to the high school expansion at the Worthy Community Park location.

Tomaino asked what type of supervision or hours of operation is envisioned for the skate area and what measures would be taken to address safety concerns. Engle responded that it would include the regular park hours in effect throughout the city, and that the self-policing method and design features are the tools planned for the park.

Hubbard noted that the City Council has approved this project moving forward. Engle confirmed that after City Council approved the master plan, staff moved forward with initiating the design process.

McGough said she was new to the commission and asked again what process was followed to get to this point. Engle responded that at the direction of City Council and with the school district support, staff was directed to investigate the option of including a skate area at the closed Pay-N-Play facility at Worthy Park. The city was able to resolve the lease issues with the former Play-N-Play concessionaire and the school district offered funds to help offset the city's expense to develop a skate area at Worthy Community Park. Staff then conducted public input meetings at Commission, with the end result being recommendation to City Council to approve the park amenities of a new restroom and skate area at Worthy Community Park.

McGough asked if there were any claims at the former HBHS skate park. Engle responded that he was unaware of any claims, as the skate park was on school property.

McGough asked what the cost-range would be to develop the project. Engle responded that to duplicate the HBHS skate area would be around \$600,000. McGough asked if this would be a Measure C item. Engle responded that staff was waiting for clarification from the attorney's office.

McGough said that she was aware of the problems regarding the skate area at HBHS. She said that the skate area had a reputation and noted that the high school and PTA were not in favor of having the skate area at Worthy Community Park. She commented that the HBHS skate area did not have a good history and that she was aware that the school had made calls to the Police Department and City for help dealing with the skate park issues. She explained that the schools' needs were not met and that the supervision of the park while on school property did not seem like a partnership. McGough said the plan looks nice and is effective, and that including a skate area is a community decision. Engle responded that City Council may opt to revisit any design recommendations, but recommended moving forward with the current direction.

McGough noted that the high school had different staff when HBHS requested the City build the original skate park at the high school, and expressed that developing a skate park by the campus may create a different set of problems. Engle commented that originally the high school deemed the skate park a success, but stated that their stance may have changed.

Rechsteiner asked for clarification of the design intent. He asked if the design would allow in-line skaters, BMX bicycles and skateboarders to utilize the facilities at the same time. Engle noted that all three types of uses would not be allowed at the same time and asked the consultant for additional response. Moore commented that the 10,000SF area was not conducive to allow all three types of activities.

Rechsteiner asked Moore about the presentation comment that the design could include a stage. Moore responded that it was only mentioned as a potential concept, that during the community workshops, ideas would be shared to develop the park amenities. He added that the public input and workshop process would allow the community to develop the design ideas, and that larger parks at other cities have asked to have a stage area in order to maximize use of the facilities. Moore explained that during the design process, the goal is to learn from the community how to develop the area for everyone, and to provide a family environment so unwanted elements are discouraged. He commented that site visibility for the police is a key design feature that will be included in the process. Engle added that as part of the process to date, the PD has been involved through the Design Assistance Team (DAT) reviewing the Worthy Community Park master plan, and has not expressed any issue with site visibility. He noted that the PD would continue to be involved in the design process along with community members.

Rechsteiner concluded his comments noting that it is unfortunate that a few people disrespecting public property can spoil it for good people.

Kreitz thanked the Commissioners for their questions and comments. He added his disappointment that the school district is reversing their position. He noted that hopefully people's concerns will be addressed through the design and planning process. He reiterated that no action would be taken by commission regarding the skate park design.

Chair Kreitz closed the public comment session.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS -

Bartlett Park – Engle reported at the October 2009 commission meeting, the consultant prepared a detailed presentation with bubble diagrams for potential park enhancements and site constraints, for public and commission input. He explained that the public meeting notification for tonight's meeting was published in the newspaper, sent to persons requesting updated information, posted on the city website as part of the meeting agenda, sent to interested parties, and notifications were mailed to businesses and residents within 1,000 feet of the park boundary. He said that staff and the consultant had worked together to include public comments and to prepare a master plan for Bartlett Park. He introduced Vickie Nuse, Assistant Project Manager, to provide a presentation on the proposed master plan.

Nuse explained that Bartlett Park included 28-acres of undeveloped property with part of the park used as a water retention basin by the county. She added that some areas had archeological and environmental constraints, and proceeded to show pictures of Bartlett Park in its current state. She noted the areas that had existing paths, stating that the master plan included enhancement to the path areas and removal of non-native plants with enhanced planting for non-sensitive areas. Nuse explained that the overall site design would include loop trails within the park boundary and provide options for

park access, walking, and viewing of the natural environment. She presented fencing options that would replace the current chain link fence along Coldwater Lane, and options for enhancing the trail system and protecting sensitive areas. She also presented ideas for potential structures and play areas, as well as parking and park entrance considerations.

Engle added that staff brought the preliminary plan to the Development Assistance Team (DAT), which includes representation from the Police Department, Public Works, Planning and Administration. He added that any future plans would include input from the DAT, as well as any traffic studies that would need to be performed as part of the entitlement process. He indicated that any park development would have to be performed in phases, and that security issues and sensitive habitat issues would be addressed along with funding and phasing options. Engle reported the agreement with the County is up for negotiation, and that staff would be looking at issues such as landscape and maintenance. He said staff would also work with the Huntington Beach Tree Society to see what native planting and support could be obtained as the phasing occurs.

Michael Cohen, has lived by Bartlett Park for 29 years and enjoys walking his dog in the park every day. He asked to have trash cans available in the park and urged Commission not to develop the park, but leave the park in its natural state. He asked to have routes provided so the park could be patrolled better.

Jeff Newell, has lived by Bartlett Park for 23 years and has witnessed things happening in the park during the day and at night, and asked to have the plan address his concerns. He asked if PD had been brought into the planning process and indicated that the PD would not go into the park at night. He asked to have adequate access to address park concerns and to have the plan address privacy concerns for homeowners on Coldwater.

Susan Young, has lived by Bartlett Park for 32 years, and has listened to all of the proposals presented during this time. She enjoys walking her dog in the park commenting that it is beautiful place. She expressed her concern about vagrants and asked to have trash cans placed in the park and PD patrol access.

John Marcin, a resident living near Bartlett Park, thanked Commission for going through the process of getting a plan together that enhances the park, is user friendly and invites people to enjoy the natural environment. He expressed concern if there would be funding available to continue with ongoing maintenance for the park and recommended that Commission approve the plan as presented.

Dick Anderson, a resident living by Bartlett Park since 1980, said it was important to put the property into perspective. He said that neighborhood residents and businesses came to the meetings to talk about their concerns 23 months ago. He said he was pleased with the plan and progress made to date. He said he has never been involved with the public process and is proud with how much has been accomplished, and complimented Mr. Engle for working together with staff, residents and businesses for

the evolution of the park. He said the plan presented is inspiring and draws people into the park.

Emily Keller, a resident living by Bartlett Park since 1976, said she was impressed with the plan and understood that part of the park served as a flood basin. She said it was a shame that the city wasn't able to help with the upkeep on different areas of the park and hoped that maintenance would not be an issue in the future.

Rudof Goetz, a resident living by Bartlett Park for 23 years, said he was grateful that the park plans have gotten to this point. He said it was a beautiful property and that the master plan does the area justice. He mentioned that security is an important issue and asked that the plan include appropriate lighting. He thanked Commission for listening to all of the concerns and incorporating the information into the master plan. He said he looked forward to seeing the project come to fruition.

Suzanne Messina, a resident living by Bartlett Park for 10 years, says she walks in the park and she sees many of her neighbors, as well as undesirable activities. She commented that the park is a beautiful place and the plan is good, but it does not provide for quiet enjoyment and privacy. She asked that a buffer zone be considered and asked for more trees along Coldwater. She asked that park maintenance be continued, and to have the park developed for residents and not businesses.

Stan Levasheff, a resident living by Bartlett Park for 30 years, commented that currently there is no PD access to the park, and that a chain link fence surrounds the park with only a few access points. He commented that the park looks like a jungle and no one can see into the park. He is in favor of an access road for PD so that patrol and enforcement of curfew can take place.

Eric Vinje, a resident living near Bartlett Park, noted that the general plan is great. He commented that preservation of the great nature of the park is most important versus developing the park, and the enhancements further the opportunity for everyone to enjoy the park. He asked the commission to think hard on the character of the fence and entrances. He would like to see PD access to the park to help with the human transient issues. He noted there was no lighting of the park for visibility at night and said security is an important feature to focus on.

David Hamada, a resident living by Bartlett Park for 35 years, expressed concern about the proposed parking lot on Yorktown. He commented that a lot of traffic exists on Yorktown from Beach Boulevard and asked that a traffic study be conducted before a parking lot at Yorktown is approved. He said he was glad that the park enhancements are being proposed and is happy that the city has decided to do something. He asked that sufficient lighting be included and doggie bags be made available as part of the improvement plan.

Selwyn Brent, a resident living by Bartlett Park, expressed safety concerns having seen coyotes in the park area. He asked that no parking on Coldwater be included in the plan. He said people of the development are responsible for the streets in the area and expressed that he didn't want cars parking on streets the residents were responsible for. He asked if residents would be able to call and have cars towed.

Sue Arnold, has lived by Bartlett Park for 30 years, and has been waiting to see the park developed. She asked to have the park remain in as natural state as possible, but would also like to have proper irrigation for any planting done at the park so the trees and landscaping would survive. She noted that homeless people have been living in the park for years and asked that access for ATV (All Terrain Vehicles) for PD be included in the plan. She asked everyone to keep up the good work.

Hubbard asked about the park curfew. Engle responded that the standard park curfew is 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. Engle explained that the design attempts to address vagrancy concerns expressed by citizens and the PD. He added that ideally, the PD requested three access points to the park with surveillance capabilities that did not require them to leave their vehicle.

Hubbard asked about the feasibility of putting trash containers in the park. Engle responded he would talk with Public Works, and that the issue was not getting trash containers, but the cost to have trash removed. Hubbard asked Engle to see if it is something that staff could negotiate with Rainbow Disposal.

Rechsteiner noted some of the issues with the park; homeless inhabitants, maintaining a natural environment, park access for surveillance, trash issues and environmental concerns. He asked if there were still concerns about the bicycle jump areas and Engle responded that periodically Public Works would bulldoze the jumps as part of park maintenance activities.

Rechsteiner asked how much funding would be required to implement the master plan with Engle responding that \$4 to \$5 million would be required. Engle reiterated the idea would be to complete any park improvements in phases so environmental concerns could be addressed, and development to occur with available funding. He said that staff would pursue all types of funding options, including recycling grants for signage and fencing.

Rechsteiner asked if the retention basin would be developed into a lake. Engle explained that the area in question is used for flood control and that it is a seasonal wet area.

Moss offered a suggestion that park surveillance be done on ATV's similar to those used by Marine Safety Officers. He said he appreciated staff's work to address all of the concerns and create an improvement plan that Council could approve.

Pogrund noted that staff recognizes the range of issues, and has an action plan and response to citizen concerns.

Tomaino commented that he is seeing the potential for the park on what can be done, and is impressed with the project.

Kreitz asked for any staff input on the privacy concerns. Engle said the issue of privacy at the condominium could be addressed with planting and that further investigation would have to be completed before planting any large trees on the perimeter.

Motion:

Moved by Moss, seconded by Pogrund to recommend to City Council approval of the Bartlett Park Master Plan as presented.

Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS –

Pier Buildings & Visitors Kiosk – Dominguez reported there was a great turn-out for the Pier Building & Visitors Kiosk dedication and that the pier buildings were nearing completion. He said the concessionaires would begin tenant improvements but, no date had been set for opening to the public.

Blufftop Park Restrooms – Dominguez reported the majority of the work for the ramp at Goldenwest Street and 22nd Street has been completed. He noted that some unforeseen conditions that impact the project budget have occurred and, as a result, there may be an impact how many restroom facilities would be included in the overall project. He said he would keep commission informed on any progress.

Murdy Community Park Playground Equipment – Dominguez reported that the city was successful in obtaining a grant to provide playground equipment and make improvements at Murdy Community Center. He directed Commission to the photographs included in the packets.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION – none.

COMMISSION COMMITTEE REPORTS –

Huntington Central Park Equestrian Center – McGough commented she was unable to attend the meeting. Dominguez noted the draft minutes were included in the packet and that the next meeting would be held January 27, 2010.

Youth Sports Grant Committee – Moss reported the committee received applications from 16 people representing 18 organizations for the Youth Sports Grants. He added that the committee received a request for an extension and that additional information was available in the meeting summaries.

COMMISSION AND STAFF COMMENTS –

Gasparian commented the presentation for the Worthy Community Park skate park design looked great and hoped the school district concerns would be addressed.

Moss commented that he was disappointed to learn the school districts' current position, adding that he hoped they would respect what the staff, Commission and City Council do. He noted that staff pursued the appropriate direction with the selection of Site Design for the design process.

Tomaino thanked Commission and staff for their work on helping to support improvements at Bartlett Park.

Rechsteiner noted he was able to make the ribbon cutting ceremony at Pier Plaza and that the event was well attended. He said the buildings look great, noting staff did a great job on the projects.

ITEMS DISTRIBUTED

Council on Aging Newsletter, November 2009, December 2009, January 2010.
Project Self Sufficiency 4th Quarter Newsletter
Murdy Community Park Photographs

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Community Services Commission regular meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Submitted by:

David C. Dominguez
Secretary
Community Services Commission

By: Mary Loadsman, Recording Secretary