



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMISSION

MINUTES

November 3, 2004

Burgess Recreation Center
700 Alma Street, Menlo Park

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Mary Kenney at 7:25 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Mary Kenney, Frank Carney, Dan Kocher, Doug Scott

Commissioners Absent: Kevin McCarthy, Rick Stevens, Bob Swezey

Staff present: Dianne Dryer, Environmental Programs Coordinator
Juan Alvarez, City Arborist
Justin Murphy, Development Services Manager

Public present: Ted & Linda Schlein, Pat Bredehoft, Roger Witte, Michael Young, Robin Smith, Chris MacIntosh, Ann Moser

A. PUBLIC COMMENTS: none

B. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dianne Dryer made announcements: a Budget Briefing meeting for Commissioners with the City Manager on Nov. 15th, Family Creek Day, a free event on Nov. 14th to be conducted by the San Francisquito Watershed Council to educate families about the Creek, and a Performance Hearing regarding BFI, Inc. with the South Bayside Waste Management Authority on Nov. 10th. She also reminded everyone about two upcoming environmental awards programs: Acterra Business Environmental Awards and Sustainable San Mateo County Awards. Nominations are due for both programs on November 29th.

Frank Carney reported on a newspaper article about a large oak tree in East Palo Alto that had to be removed because it had become hazardous. The tree had not been properly maintained. Frank noted that our heritage tree ordinance raises awareness that property owners should care for their trees properly.

C. BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1. Approval of Minutes of October 6, 2004:** Minutes amended to reflect change in name from Bob Swezey to Dan Kocher in second paragraph under Reports and Announcements and change in maker of motion in agenda item C2 from Dan Kocher to Bob Swezey. Approved as amended (DS/DK, unanimous).

2. Appeal of Denial of two Heritage Tree removal permits at 772 Cotton Street:

Dianne Dryer summarized the reasons for the City's denial of permits to remove two coast live oaks along the edge of the property. The owners, Ted and Linda Schlein, have designed a new home for the property and the trees are close to or in the proposed driveway. Staff suggested that the Schleins reduce the width of the landscape strip next to the proposed driveway to save the trees. Ted Schlein stated that the location of the trees between his and his neighbor's driveways was not optimal. He stated that he would plant large replacement trees if allowed to remove the trees in question. Arborist Michael Young stated that the trees will soon grow too large for the location near the proposed driveway and home. He also noted the likely structural problems in the future due to weak attachments on co-dominant stems. Pat Bredehoft and Roger Witte, neighbors adjacent to the trees, stated that they would like the trees to be removed because they are messy. Commissioners discussed the unfortunate location of the trees between the two driveways and the likelihood of the trees interfering with the house in the future. A motion was made (DS/DK) to overturn the denial of the permits and it was approved unanimously.

3. Bayfront Park Development Update

Dianne Dryer summarized the memo from the Director of Community Services to the Parks and Recreation Commission, which describes a proposal being discussed for possible development of a portion of Bayfront Park. The proposal includes four lighted baseball fields, a multi-purpose pavilion, four lighted soccer fields, a golf facility, administration facilities, parking and roads. The memo lists tasks for Phase One (pre-development) over the next six months including studies, cost estimates, schematic plans and meetings with permitting agencies, the Parks and Recreation Commission, City Council and staff. Three speakers in attendance made comments to the Commission. Robin Smith, with Sequoia Audubon Society, presented copies of the "Breeding Bird Atlas for San Mateo County" to the Commissioners. She noted that the lowland areas of Bayfront Park are an important area for grassland bird breeding and migrating. She said that the lighting would negatively impact the birds. Chris MacIntosh stated that the Park is the last undeveloped area in Menlo Park and it is an important piece of contiguous open space along the Bay. She also noted that the proposed sports activities with the presence of food and beverages could increase the number of vectors that would disrupt the ecology of the area. Ann Moser stated that four or five years ago the City Council said that Bayfront Park would not be developed. She said the Park is a unique expanse of open space in the Menlo Park community. She thought that access for numerous children going to athletic activities across Marsh Road and the freeway would be problematic.

4. Commission Priority Setting for 2005: postponed to next meeting.

5. Proposal to Change Commission Meeting Time: postponed to next meeting.