

MINUTES



**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 24, 2003
Palo Alto City Hall
Council Conference Room
250 Hamilton Avenue**

Commissioners Present: William Garvey, Ellie Gioumousis, Jennifer Hagan, Edie Keating and Judith Steiner

Commissioners Absent: Lynn Torin

Others Present: Vic Ojakian

Staff Present: Greg Betts, Dawn Calvert, Patrick Larkin, Khash Alae, Virginia Gibbons

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order by Bill Garvey at 7:10 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Conducted by Virginia Gibbons.

AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:

1. Item #6: Conceptual Discussion of Bay to Ridge Trail Route changed to Item #3.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None

BUSINESS:

1. **Approval of Draft Minutes of May 27, 2003 meeting.** Minutes approved with one change to Page 3.
2. **Special Events Update.** Shia Geminder gave a brief update on the upcoming 22nd Annual Chili-Cook Off scheduled for July 4, 2003. There are 23 teams registered to cook approximately 276 gallons of chili. Eight vendors, including Thai Stick, Red Box Culinary, The Old Pro's, Papa's Kettle Corn and Compadre's Margaritas, will provide food and drink. This year the Park and Recreation Foundation will have a booth offering hot dogs and Red Tail Ale to raise funds. Judging will be held from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

3. **Conceptual Discussion of Bay to Ridge Trail Route.** Greg Betts presented the proposed route of the Bay-to-Ridge pedestrian trail. Concentrating on the proposed route that would run from the Baylands Nature Preserve heading toward the foothills through Palo Alto neighborhoods, Greg requested the Commission's comments and feedback.

The following criteria was used to determine the proposed route:

- Eventually connect the Lucy Evans Baylands Nature Interpretive Center, Arastradero Preserve Gateway Facility, Foothills Park Interpretive Center and the Daniel's Nature Center at Skyline Open Space Preserve to that trail users can learn about the habitats they are hiking through.
- Connect green spaces through town (parks and school fields) allowing hikers to rest and relax in landscaped spaces.
- Provide a convenient, central and direct connection between urban neighborhoods and regional trails.
- Take advantage of existing off-road paths, trails and sidewalks wherever possible to expedite the establishment of the trail.
- Provide access for both pedestrians and bikes between the Baylands and the Arastradero Preserve. At the Arastradero Preserve the route would branch into two separate trails: a pedestrian route that would connect through Foothills Park and Los Trancos Open Space Preserve, and a future bicycle route that would travel along the De Anza Trail to Alpine Road and then along Alpine Road (in San Mateo County) to Skyline Boulevard.
- Provide a safe and beautiful recreational experience, avoiding heavy arterials of vehicle traffic wherever possible.

The proposed route of the trail would follow multi-use (pedestrian/bike) off road paths in the Baylands to the Pedestrian Highway 101 over-crossing and then onto neighborhood streets, taking advantage of existing sidewalks and safe crosswalks. North California Avenue is suggested because of its beautiful tree canopy, broad sidewalks and proximity to existing bicycle trails. The trail would connect to Jordan Middle School fields and on to Bowden Park at Alma Street. A pedestrian under-crossing would take hikers from Bowden Park, along Park Boulevard to Peers Park and from there, to unpaved trails along Stanford Avenue to Junipero Serra Boulevard.

In order for the proposed trail route to be further investigated, it will be necessary to meet with neighborhood groups to determine if the route is compatible with recreation and transportation strategies in each neighborhood. There are five different neighborhood associations affected by the proposed trail.

Commissioner Hagan suggested that a sub-committee be appointed to attend neighborhood association meetings over the next year to seek input on the design and

trail route. Commissioners Hagan, Keating, Steiner and Gioumouis volunteered to work on the sub-committee.

A question and answer session ensued with the Commission asking a variety of questions regarding trail development, trail use, parking, and non-resident use of Foothills Park. Many of the questions could not be answered at this time. Stanford has not made a final decision regarding the S1 route and the present discussion is only regarding the trail from the Baylands to Juniperio Serra.

4. **Aquatics Program Presentation.** Dawn Calvert introduced Khash Alae, Aquatics Coordinator, who gave a presentation on the Aquatics Program. Khash updated the Commission on schedules, maintenance issues, classes, programming, and the Maters and Swim Clubs' use of the pool. It was noted that staff recently cleaned out the old Snack Shack and there has been discussion of installing vending machines.

Commissioner Garvey asked if staff had reviewed the non-residents use of the pool on hot days, and if this was keeping residents out of the facility. This issue has not been investigated. Dawn Calvert showed the Commission a local magazine article that detailed the three best pools in the Bay Area, Rinconada being one of the three and explained that cutting down on non-resident use would impact revenues. Commissioner Garvey suggested that when residents can't use a facility due to over-crowding, it is time to look at setting limits.

5. **Final Budget FY'03-04 Update.** Dawn Calvert gave the Commission a brief update on the budget. City Council approved the Parks and Recreation budget and commended the staff on their hard work. There has been discussion of eliminating some classes and reducing MPCC hours by ½, with Stern assuming the overflow. Staff is committed to reviewing Recreation and making adjustments as required.
6. **Athletic Fields Projects Update.** Dawn asked Bill Garvey to tell the Commission about the Council meeting where Bill Garvey and Edie Keating spoke in favor of Stanford's proposal, which is considered a "big win" for the City. The capital improvement plan will need to be amended to include astroturf and to move the Mayfield site up while Cubberley is moved down. The next step is the completion of an EIR, which should take about six months.

Commissioner Garvey brought up the subject of City Council's request for the Park and Recreation Commission to review the ordinance authorizing the exchange of minor portions of park land for contiguous lands in order to Implement Article 8 of the Palo Alto City Charter.

Vic Ojakian asked Herb Borock to address the Commission on his interpretation of the Council's request. Herb Borock reiterated the Council's request for the Parks and Recreation Commission to review and make recommendations on the ordinance.

APPROVED

The Commission will meet with the City Attorney to review the ordinance and make recommendations to Council.

AGENDA FOR JULY 22, 2003 MEETING

1. Review of Ordinance Authorizing the Exchange of Minor Portions of Park Land for Contiguous Lands in Order to Implement Article 8 of the Palo Alto City Charter - Action Item – Ariel Calonne (2 hr.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Ann Warner Cribbs has been appointed as the new Parks and Recreation Commissioner.
2. Commissioners were asked to read a copy of a letter regarding the Terman Tennis Court Abuses.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

