MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
January 28, 2020
CITY HALL
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, California

Commissioners Present:  Anne Cribbs, Jeff Greenfield, Jeff LaMere, Ryan McCauley, David Moss, Jackie Olson, and Keith Reckdahl

Commissioners Absent:  None

Others Present:   Council Member Kou

Staff Present:  Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin

I.  ROLL CALL

Vice Chair Greenfield:  I want to welcome a couple of new faces to the dais.  First, Commissioner Olson is joining us.  We've had three consecutive years with the same Commission members, so we welcome some new blood on the Commission.  I've met with you personally and really am impressed and look forward to you contributing to our Commission and our community.  Thank you.  Also, our new staff liaison this year will be Council Member Kou.  I've known you for many years and look forward to the guidance and passion that you can offer the Commission and welcome you to join us as often as you're able to.

Council Member Kou:  Thank you.  I'm very excited.

Vice Chair Greenfield:  Also, I'd be remiss not to say one more word of thanks for former Chair Don McDougall, who has moved on.  We'll miss his guidance and his passion for parks and recreation and everything therein contained.  I hope we can do him justice this year in continuing his work and keeping it going.  Thank you.

II.  AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, DELETIONS

Vice Chair Greenfield:  Are there any comments, changes or requests, deletions regarding the agenda?  If not, then next up is Oral Communications.
III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Vice Chair Greenfield: Do we have any speaker cards from the public to comment on items not on the agenda? First speaker will be Shani Kleinhaus followed by Mark Weiss.

Shani Kleinhaus: Good evening. I'm Shani Kleinhaus with the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society and a resident of Palo Alto. I'm going to be a bit of a broken record this evening. I want to talk about native plants and pollinator gardens and pollinator pathways in the City. Everyone of your items has something to do with that. I've been working through Audubon to look at how to enhance habitat for birds in the urban areas. We've worked with Google a lot. We've worked with Facebook on the roof. If anybody wants to visit, let me know. We can take you there. What we learn is that it's really, really important to start moving away from planting—even if it's a species that is easy to maintain and doesn't require a lot of water, if it's not native, it doesn't provide the ecological services that the wildlife, starting with the bugs and ending with the birds, need. I would like to speak to you, but I know you have a presentation about some of the wonderful gardens that we already have. I think every park should have them. Every place where you have some kind of corridor, whether it's a street or a creek, should be enhanced with native plants because that's how you can create that. It's actually in the Parks Master Plan. I know because I worked on that when I was part of that task force. I'll come back and talk about some of those in more detail. One other thing I wanted to let you know is on the 12th of March there will be a symposium in Mountain View about green streets, and their view of green streets is inclusive of ecological infrastructure. It's not only looking at how do we get people to move through, cars to move through, bicycles, pedestrians, but it's also looking at how do the birds and the bugs move through and how does water infrastructure fit in and how the underground system fits in. They're trying to have a very, very comprehensive view. I will send something to Daren, and he can distribute it to you. I hope you actually take part in that symposium. The City of Palo Alto is supporting it. Just so you know. Thank you.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Mark Weiss.

Mark Weiss: Good evening, Board Members, Commissioners. My name is Mark Weiss. I actually have two things to talk about in three minutes. If I don't get to both of them or all the points, I'll send a letter to Council or to you all. I seem to have two threads going with various Commissioners or groups of Commissioners. One is about basketball, and one is about music. I was going to talk about music in my three minutes, but there were some emergent things this week with basketball. The Palo Alto Historical Association had a presentation this weekend with Dave Newhouse, former sportswriter who grew up in Menlo Park. It wasn't on topic of his event, but a famous Palo Alto basketball player named Jim Loscutoff, who was a world champion for the Boston Celtics and Paly Class of '48. He would be turning 90 years old next week, February 4th. I thought we should remember
him. I actually had proposed years ago when Yiaway Yeh was the Mayor—he actually discussed this with Ron Wyden, another famous Palo Alto basketball player from Paly High, who is a U.S. Senator. The idea is something to do with naming the basketball courts of our parks in honor of famous Palo Alto basketball players. At the time in 2011, it had to do with the renovations of Seale Park, the former Stockton Park, the former De Anza School yard. There's an article you can find, I wrote in 2011, on my blog called Plastic Alto, which is a jazz reference. It was called the Lockhart Loo Proposal. It's a little bit off topic, but it did generate some of the same ideas. Kent Lockhart was a famous basketball player from Palo Alto. They used to say that there were three Ls who were the top players, Kent Lockhart, Jeremy Lin, and Jim Loscutoff. Jeremy Lin has risen above them. I'd like to maybe talk about that sometime. I'm really here to talk about music in that I've been running a concert series at Mitchell Park Community Center in the relatively new building, celebrating its fifth anniversary. The people of Palo Alto authorized a $41 million bond initiative a few years back, if you recall. As a private company called Earth Weiss Productions, I've produced ten events at Mitchell Park, and I have about another ten on sale right now. It's my idea of a—it's not quite a public-private partnership. As a private citizen, I'd just like to leverage our public support for the arts. I had been a consultant years ago to some of the music in the park events, for example Mitchell Park bowl is a good idea for doing events. We still do a little bit. I think it's less than we did a few years ago with the Twilight Series and the Cogswell Plaza Brown Bag Series. It's not the exact purview of this department. It's almost more of an Arts Commission topic, but at least one Commissioner said it was of interest to him. The general topic of how can we use our parks to cross-pollinate, if it were, with the arts community. By the way, I'm going to stay to hear about Juanita Salisbury. I think she's doing a great job. Good luck this year, Commissioners. Thank you for your service, and Council Member. I look forward to talking with you all about either basketball or music. Thanks.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. We'll move on to the next item, which is the Department Report.

IV. DEPARTMENT REPORT

Daren Anderson: Good evening. Daren Anderson with Community Services Department. I just would like to reiterate that warm welcome to our new council liaison, Council Member Lydia Kou. Thanks so much for being here. To our new Parks and Recreation Commissioner, Jackie Olson, we're very glad to have you. If there's anything I can do to support either of you and your roles here, please let me know. Staff strives to support and provide good service to this Commission. I wanted to let you know about a community meeting coming up at Ramos Park. It's scheduled for tomorrow evening from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Cubberley Community Center, Room A-6. I wanted to let you know about a structure at the Baylands called the tide gate. This structure was built in 1956, and its function was to separate the Bay water from this flood basin area because water was
backing up. When high tides met heavy rainfalls, it would flood certain portions. It did in 1955, and they built this structure. The structure is near the end of its life now, and Santa Clara Valley Water District is responsible for replacing it. They've been thinking about the design and working on a capital project to replace it. It's coming soon. They're working on, I think, the 30-percent design now. I explained to them in a recent meeting that this would have to come to the Parks and Recreation Commission. It would need a Park Improvement Ordinance, which is required when you make a substantive change in a park or preserve. They understand that. They'll be coming soon to explain more details about it. The next step I think they're planning is a community meeting in March 2020. I'll share that with the Commission and, of course, our other Baylands stakeholders as soon as I get it. It'll be noticed by the Water District. I imagine shortly thereafter they'd be coming to the Commission to discuss it, explain it in more detail and collect your feedback. Shortly after that, I assume it would be a request for your recommendation on a Park Improvement Ordinance that would go to Council for their approval.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Can I ask for a clarification?

Mr. Anderson: Sure.

Commissioner Reckdahl: What was flooding? Parts of the Baylands or …

Mr. Anderson: This is 1955 that the flooding happened. The high tides came in with the rain, and it flooded areas of the residences, not the Baylands itself but … The confluence of three creeks go into this flood basin, a 622-acre flood basin. You have Matadero, Barron, and Adobe that all come into this same basin. At the time, there was nothing to stop the Bay water from coming in as well. As you had that high tide and heavy rainfall, there was no place for the rain to go.

Commissioner Reckdahl: This is just past Byxbee?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yes, that's correct. When we come back, I'll have a full map, and I can walk you through all of it. The Water District will as well. I just wanted to apprise you it's coming. The Pedestrian Bicycle Bridge across 101 project started on January 14. That was the notice to proceed. I don't believe you'll see any construction activity just yet, but it'll be coming soon. Right now, they're working on the behind-the-scenes preparation, and that'll go through July 2021 for that project. The Council Retreat is scheduled for Saturday, February 1, 9:00 a.m. in the El Palo Alto Room at Mitchell Park Community Center. Each year, the City Council reviews its priorities for the year at its annual Council Retreat. A Council priority is defined as a topic that's going to receive significant attention during that year, and typically priorities have a three-year time limit. Although, certain priorities continue beyond that time period.

Commissioner Moss: When is that?
Mr. Anderson: That is Saturday, February 1st, at 9:00 a.m. at Mitchell Park Community Center in the El Palo Alto Room. I wanted to apprise everyone that the 24th annual Palo Alto Mayor's Tree Planting and Canopy Awards Ceremony is coming up. This is Thursday, January 30th, at 5:15 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This is also at the Mitchell Park Community Center. Each year, Canopy and friends host a party in honor of the Palo Alto new Mayor to kick off the new year, and they plant a tree as well. Everyone's invited. You can RSVP or go online at info@canopy.org to learn more about that. There was an email that came out a little earlier from my colleague, Catherine Bourquin, notifying the Commission that the City Clerk's Office and the City Attorney's Office are working on setting up a Brown Act training. That'll be coming soon. Catherine's email also had information on the Brown Act, good reminders that we're all obliged to follow. Also, your PRC handbook has more information on that as well. That concludes the Department Report.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you.

V. BUSINESS

1. Election of New Chair and Vice Chair.

Vice Chair Greenfield: The first order of business is to elect a new Chair and Vice Chair. Normally, the previous Chair would be reviewing the Chairperson's role, and staff would be commenting on the procedures for electing the Chair. As the Vice Chair, I will give a quick overview of the Chair's role. The primary role is presiding at meetings and being in charge of applying the rules of conduct of the meeting. The Chair shall call or cancel meetings, coordinate the setting of the agenda with the staff liaison, ensure timely start and end of meetings, work to keep agenda items moving, ensure that public testimony is received but not allowed to disrupt the meeting, and set an acceptable time limit for public input if necessary. The Chair should clarify ideas as they are discussed and repeat motions made in order that all members understand the motion they'll be voting on, responsible for ensuring that actions are properly moved, seconded, and voted upon, and work to see that the Commission maintains focus on the issues before them and doesn't discuss or act upon items not listed on the agenda as prohibited by the Brown Act. The Chair serves as a spokesman for the Commission, representing the views and opinions of the Commission as a whole when speaking on its behalf. The time commitment in general can be similar to other Commission roles, depending on how active Commissioners may be with the ad hoc committees. Certainly some of the ad hoc committees get very deep in the time commitment and are extensive roles similar in commitment to the Chair and/or Vice Chair. Daren, would you like to give us an overview on the procedure?

Mr. Anderson: Yes. Thank you. The protocol for the election of the new Chair and Vice Chair. These are both one-year terms. The process is that the Chair would open the floor to nominations for the Chair position. Commissioners would nominate one Commissioner
at a time, and the person nominated must be present. A Commissioner may enter their own
name in nomination. The person offering the nomination can explain why they've
nominated that person, why they feel they'd be appropriate for the position. The Chair will
ask the nominated person if they're willing to accept the nomination. The Commission
would continue to nominate additional candidates, and with each nomination the Chair
again asks the person if they're willing to accept the nomination. When there are no further
nominations from the floor, the Chair will ask for a motion to close nominations. Staff's
secretary will distribute a single paper ballot to each Commissioner. The names of the
nominees are repeated by the staff secretary in the order in which they were nominated.
Each Commissioner writes in one name, the person they wish to vote for, and returns that
completed ballot to the staff secretary. Staff's secretary will count the votes and read them
out loud. The elected Chair assumes responsibility for chairing the remaining portion of
the meeting. We'll repeat that same process for the Vice Chair.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Does anyone have any questions? If not, then I'll open
the floor for nominations for Chairman.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I'd like to nominate Jeff Greenfield for Chair.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Would you like to speak to the nomination?

Commissioner Reckdahl: You've been Vice Chair for two years. I think you've done well.
You've trained under Don, and it's time for you to move up.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. I accept the nomination. Are there any other
nominations?

Commissioner Cribbs: Could I speak to support the nomination at this point?

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yes.

Commissioner Cribbs: I agree with Commissioner Reckdahl. You've served well as the
Vice Chair. I know you're certainly committed to Palo Alto and to the community, and
you spend a ton of time on a lot of issues. I've been very impressed with that. I believe
you will serve the whole Commission and present the views of the Commission to other
people as you serve as the face of the Parks and Recreation Commission. I would certainly
support the motion.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you for your kind words. A last call for additional
nominations. I would ask for a motion to close nominations.

Motion to close nominations

Commissioner Reckdahl: I so move.
Vice Chair Greenfield: Second?

Commissioner Moss: Second.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I guess the staff secretary should—do you have any further instructions? Do you need to read the names of the people nominated?

Catherine Bourquin: (inaudible)

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you.

Ms. Bourquin: One for Greenfield from Commissioner Olson. One for Greenfield from LaMere. One from McCauley for Greenfield. One from Commissioner Greenfield for Greenfield. One from Commissioner Reckdahl for Greenfield. One from Commissioner Cribbs for Greenfield. One from Commissioner Moss for Greenfield. Seven for Commissioner Greenfield.

**Commissioner Greenfield elected unanimously as Chair.**

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. I know this is what we were instructed to do, but it seems like there must be a more efficient approach. I appreciate your confidence and look forward to serving the community and the Commission and being a conduit for all the issues that we'd like to discuss. I'm passionate about this work and look forward to working with you. It's really a team effort. I think we've also prided ourselves as being a very flat Commission and really spreading out the work and the credit to all the members. I look forward to continuing working with all of you in a similar vein. We'll now open the nominations for the Vice Chair after I review the roles of the Vice Chair. The general role of the Vice Chair is to assist the Chairperson in responsibilities serving the Commission. This includes serving as the acting Chair when the Chair is not available, whether that be at regular Parks and Recreation Commission meetings or other community events. Also assisting with other tasks as requested by the Chair. In the past, this has included working with staff and the Chair on planning meeting agendas and other matters. This is a practice that I would certainly like to continue as the Chair. Also, providing guidance to the Chair and the Commission as needed, which may also include sitting next to the Chair during meetings and discretely bumping elbows and offering guidance or helping keep me on track as needed. Are there any questions regarding the role of Vice Chair? With that, I'll open the floor to nominations for Vice Chair.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I hope she's interested. I'd like to nominate Anne Cribbs. She's been on the Commission for quite a while. You're well thought of on the Commission and the community. I think you'd be a real asset, and I hope that we can do some arm-twisting here.
Commissioner Cribbs: Thank you very much. However, I would like to put in a nomination for another person on the Commission. What do we do?

Chair Greenfield: The first order is do you accept the nomination?

Commissioner Cribbs: I did do that.

Chair Greenfield: You have accepted the nomination?

Commissioner Cribbs: Yes, I did.

Chair Greenfield: The floor's still open for additional nominations.

Commissioner Cribbs: I would like to nominate Commissioner McCauley. I have worked with him on several committees, and he has been always just very thoughtful, very inclusive. I think he has a great future in Palo Alto. He always appreciates all the sides of the issues and makes people feel like they're being listened to. I think he would be a great Vice Chair.

Chair Greenfield: Commissioner McCauley, do you accept the nomination?

Commissioner McCauley: That's very kind of you to say, Anne. Thank you.

Commissioner Cribbs: It's all true.

Commissioner McCauley: There are not enough good things to say about Anne Cribbs. Will I accept the nomination? I'm inclined, frankly, not to because I would love to see Anne serve as the Vice Chair. I'd also like to see Jeff LaMere serve as the Vice Chair. Anne, I don't know if you'd like to flip a coin or what. I will reluctantly accept, but I wonder if we might be able to take a 30-second break.

Chair Greenfield: You're asking to recess for 30 seconds, a brief recess?

Commissioner McCauley: Yes.

Chair Greenfield: I think we need to vote to agree to recess. If there is any further discussion at this moment, all in favor of a recess? Anyone opposed? We are now in recess.

The Commission took a break from 7:24 p.m. to 7:25 p.m.

Chair Greenfield: I will now call the meeting back into order. Do we have any further comments from Commissioners regarding the nominations for Vice Chair?

Commissioner McCauley: Please. I would like to decline the nomination.
Chair Greenfield: Very well. As it stands, we have one nomination for Vice Chair for Anne Cribbs. Do we have any other nominations for Vice Chair? If not, then I'll ask for a motion to close the nomination process.

**Motion to close nominations**

Commissioner Reckdahl: I so move.

Chair Greenfield: A second?

Commissioner Moss: I second.

Chair Greenfield: We now have closed the nomination process for Vice Chair. We go to our ballots. Daren, with only one nomination, is it necessary to read all the ballots or is it …

Mr. Anderson: I think we should. We'll just go through it quickly.

Ms. Bourquin: One for Cribbs from Olson. One for Cribbs from LaMere. One for Cribbs from McCauley. One for Cribbs from Greenfield. One for Cribbs from Reckdahl. One for Cribbs from Cribbs. One from Moss for Cribbs. Seven unanimous.

**Commissioner Cribbs elected unanimously as Vice Chair.**

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, and congratulations Vice Chair Cribbs.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Thank you. I look forward to working with you and all the Commissioners. I think we'll have a very good year.

Chair Greenfield: Let's move on. The next item is the approval of draft minutes from the December 10, 2019 special Parks and Recreation Commission meeting.

2. Approval of Draft Minutes from the December 10, 2019 Special Parks and Recreation Commission meeting

Approval of the draft December 10, 2019 Minutes was moved by Commissioner McCauley and seconded by Commissioner LaMere. Passed 6-0 with Commissioner Olson abstaining.

3. Presentation on Pollinator Gardens in Palo Alto

Chair Greenfield: We have the next item, which is the presentation on pollinator gardens in Palo Alto.

Mr. Anderson: Chair, would you like to introduce our guest or shall I?
Chair Greenfield: Please, go ahead.

Mr. Anderson: It's my pleasure to introduce Dr. Juanita Salisbury. As background, Juanita has a Ph.D. in biopsychology from the University of Florida as well as a Bachelor of Science in landscape architecture from West Virginia University. In 2009, she established the Juanita Salisbury Landscape Architecture Firm after working for commercial and residential design firms. Recently, she's turned her focus to California native pollinator habits and in 2016 established the Primrose Way Pollinator Garden, the first of five pollinator gardens here in Palo Alto. Her focus is to research and educate about these habitats as well as exploring opportunities to install more of them. I personally would like to acknowledge Dr. Salisbury. She donates a tremendous amount of time to designing and building and maintaining these pollinator gardens. She's incredibly generous with her time and expertise and a true asset to our community and our Department. I'm really grateful for you being here.

Juanita Salisbury: Thank you, Daren, for inviting me to come and speak to the Commission tonight. It's a pleasure, really, to do these gardens. It's a real privilege to be able to do them and to talk about them, which I do quite a bit. Without further ado, let's go right into the presentation. Here we have on the first slide our name and a little bit about me. I wanted to also mention that in my area of psychology, I started to study ingestive behavior, the biology and physiology of eating and drinking, and then I moved on to landscape architecture. For many years, I wondered what one had to do with the other. Now that I design and install pollination habitats, pollination is really at the base of the food chain. I'm still studying ingestive behavior, just for insects basically at this point. We also have a social media presence, so we like to keep everybody informed on Facebook and Instagram. Most of those posts are of my microphotography. I go out several times a week to categorize and look at the various insects that are in the gardens. I have years of research of these weekly observations. We have five gardens right now. Our first garden was the Primrose Way Pollinator Garden, which is located very close to my house. This is how I became interested in this space. It was just there waiting for a garden. The second is the Arcadia Place Pollinator Garden, which is located off of Newell Road and Arcadia. The third garden is the Island Drive Pollinator Garden, and that's between Hamilton and Edgewood on Island Drive. The fourth garden is the Guinda Street Pollinator Garden, which is on Embarcadero right across the street from Rinconada Park. The one that we just finished installing is the Hopkins Avenue Pollinator Garden, which is adjacent to the tennis courts behind the new fire station. If you Google pollinator garden palo alto, the gardens pop up on Google Maps, and you can take virtual tours. That's been very helpful to get people to visit the gardens. This is what it looked like back in 2016. This is the Primrose Way site beforehand. As you can see, there are some cherry trees on the left and camphor trees on the right with the sidewalk, Embarcadero Road off to the right, a very busy, noisy street. That space wasn't really doing much of anything. It was just sitting there, and I saw this as an opportunity to really get into planting more native plants and to
research some of the effects that native plants have on biological resiliency and habitat function. I approached the Parks and Open Space people and said, "Can I do this? I'm a licensed landscape architect. I will do everything. I will do the fundraising, the maintenance, the site prep, the volunteer coordination, the design." The response was so great and so supportive. They were like, "Show us your design." I did, and they were good. Without further ado, we got started. I set up a Go Fund Me site because I'm not a nonprofit. I'm just an individual. Raising money can be difficult in these days. Go Fund Me is a great way to raise money for an individual. A Palo Alto Know Your Neighbor grant also provided some funding along with some donated mulch and logs from the City as well as an in-kind donation from a local building supply company of boulders. The entire neighborhood where I live came out to plant over a course of several weekends. Now, I know all of my neighbors. I know every last one. Before I was kind of faceless and anonymous in the neighborhood. I would see people, but there was no reason for me to talk to them. Now, people run when they see me coming with plants. The City also added some signage to each of the gardens. This was the first sign, wonderfully designed by a good volunteer that we have. Each of these signs includes more information for people, so they can do some research on their own as well as featuring some photographs of the various insects that we see in the gardens. This is what the Primrose Way Garden looked like in the spring. This garden has over 50 native plant species. It has more annual species than the other four gardens, so it has a different flavor. It's really magical in April, May, and June when these flowers are blooming like crazy. I would encourage the Commission—if you all want a tour of the gardens, I'd be happy to arrange that. They're always open, but it would be nice to take you around and show you the gardens during the height of bloom. I think you'd really like that. That was pretty spectacular, and it was noticed by a lot of people. Another view looking west, again spring 2019. That was what I called our super bloom last year. Another picture. This garden was also featured on the Going Native garden tour that the California Native Plant Society organizes every year. We had 150 people show up to that. It was just wonderful and really busy the entire day. Everybody loved it. They're always looking for more Palo Alto gardens, so we have some now for them. The City liked the Primrose Way Garden so much that Mark Ribeiro came to me and said, "We just finished doing some maintenance on Arcadia Place, which is a cul-de-sac. Will you design something for us?" I'm like, "Sure, okay." The City provided plantings, and the same year in December we went out and planted it up during a gigantic rainstorm. Beforehand, we did community outreach. I put together a flyer that tells the surrounding houses what we're doing, what the design looks like, and how they can get in touch with me if they have any comments or questions. We didn't really get any feedback, so we took that for approval and went ahead and planted the garden. The picture on the lower right is what it looked like during the spring. There's a mix of annuals and perennials in there and about a dozen different species. Even in that small area, you can really fit in a lot of natives. The third garden, Island Drive, is a spot I had my eye on. After doing the first garden, I started scouting locations, and this one looked particularly juicy. As you can see, the before shot in 2017, about 4,000 square feet
of ivy and a nonnative cedar tree. I asked for permission to design something for that. Mark Ribeiro actually said, "You can apply for a grant from the Happy Hollow Foundation's progress for pollinator's grant program." We got the first grant that they ever awarded. The City was very kind in removing the ivy for us and providing mulch, which I'm forever grateful for the ivy removal and to enhance the irrigation there as well. Again, we did the community outreach. We distributed flyers to the surrounding houses, and again not really very much response. When we were out planting with our volunteers, the neighborhood came out. People were walking by, and the great comment was, "I've always wanted this to be a garden." We transformed it for them again all by volunteers. We also maintain that garden. These are some pictures of how the garden has developed over time. The upper right was last spring, just really coming into its own. A little later in the year on the lower left. This garden has more native plant species than all the other gardens. We have over 70 plant species there. Another picture of this garden last spring and summer. I like to go there in the late afternoon, what I call the golden hour, and see what's going on. It's a wonderful, quiet, nice spot. You can also see there's a Happy Hollow sign. They like to promote their pollinator program. The fourth garden, the Guinda Street Garden, is further down. Daren asked me about this, if I was interested. Of course, I said yes. This was a little pie-wedge of ivy across from Rinconada on Embarcadero Road. This spot, according to one of the neighbors, was ivy for over 60 years. We transformed it in a couple of weeks with over 20 native plant species. Again, we did our community outreach and then got a Happy Hollow Foundation grant again. We went out and planted it up. You can see some of the happy volunteers there. This is what it looked like this last spring. Again, the wonderful signage provided by the City of Palo Alto. We've started to line the pathways with these branches to keep people from stepping on plants. This garden's wonderful. The neighborhood actually has come out to me and told me how much they liked it. People are very supportive of this particular garden. They just love it. The last garden, the one that we just installed, is the Hopkins Avenue Pollinator Garden. This garden came about because the woman who lives next to the tennis courts is very interested in transforming this space. I was brought in to see what I could do. Of course, I was very happy to do something. I designed up another planting scheme for this. We did our outreach again to the neighborhood. Still no negative kickback, which was really nice. The City again supplied mulch and was very kind to enhance the irrigation here. I like to irrigate maybe the first year or so. All of the other gardens right now, because it is the rainy season, we've turned off the irrigation. This one will get a little bit more water while it's establishing. Again, we had a bunch of really great volunteers come out and plant this garden. This is what it looks like after, right now. You can't see very much, but there's about 175 plants in here with over 20 different species. Again, a nice quiet spot. Those are our five gardens. I do a lot of public speaking about these gardens now. I speak for the Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency, and I'm happy to always bring photos of the plants and the insect species that I see in our gardens and talk about those. This is a slide that I actually use. Why California native plants? California, as most of you probably know, is a biodiversity hotspot. We have in California one-quarter of all plant species in the United States. As you can see, we have a variety of plant species here in California. What do we need to do to ensure our native plants continue to thrive in this area?
States. That's a lot, almost 8,000 species. Many of them are found nowhere else on the planet. They only occur in California. We have a lot of native pollinators here, about 1,600 species of native bees, again more than any other state in the United States, which has about 4,000 all total. We have such a huge number of both native plant species and native pollinators because of the diverse ecosystems that we have here in California as well as our number of native bee species. These gardens are super important because pollinator species are declining worldwide, and other insect species are as well. Native plants are one way to combat some of those issues. Again, this is a slide I use in some of my presentations. I like to call this one my photons to protein slide. Plants, as I always say, are the beginning of everything. They are the primary producers of food and the base of the food chain. Energy from the sun is converted by plants into food that is then eaten by insects and other animals. In that middle picture, you can see there's a big fat juicy caterpillar there. That is on a Grendelia camporum at our Arcadia garden. I was very happy to find that caterpillar. Those caterpillars are preferred food for baby birds. They're super easy for the baby birds to swallow because they're soft and juicy. I like to refer to them as bird sausages. Insects provide food for baby birds and other animals. What research is showing us is that gardens with at least 70-percent native plants are required to sustain populations of birds such as chickadees. The reason for that is because native plants are largely eaten by native insects. Nonnative plants are not eaten by our native insects. Any nonnative plant is not going to efficiently and optimally provide food for insects. It becomes an ecological dead end. This is how everything else in the food chain can access the sun's energy through plants. Native plants really solve a number of different issues aside from ecological issues. What I've noticed is that these native plant gardens really enhance and create community around them. Because these gardens change the way that these spaces look, it communicates something about these spaces, that they're engaged carrying people in this environment, which is something that is critically important these days. We care that we live here. We care to see beautiful things. Besides strengthening ecosystem resilience, there's health benefits. There are many opportunities that these gardens provide. They enhance neighborhoods. They become neighborhood amenities. One of the neighbors who lives in the Island Drive neighborhood said he felt like he was in Tahoe by walking through our garden. That was a wonderful compliment. Lots of engagement, lots of educational opportunities. Doing these gardens has increased the proportion of my time that I speak and educate now. I'm moving away from designing for residential things and doing more educational opportunities. I've spoken to a lot of different groups. We do outreach here in the City through the open house that we do here every year. I've spoken to high schools. I also like to provide each neighborhood that has a garden a newsletter, which you all have a copy of that, the first issue of the Pollinator Post, which tells people what we're doing. These things do not occur magically. There are people that are doing this. You can ask us questions, come out and talk to us, explore the other gardens, that kind of thing. I have had so many positive comments from people who live around these gardens. One woman who lives by the Primrose Garden takes her grandson there almost every single day because he wants to see the bugs. It's kind of a wild place for him, and he loves it. He has to go.
this picture, we have the volunteers, me speaking in the lower right corner. I've distributed many seeds that we've collected in these gardens. So many opportunities. There's this large ripple effect that these gardens have in terms of what they provide, what they say, and what they do. I never stop thinking about where is the next garden going to be. Across the street from the Primrose Garden, the people at the First Congregational Church like that garden so much that they installed their own pollinator garden. That strip of land between Embarcadero Road and the sidewalk is about 10 feet wide, filled with ivy. They are very interested in transforming it. After many talks and organizing a couple of different groups, we're working with Grassroots Ecology to get some funding to get rid of the ivy and maybe even some of the concrete to increase the size of that space. That's almost 1,000 square feet. That's a lot of land. It would be a simple thing to plant with native plants once the ivy is gone. There is always another space. The gardens also help fulfill the pollinator pathways part of the Master Plan that we have for the City. I'm happy to provide these nodes as well. They enhance so many things. I see so many different species in these gardens that I know they're working. The things that are communicated through our gardens is that not only do we have a lot of species richness, but we have a lot of abundance. That's something that we can leverage to showcase all of the talent that we have in Palo Alto. We have so much talent, and it's an easy task really to plant these gardens. They eventually start taking care of themselves. We go out a few times a week to take a look at them. I like to go out and take a lot of photographs. They're fun plants to me, but they just transform these areas, these neighborhoods in ways that I didn't anticipate. They've all been really great, and I'm so grateful to have the opportunity to take these public pieces of land and make them into something that's beautiful and abundant and full of life. That's my presentation.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you for joining us this evening and sharing your success story with us. As you say, it is very much in line with our Master Plan objective of pollinator pathways. It's really an inspiring story of how someone can take the initiative and really work with the community, both with staff and neighbors, and build up neighbors with support. Thank you. We have a couple of comments from the public. Before that, do any Commissioners have any clarifying questions? You'll get a chance to comment afterwards.

Vice Chair Cribbs: I would like to say thank you. This is incredible. When I read through the packet today, it just made me smile, made me happy. It's beautiful. Thank you.

Ms. Salisbury: It's really a pleasure.

Male: (inaudible)

Chair Greenfield: The Commissioners will have an opportunity to comment after the public speakers. Mark Weiss followed by Shani Kleinhaus. Three minutes.
Mr. Weiss: I just wanted to say I thank Ms. Salisbury for all she did. It's a good example of individuals taking the initiative and trying to either work with local leadership or set a high standard for involvement. We've talked by phone but never met. Thanks for all you do.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Shani.

Ms. Kleinhaus: Thank you. Shani Kleinhaus with Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society and resident of Palo Alto. Congratulations, Chair Greenfield and Vice Chair Cribbs. This is a beautiful, beautiful work. It's amazing and the most amazing thing is that it serves both the community, bringing people together, and the ecological system that we're losing. They're talking about the insect apocalypse. The birds have crashed by 50 percent in 30 years. We know what the result is of interfering so heavily. People prefer often to plant something that doesn't have bug bites. The leaves look pretty. There's no bites in them. When there's no bites in the leaves, that means there's no caterpillars. If there are no caterpillars, there's no food for the birds, and there's no butterflies. We really need to think about the entire food chain, not only the pollinators that are attracted to the mature forms. They're actually looking at how to sustain the pollen and the nectar from the flowers. We really need to look at the entire system including the little caterpillars that were called sausages. I was on the citizen advisory committee for the General Plan Update a couple of years ago. The Sierra Club and Audubon together suggested the idea of pollinator corridors, which is implemented beautifully. I'm really glad to see that there is a start. I was disappointed to see in Ross Road when they did all these updates, they put almost entirely nonnative plants and almost no native plants. If there's any way to change that and make those little islands—they have all sorts of plants there that are like, "Was that the cheapest they could get?" They seem to get cheaper the further south you get on the road. I don't know if there's a way that could still be corrected. The other thing that I wanted to mention is that tomorrow, as staff mentioned, there is a discussion of what to do at Ramos Park, and that is a place that is close to my house. For a long, long time, I was hoping to see a native plant garden there. There's a lot of ivy. There are areas with some other nonnatives that could be replaced. That would be really wonderful if that could be a component. I'd be happy to help in the neighborhood. I think our neighborhood really needs something to bring it together. It's a very diffuse neighborhood, and this would be something that people could aggregate around and feel some kind of identity that is missing. Right now, the thing that puts people together is running the dogs off-leash in the evening, which is okay, but this would be an added value. Maybe you can consider that. Thank you. Thank you for what you do. It's just absolutely wonderful.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Would Commissioners like to comment? We'll start on this end with Commissioner Moss.
Commissioner Moss: The last slide that you have, which shows the map, we did that for the Master Plan. Can you show us, when you talk about a pollinator pathway, on the map a grand plan for a pathway? In our parks, do we intend to put some pollinator gardens in corners of existing parks so that there is a pathway?

Ms. Salisbury: I looked at this map, and I'm not exactly sure what the—I was not part of how this was developed. What I think would work really well would be to take the parking strips along the streets between the sidewalks and the roads and transform those into habitat. Right now, you see a lot of dead grass, ivy, nonnative plants. The way that we know that pollinators move through the environment—they don't go very far, especially the smaller bees can only travel about 150 feet. You're looking for ways to connect these areas. You're looking for ways that are not separated by 150 feet. If we can do something that's linear in nature, like a parkway strip, that's a good corridor. We have a few of those in town. Not every street has one, but the streets that do have them are perfect candidates for this kind of work and this kind of enhancement. Daren has requested some design input on some places in Rinconada Park, and I'm happy to do those as well. I'm working on a couple of different places in that park right now to design up some native habitat that would work in the Magic Forest area. Also along the chain link fence by the school, there's an area that we've already designed up and has a pollinator habitat already. We're on it.

Commissioner Moss: I'm an absolute firm believer in this, and I really appreciate your efforts. I know just on Alma there's a huge strip between the sidewalk and the road. It used to have some plantings. In some places, they're are still there, just north of San Antonio for instance. I hope that we can continue that. I'm a firm believer because for the past 15 years, we've counted birds in the winter. We have a native plant garden with maybe 30 species or 40 species. There are birds that come down from the Foothills and birds that come in from the Baylands in the winter and use ours. I'm sure if there were 20 or 30 or 40 more gardens like that, it would be a big success.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Marvelous. Thank you for all your work. This is really an asset to the community. How much labor is involved? Once they're established, do you have to go in and weed and replant or do you pretty much plant them and they're native and they succeed by themselves?

Ms. Salisbury: It really depends on the particular garden and how determined the ivy is to come back. That decreases over time. What we have found in most of the gardens is most of the plants survive very well. There is some initial weeding that takes place, but we do mulch pretty heavily so the weeds come out fairly easily. For example, the Primrose Garden, which has been in place now for almost four years, I go out there maybe once a month with a group of volunteers, and we go after the weeds there. That garden is very wild, and it's mostly an annual plant garden. The Island Drive Garden is also very low maintenance. We try to do a lot of best practices kinds of things. For example, we really
try to hold back on pruning and deadheading. Most people say do it during the winter when
activity is low, but now we like to wait until the overwintering insects have already
emerged, and then we prune. There isn't a ton of work to do in these gardens because I
really look at them as habitat gardens, which means hands off except to remove the weeds.
Not a ton, but it can add up over time.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Which is also good in the sense that if you can do that, then that
scales much better. If it's labor intensive, then you're really limited to how far you can
spread. Do you usually have annuals that reseed or do you have perennials or what do you
usually plant?

Ms. Salisbury: The Primrose Garden is the experimental annual spot. Annuals can be
unruly children because they like to go everywhere. To try to keep some form and
structure, I don't have many annuals in the other gardens. It's mostly perennials, shrubs,
and small trees.

Commissioner Reckdahl: You mentioned irrigation. What happens if there are some spots,
like in the traffic circles, where you don't have irrigation? Do you hand water for that first
year or what do you do?

Ms. Salisbury: All of these gardens have existing spray irrigation, which is very handy.
We try to plant during the rainy season, which is the best time to plant during the year. It
is easier to dig holes, and the ground is moist, and the plants establish better. We initially
start with some irrigation to get the gardens established, and then we slowly cut it way,
way, way, way back.

Commissioner Reckdahl: If you found some locations without irrigation, would you have
to put irrigation in?

Ms. Salisbury: That would be helpful.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Like I said, very wonderful. If you're looking for more land,
have you been to Byxbee Park? There's a lot of land you could use. We do have some
native species there, but there's a lot of open area. Baylands especially, along those walking
paths there's so much nonnative there. Around town is probably the biggest bang for the
buck. Thanks again. Wonderful.

Commissioner McCauley: Dr. Salisbury, thank you very much. This is awesome. I'm not
sure whether you intended when you set out—I think the answer is you probably didn't
intent when you set out to create such a great community around this, but I view that as
probably one of the shining outcomes of this, the way you've built community around it.
I'm going to channel Don McDougall for just one second. Anyone who has their ear bent
by Don has heard about the idea of physical, social, and natural infrastructure. You hit all
three of them with these projects. It's awesome. Well done and please keep it up.

Commissioner LaMere: I want to echo the sentiments of my other Commission members.
Thank you for doing this. I also compliment the City for allowing this to happen and to
happen in a timely fashion. We preach often that we need to find more public-private
partnerships. To see something like this happen is great. Hopefully we can get down into
south Palo Alto at some point. I know the canopy there is a little bit as well. To be able to
get south Palo Alto and have some of these plantings would be wonderful. I would also
comment that if—I don't know if there are resources available that you have or can guide
people for private property owners that would want to participate in becoming more savvy
to the native planting and if that's something as easy as finding the Native Plant Society. I
would be interested in your comments about that. I have one question for Daren.

Ms. Salisbury: For homeowners who are interested in transforming their backyards and
front yards into more habitat-friendly gardens, I do speak for the Bay Area Water Supply
and Conservation Agency just on these topics especially. I will be giving a talk later this
year. I believe it's in April at Mitchell Park Library on these topics. We'll be talking about
rebates for transforming your lawn as well. That's certainly one way to go. One of the
really great resources that we have here is the California Native Plant Society. They're a
group of such dedicated professionals who are always advancing the cause and the science
of these things. Those are a couple of places to start certainly.

Commissioner LaMere: Thank you so much. Daren, in terms of when we do plantings,
we had a speaker mention the Ross Road and the nonnative plants planted there. What's
our process of choosing what to plant and how much do we consider that we need native
plants here? Is there a thought with that?

Mr. Anderson: It's a good question. I think it's evolving. When we look at open space and
park areas, it leans very, very heavily, in some areas 100 percent, native plants. Four our
4,000 acres of open space, nothing gets planted but native plants. They're grown in our
own nurseries both by Save the Bay down at the Baylands and Grassroots Ecology up at
Foothills Park. In the urban park areas, it's a mix. We do have some that aren't native, but
none that are invasive. For other projects led by either Transportation, sometimes it's a
little less leaning towards those native varieties. I think we're working to change that.
Maybe Peter Jensen can speak to this a little bit later during his presentation, just a little bit
about new documents that are coming out to give more guidance on what should be planted.
Certainly, native plants are going to be the dominant one we lean on. The same for our
tree species, always dominant with the native oaks.

Commissioner Olson: Dr. Salisbury, thank you for your labor of love. This is clearly
something coming from your heart. It's so beautifully done. I'm really grateful for that.
Piggybacking on the last Commissioner's comment, when you design the gardens here, are
the designs then open sourced on the park site or somewhere where the public can access them? If they have a similarly shaped plot of land, they can take advantage of your design to put in their own homes?

Ms. Salisbury: All of the gardens are open all the time. We try to get as many labels as possible on the plants so that people can try to replicate what we do. I'm always looking for ways to educate people on how to do this. It's really not that difficult a process. We know how to enhance resources for pollinators. We know what the best practices are to protect insects. I'm always looking for ways to encourage people to look at the science. I do post quite frequently science on our social media so that people can follow us there. There's still nothing like the physical garden to go and see. I'm happy to give people tours all the time and talk to them about how to do that. It's become my mission in life.

Commissioner Olson: Thank you again. It really is something that's not just practical and fixes a problem; it's also beautiful. Thank you again.

Chair Greenfield: Building on some of the comments of fellow Commissioners, I really think this is a great example of a local grassroots effort to both build community and transfer the community at the same time. It's really inspiring. One of the first things I thought about as well as others was the potential synergy with the bulb-outs from some of the traffic calming measures. It is disconcerting to hear that there weren't natives put in there. Hopefully we can work more towards that. Daren, is that more under the Urban Forestry Department and could some of potential synergies between the Commission and the Urban Forestry Department assist in this effort?

Mr. Anderson: I think there's an element of that where it has specific programs. We also have it in the Parks Master Plan. We'll have it in the Baylands Comprehensive Conservation Plan. We've got the plans there. I think it's getting the message through to the contracted design firms and architects that we want native species.

Chair Greenfield: It sounds like we're really trying to transform our culture a bit. I appreciate the comments to look to build more towards south Palo Alto as well. I know the planting strips are a perfect avenue. Unfortunately, we don't have planting strips typically in south Palo Alto. I'm wondering what other potential conduits you may be able to suggest for neighborhoods that don't have the planting strips.

Ms. Salisbury: What we have found are any sort of scrap pieces of land work. Parking lots where there are perhaps some islands planted with nonnative plants are one thing. Cul-de-sac islands are another avenue as well. Any sort of small strip of land can be planted with some kind of native plant. There's always a plant that will fit. With 8,000 to choose from, there's always a plant that will work.
Chair Greenfield: Is there anything that the Commission can do specifically to assist this effort?

Ms. Salisbury: If there are other areas that are lying fallow and that could be enhanced, I'm happy to apply my design expertise. One of the things that really could be a very easy thing to do is to remove as much ivy as possible. It's not so much the planting that's hard; it's site preparation. Once the ivy is gone, planting becomes the icing on the cake. It's pretty easy.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you again for your efforts. Council Member Kou, do you have any comments?

Council Member Kou: Thank you very much. It was a beautiful presentation. I think the bugs were really great to see. I wanted to ask Daren if you happen to know—like in Barron Park, where we have Matadero Creek, parts of it belong maybe to the County or to Santa Clara Valley Water. Do we have any understanding with them in using those pieces of land? It's filled with ivy. It's crawling up the trees. It would be lovely to have a nature garden over there.

Mr. Anderson: That's an excellent suggestion.

Council Member Kou: I don't know if we have any coordination with them.

Mr. Anderson: What we've done in the past, not on such a grand scale but rather small sections of creek areas, not specifically in that spot but along San Francisquito Creek and a few other areas, Grassroots Ecology has said, "We'd love to come in, and we'd like to restore this." We've got some success stories that looked really good. Now, it's just a matter of scaling it. A key piece that Dr. Salisbury is underselling is her incredible perseverance and gift to the City of sustaining it. I've been part of a lot of native plantings from groups that come in. You can restore an area. In about a year, unless you don't do anything to it, unless you keep coming back and taking care of it, it'll quickly revert to invasive weeds. I've seen that for the last 20 years here in Palo Alto. It takes that sustained effort from really caring volunteers. The way Dr. Salisbury is building this, where a neighborhood adopts it, that's the same methodology we try to do in open space when we restore it. That's the same thing I'd recommend when we do those creeks, that we engage the community to say, "This is your patch of the creek. You have to come year after year and care for it and love it."

Council Member Kou: That sounds great. Thank you so much for your service. Some of the neighborhood associations might be the way to go in getting them to participate and to take over the maintenance of it. Thank you again.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you again. Commissioner Moss.
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Commissioner Moss: The signage that you put out is so important for what Commissioners LaMere and Olson said about being able to see what plants you could bring home to your own house and also how they were arranged in a nice design. Some are bigger, and you don't want them up close. Signage is really important in the places that you do it. I'm so glad that you're doing that kind of thing. Just keep it up. A lot of these native plants have their own weed suppression chemicals so that you have a lot of maintenance, but not as much as with nonnatives. It's really important to let people know maybe with signage that it is a great way to do something without as many weeds as otherwise. There are many churches in the neighborhood, like the Unitarian Church on Charleston has a native plant garden. Now that you're telling me about this, I noticed in my mind that they've got a nice garden. If all the churches in the City had a patch, that would be great. Going back to what Councilwoman Kou said, if you can get the churches to own their plots, that's a great community-builder.

Chair Greenfield: We'll now move on to our next item, which is the North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan and Matadero Creek Study Update. Daren, I'll let you introduce our speakers

4. North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan and Matadero Creek Study Update

Mr. Anderson: It's my pleasure to introduce Rachel Tanner, Assistant Director for Planning and Community Environment. With her is her consultant, Ben, from WRA.

Rachel Tanner: Good evening, members of the Park and Rec Commission. It's great to be before you this evening to talk about the North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan. As Daren said, I am the Assistant Director of the Planning and Development Services Department. Due to some staff departures, I'm also project managing the North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan. It's a pleasure to be here tonight and to share with you an update, maybe an introduction for some of you. If you haven't been tracking the planning process, that's okay. I'll provide an overview of where we are right now, a little bit about what we have planned for open space in the plan area. Ben's going to provide more detail about Matadero Creek and how we've been researching what might be able to happen with the creek resources. This is a map of the project area, where the NVCAP is taking place. It's bounded by Page Mill, El Camino Real, Park Boulevard/Caltrain, and then also Lambert Avenue. Just outside of the boundaries of this particular 60-acre area are Boulware Park and the newly purchased AT&T parcel, as we call it. Sarah Wallis Park is about an 8-minute walk away from the plan area. Peers Park is about 25 minutes walking, and Hoover Park is about 30 minutes because you have to get over the Caltrain track. If we were birds, we could get there a little quicker, but we can't. Of course, the Research Park is southwest of the plan area, and Cal. Ave. is just a few blocks away, an area that many are familiar with and perhaps most famously known for the former Fry's building. Fry's, of course, closed at the end of last year, another well-known landmark there. Background on the North Ventura
Coordinated Area planning process. This process began in November of 2017 when the Council adopted a resolution expressing commitment to this project, and we pursued grant funds to support the project, a Caltrans grant that's supported by the Federal Highway Administration. We were successful in achieving and being awarded those grant funds. In March 2018, the City Council approved goals, objectives, milestones, and plan boundaries and formed a working group. We have a 14-member working group that is seated by members of the community, includes a member from the Architectural Review Board, a member from the Planning and Transportation Commission. Keith Reckdahl serves on it from your Commission. We're very glad to have him participating in the discussions as well as folks who live in the plan area, folks who own property and are a small and a larger developer. Really trying to get a diverse section of people who together can envision the area but also folks who have a real stake in the future of the area. That group has been meeting since April 2018, when they were formed and appointed by the Council. In June 2018, we selected our consultant, Perkins + Will, who had the lead on helping design the plan. In October 2018, we kicked off the project and have had a variety of stakeholder meetings, a community workshop, a joint Town Hall with City Council, and in total 11 working group meetings from October 2018 until January 2020. These are the project goals. There are seven of them that Council adopted when they accepted that we were going to do this plan, formed the plan boundaries, and charged us to go ahead and look at contracting with a consultant. They include housing and mixed use, transit, pedestrian and bicycle connections in the plan area, connecting the street grid, ensuring that we have community facilities and infrastructure in the new plan area, that we balance the different community interests in the plan area. We consider urban design, design guidelines, and the neighborhood fabric as well as sustainability and the environment. They also adopted project objectives. In the interest of time, I won't read them all, but we'll ensure that you all have access if that's something you'd like to go deeper into. We have our consultant, Perkins + Will. At the end of December, they presented us with three project alternatives. Just a little insight into how we're seeing this process unfold. We want to create three draft plan alternatives that each look at different aspects of what could the future of this neighborhood look like as it unfolds over the next 10, 20 years. We plan to study these three alternatives so we can compare them against one another. What are the benefits of approach 1 versus approach 2 versus approach 3? We can refine them with the hope being that we get to one preferred alternative that we can present to City Council, have their feedback and ultimately buy-in in saying, "This is the preferred alternative that we'd like to move forward with," and then draft an area plan that brings that preferred alternative into our City's Planning Code. Part of the planning process includes ensuring that we are planning for adequate open space and really abundant open space. One of the things that has emerged from the working group that I think is a strongly held and widely shared value is the value of open space, having access to it, making sure that as more neighbors and more residents are accommodated there is adequate open space, and not just for the folks who live there but maybe folks in the neighborhood who are going to be coming to the open spaces here, visitors, workers, people commuting through, that there are gathering
spaces as well as active and passive recreational spaces. The consultants have
recommended three types of open space. One is called centralized, which is essentially
what you might think of as a typical park, a larger open space that's gathered together,
providing more ample room to move around. Green ways, which I'm very glad I was here
for Dr. Salisbury's presentation, ways that we're connecting so that we don't just have
sidewalks that are nice but really are providing connection to open space, connection to
nature as we're walking through the neighborhood. Lastly, green roofs and courtyards.
Ensuring that if there may be privately owned but publicly accessibly open space, maybe
there are plazas that have some green amenities. Maybe they're rooftop gardens. Some of
those may be open to the public. Some of those may be open only to the residents there,
but again ensuring that balance and mix of private open space for residents and publicly
accessible open space. These diagrams show the open space throughout the three proposed
alternatives, the draft alternatives. As the development is increasing, the amount of open
space is also increasing for each alternative. You can see the green popping up on rooftops.
A lot of it is centered around the creek, which is one of the reasons we have a creek study
going on. We see that as an asset and how can we turn Matadero Creek into an asset for
the neighborhood, for the entire City of Palo Alto. Right now, it's channelized, it's forced
out of its natural pattern, and what can we do to restore some of the natural creek elements.
The Matadero Creek study, we have gotten a lot of interest from City Council as well as
from the working group in studying it, which led us to consult with WRA to study creek
naturalization. The analysis that they're performing, we understand it to be answering the
question, what will it take to naturalize the creek under three levels of intensity. One would
be a full naturalization. If we were going to roll back the development and say, "Let's take
the creek back to how it naturally wants to flow," what would that look like? What if we
were able to do it partially? What would some partial naturalization look like? What would
that take? Finally, if we were going to stay within the easement area that surrounds the
creek, what would that take? That's the minimal naturalization scenario. Ben is going to
talk about all three of these scenarios tonight. One thing that's important to say is that there
are certainly many folks who would like to see the creek become fully naturalized. Ben is
researching what that would take from an engineering perspective. What are the technical
specifications that are required? And giving us some high-level cost estimates for
construction. That doesn't include permitting, and that doesn't include the cost for design
and some other elements that would be pretty costly as well. There are other costs, the
opportunity costs of naturalizing the creek. If we were, for example, to choose the most
fully natural option, that would limit the ability to have housing on what's currently 340
Portage, the Fry's site, because a lot of what's currently the parking lot would become the
creek. Likewise, if naturalization were to occur on parts of the park, that could basically
take away all the parkland or even what's conceived as open space in some of the diagrams.
The space for passive or active recreation gets traded off for the naturalization of the creek.
Furthermore, the Santa Clara Valley Water District has an easement for the creek, but they
don't actually own the land through which the creek flows. This creek is crisscrossing
privately held land and also crisscrossing through Boulware Park and the soon-to-be-added
extension of Boulware Park, which is publicly owned land. Again, that tradeoff. These are things that we have to consider, that it would take not just money and not just effort, but it would take the purchase of private land. It would take negotiating those purchases, and it would take us saying we believe we want to naturalize versus maybe pursue some of the other opportunities that these parcels present. Those are things that we're hoping to get your feedback on this evening, how you see some of those tradeoffs, questions you might have regarding the creek as well as comments on the open space, where you see opportunities to do something innovative with the open space in the plan area, both along the creek and in other parts of it. With that, I'm going to turn it over to Ben Snyder from WRA. He is our engineer and project manager. He has 15 years of experience working on projects like these. He's worked in neighboring communities like Hillsboro. He even did a project here in Palo Alto on our own San Francisquito Creek and has also worked in Corte Madera and Concord. Lots of experience in the Bay Area.

Ben Snyder: Thanks, Rachel. Again, my name's Ben Snyder. I'm grateful to have the opportunity to speak with you today and tell you about the work we've been doing on studying Matadero Creek and looking at what's possible in this short reach of the creek, mostly downstream of El Camino Real and upstream of Park Boulevard. In my brief presentation this evening, I'll give you a brief update on what we've done since November and a little bit of discussion about the outcomes of our planning process. We've held two working group meetings with the NVCAP working group as well as a charette to get input from the public and from the NVCAP working group on what the public really wants to see done with Matadero Creek so we can focus our efforts on developing these conceptual designs. I'll give you a discussion of the different alternatives that we've developed and provide you with some of the results of our hydraulic modeling and finally our cost estimates. We're making pretty good progress on our project and our study now. The planning is about 100 percent complete. We have a really good definition of what the problems, opportunities, objectives, and constraints are for Matadero Creek, at least for this little reach. We visited the site and performed a site assessment using data that was provided by the City of Palo Alto and by Valley Water related to Matadero Creek, including as-built drawings of the creek and a hydraulic model developed for the Federal Emergency Management Agency to define the 100-year floodplain. We've defined the alternatives now. We've developed an alternative that was basically a no-option alternative, an alternative that has a minimum amount of footprint, and then two middle-of-the-road alternatives, and then finally the full naturalization, which I'll go over in a minute. We've been performing hydraulic modeling of each one of these concepts to evaluate what the impact on the 100-year flood would be by changing the geometry of the channel and introducing native vegetation and these things that make a creek natural but also make it very rough and make it not as good of a conveyance for flood flows because we want to balance these competing interests of naturalization and habitat value with the need for flood risk management. We're in the process of incorporating feedback from the City on the designs into conceptual drawings. Finally, we're documenting the work we've done with
an analysis and costs to have a memo to provide to the City. Alternative 1 is the minimum extent project with still having some re-naturalization effort. This would work within the boundaries of the current Santa Clara Valley Water District easement, which is roughly 60 feet wide. This would extend from Lambert Bridge to the Park Boulevard Bridge. Here you have a plan view of this section of the creek. This is rotated 90 degrees from north. This would have a channel that's widened from 30 feet to 60 feet. The concrete walls would be replaced with a sheet pile wall. The extra width would allow planting of native vegetation and incorporation of recreational access. We could have walking paths through this reach of the creek. There will be a considerable improvement in the value of this reach of the creek from the existing condition, which is simply a rectangular concrete channel. We could at least re-naturalize the bed of Matadero Creek and create a connection between the community and the creek for this reach. Here's a section view of alternative 1. The existing section is shown in a dashed line. The proposed view is overlaid on top of that. As you can see, we're essentially doubling the width and increasing the amount of space available for planting native vegetation and allowing public access. Flood walls would be required on the top of the cross-section. Flood walls higher than the existing top of bank would need to be constructed to mitigate impacts to flood risk by incorporating these additional roughness elements of trees and shrubs and their vegetation. Alternative 2 would work in the reach of creek from Lambert Bridge to Park Boulevard through the 340 Portage property. This would widen the bed the same amount, but then also lay back the left bank if you're facing downstream at a 3:1 horizontal to vertical slope. This would add additional space for planting and beautification of the space and allow for greater public access. Alternative 2, you can see the plan view here, essentially the same footprint as alternative 1 but with additional real estate being taken on the left bank to allow for the additional slope, where it's laid back. There would still be access for maintenance vehicles. One of the things that we learned from communicating with Valley Water was some of the requirements that they would have if we were to do any kind of project here. All of these alternatives would be meeting the requirements of Valley Water. One of those is continued access for maintenance to the creek. Another is no increase in flood risk and no increased cost to Valley Water for maintenance. Here's a section view of alternative 2. You can see it's similar to alternative 1 but with additional space with the left bank being laid back. Alternative 2A would be essentially the same as concept 2 but would also include an additional reach upstream in Boulware Park. What we're doing is expanding the re-naturalized creek into the park with essentially the same cross-section geometry as downstream in 340 Portage but an additional approximately 500 feet of creek adjacent to the park. People in the park could then walk down into the creek corridor underneath Lambert Bridge and down to the 340 Portage site and connect over to Park Boulevard. There would be a recreational corridor that connects the park to the other part of the City. Alternative 3 is the full re-naturalization or at least as fully re-naturalized as can be in the urban-constrained site that Matadero Creek currently is in. We think this is probably the maximum amount of ecological value that could be provided to the corridor by taking this approach. This would also have vertical walls to maximize the amount of space available.
for a natural creek function and vegetation. It'd be roughly 3.5 times the existing width, a little over 100 feet wide. This would have a meandering low-flow channel going from bank to bank within this corridor. A large part of the undertaking with alternative 3 would be replacing the Lambert Bridge with a completely new span that would allow the creek to meander through the bridge and not be constrained by the relatively narrow, roughly 30-foot width. This would require a significant investment in real estate because this would be well outside the easement that Valley Water currently has. Here's a plan view for alternative 3, showing the additional footprint of re-naturalization area. Here's a section view. It's kind of similar in geometry to alternative 1, but now it's much wider. We're giving the creek lots of room to meander back and forth within this corridor and function the way that creeks function. This is a longitudinal profile view of model output showing the difference in 100-year backwater profile for existing conditions compared to the design conditions. The filled-in blue area is existing, and the line above it between Park Boulevard and Lambert Avenue is the design condition. You can see that the water surface elevation is higher. This is the increase in water surface elevation that would be mitigated with raising the flood walls. This would be required as far upstream as El Camino Real, along that reach, for any one of the alternatives.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Can you say that again? What's required up to El Camino?

Mr. Snyder: Flood walls on top of the channel bank, approximately 2 feet in height. These flood walls could be somewhat recreational in form and function, meaning they could be a place for people to sit in addition to providing this flood risk mitigation. I don't want you to picture a 10-foot-high border wall.

Commissioner Reckdahl: When you go west of the park, isn't that a culvert? At the Boston Market, doesn't it go under the parking lot? Upstream of the park.

Mr. Snyder: Yes. It's essentially a long box culvert upstream.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Would that have to be touched at all or just everything up to that point?

Mr. Snyder: Up to that point. Based on each one of these designs, we've gone through line by line and looked at what the costs for implementation would be, starting with an analysis of the quantities of work materials required for each one of them, demolishing the existing channel, hauling off concrete, doing earthwork to widen the channel, and then installing the new project elements, in order to come up with what these totals would be. Alternative 1 is the least expensive because it has the least amount of earthwork and requires no real estate acquisition. We estimate this could be done for under $4 million. Alternative 2 would require acquisition of part of the 340 Portage parcel and with real estate in this area valued at $10 million an acre, that adds significantly to the cost of this project as well as the additional earthwork of laying back the left bank. The alternative 2 estimate is about
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$7.4 million. Alternative 2A with the same approach but with an additional 500 feet through the park upstream would be about $10 million. Alternative 3 including the rather expensive improvement and widening of the Lambert Avenue Bridge would be in the vicinity of $45 million. As Rachel mentioned, these costs don't include design, permitting or construction management, but they do include a 25-percent contingency.

Ms. Tanner: That is the conclusion of our presentation. Next steps are we're hoping to get feedback from this Commission this evening. We'll also be having a community workshop on February 27, 2020 around the overall NVCAP plan. We hope to begin public hearings, taking it to the Planning and Transportation Commission, the Architectural Review Board and then also to the City Council this spring. We're available for questions.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you for your presentation. We have a couple of public speakers. Do any Commissioners have any clarifying questions before we go to the public comments? I do have one question. The construction costs which you were just itemizing for us, do those not include land purchase costs as well? If it's necessary to purchase property, that is not included in the construction cost estimate?

Mr. Snyder: These do include real estate acquisition.

Chair Greenfield: They do include real estate acquisition.

Mr. Snyder: That was assuming $10 million an acre.

Chair Greenfield: Our first speaker will be Shani Kleinhaus followed by Ken Joye.

Ms. Kleinhaus: Good evening. Shani Kleinhaus from Audubon again. I did not participate in the meeting, but some of our members did. I can see the results. They did a good job. In Cupertino, Stevens Creek in the area of Blackberry Farm and what they call the Stocklmeir property was in a similar condition. Some of it was very urban; some of it was still orchards. They did a beautiful restoration project there, which is the gem of Cupertino. That project was paid for primarily from Prop 68 and the Water District. Don't let the numbers scare you. The money is available for things like this. It really is. Go for the maximum you can get here. Do the restoration. It will serve people. We get buildings that will be a little higher to provide a little more space. I think the City will be open to that. If we want more housing, maybe we do another story and provide some really good ecological value to the community. Sports fields and things can even go on the roof. There are things we can put that don't require the land. You can't put a creek somewhere else. Go for the max. Look at what they've done to Blackberry Farm, and it'll give you an idea of what can be done here. Maybe it is a little less restricted there. Any lengthy place that creates that continuity should be the continuity for the pollinators, for the birds. Even if you have a flood wall, plant the trees behind the flood wall. Make sure we have continuity.
for the birds and the bugs everywhere that we can create it. Always try to think, "Where can I put a few oak trees, some native plant gardens?" Nature trumps everything else.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Ken Joye.

Ken Joye: Thank you for coming tonight. I have a couple of questions. I picked up a handout on the table that's dated December 5, NVNAP working group meeting that is similar to the slide you showed but not exactly the same. There's a page in this that shows the various cross-sections next to each other, which is very useful. I don't know where on the map those cross-sections would be shown. It would be great if you could give people an idea of where that cross-section appears on the map. The numbers you gave on your construction cost estimates, you talked about how many dollars it would be. You didn't specifically say how many acres of land would be taken under each of those scenarios. When I look at alternative 3, I see that there's land on both sides of the creek. How many property owners are affected and what proportion of each of their parcels is affected by eminent domain for alternative 3? I agree it's very attractive to consider that. What's the real implication there?

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Olson: I have various thoughts. On designs 2, 2A and 3 where that widening looks like the first drawing, but there's this angled area. Is that the difference? It's not a walking path; it's more a slope.

Mr. Snyder: Yes, and that slope will have a path that goes up from the creek to allow recreational access into the creek and ornamental plantings along the slope.

Commissioner Olson: Before and after this project, there's no going along the creek. You literally can come down and out. How long is that stretch when you're coming down and then going back out? I'm trying to get a sense is this a 2-minute or a 15-minute stroll.

Mr. Snyder: I think it's about 1,000 feet.

Ms. Tanner: Is that within the project area and the park stretch? If you start at the park and end at Park Boulevard, do you know approximately how long that walk would be in feet?

Mr. Snyder: I believe total that would be roughly a third of a mile, 10 minutes or something.

Ms. Tanner: It is a relatively small stretch of creek that we would be addressing.
Commissioner LaMere: Is there creek restoration built in? Do we need to restore the creek as we're doing this and that is built into the price as well? When we looked at Buckeye Creek, for example, the cost to restore it is very expensive.

Mr. Snyder: That's included in the price.

Commissioner LaMere: Do we have funding sources already identified with this project or how do we go about that?

Ms. Tanner: We are certainly open to looking at grant sources. The particular intent of this project was to see what's feasible and to include some level of creek restoration in the project plan. It could be that this becomes a community benefit. As developers build housing or other uses in the area, there may be an impact fee or something that could go towards restoration. There has been discussion of maybe we could do some type of benefit district so that there are funds generated within the district that go into this particular use. As the speaker said and as we know from other creek projects, there are funds available that we could be competitive for if we did go from a conceptual design to a more refined design. That could be funded hopefully with some grant dollars.

Commissioner LaMere: With projects such as these, what are some of the maintenance costs or maintenance that needs to be done?

Mr. Snyder: Each year, some of the vegetation would likely need to be cut and thinned so that it doesn't completely reduce the flood conveyance capacity of the channel. That's probably a hand crew working for maybe a week once a year.

Commissioner LaMere: In terms of properties that are taken, how many residential properties are impacted and what other properties are impacted with it?

Mr. Snyder: The property is upstream of Lambert. It's all City-owned property, the park and the newly acquired parcel. Downstream of Lambert is primarily the 340 Portage parking lot. There are some other parcels on the right bank that are commercial properties. There's one right downstream of Lambert Avenue on the left bank, if you're facing downstream. I don't know the disposition of that property. It may be a small office building. That could be avoided by shifting over to the right side and maintain that same corridor width but avoid that one parcel.

Commissioner McCauley: Thanks very much for the presentation. You have a bunch of different and difficult tradeoffs to think about. Your job is not easy here. Rachel, maybe you could speak to the broader planning process for the North Ventura area and whether or not any of these creek restoration projects are necessarily coupled with the broader planning process or if there is the opportunity for this to happen even if some of the other goals for NVCAP don't happen.
Ms. Tanner: They're parallel projects. They don't necessarily need to be coupled. The nature of the long-range plan is to set out our vision for how this area might develop over the next decade or two. It is by nature a slow-moving, "to become enacted." This creek project, due to the relatively short stretch of creek and if funds were available, perhaps could happen at a different time. There's a strong connection around how any kind of proposed plan we might choose would impact the private properties and what can happen on those. Where we see these projects dovetailing is deciding what level of restoration would we want to pursue. Funds could be raised for that level restoration, and other parts of the plan could settle around it. The way open space has been developing in the vision for this plan is centered around the creek as being this asset that we want to connect people to. An idea has come to try to have more small-scale retail along Portage, almost like a small main street of the area that leads to this creek and park. That's been important to the working group and something that we have consensus around. Alternative 1, although modest in its ecological benefits, uses the available easement that will be maintained and helps to balance those tradeoffs.

Commissioner McCauley: Did you want to receive some feedback from us this evening on the different alternatives?

Ms. Tanner: That would be great, yes. We want to understand what your perspectives, questions or concerns might be.

Commissioner McCauley: All of these alternatives, 1-3 including 2A, provide pedestrian and bike access, which is really important. Further naturalization of the space as well as having that pedestrian/bike path is critical. As I look at the other alternatives, it would be wonderful to have the added elements that each alternative provides, but I'm not sure that the marginal gain is worth it. Going from 60 to 85 feet is a pretty significant addition. Certainly the costs and other issues you've identified with alternative 3 would seem to make it very difficult. It doesn't seem like it would be the most pragmatic alternative from my perspective. I would love it if we could do that, but I don't know that we would be able to. 2A would be very cool if it were feasible. 2A is extending this naturalization of the creek up to Boulware Park. I'd be interested in hearing from Peter about how that would impact the park and the amenities and resources within the park. That would seem to be the most natural way to make it a cohesive, continuous space that is longer than a football field. Having that third-mile connection that continues through the park would be the preferred alternative from my perspective. That would be 2A. To clarify slightly, 2A but perhaps you would consider alternative 1 all the way through the park.

Ms. Tanner: I believe there is a way to extend alternative 1 through the park, which takes recreation space but has a connection to the creek. I think we looked at that earlier.

Commissioner Olson: If that were the case, would there be any eminent domain of people's homes?
Ms. Tanner: I think we would cross over Lambert and the park, so we wouldn't need to take any real estate from any of the private properties if we were to extend alternative 1A through Boulware Park and the extension of Boulware Park. That's staying within the current easement of the creek for alternative 1.

Commissioner Moss: The two examples that I know of in the neighborhood are Stevens Creek between El Camino and 101. That is quite an extensive path down at the river level. I don't know how they close it at high water, but we'll have the same situation. Do we let people in there when there's high water? How do we keep people out? How do we prevent people from getting washed under Alma? What do we think about that?

Ms. Tanner: It's certainly an issue. I'm not sure if you're familiar with other ways that the Water District handles access at challenging times, if we'd close access with a fence or gate.

Ms. Snyder: An example comes to mind from the Valley Water portfolio, and that's the Guadalupe River Trail, which runs through San Jose. There are several places along there where it passes underneath overcrossings that would be inundated during a flood event. I don't recall seeing any signage in those areas even during flood events. I don't know that there is an existing Valley Water protocol for addressing public access. It could be part of the operations and maintenance plan for this project, should it go forward, to have signage displayed at least during storm events and potentially year-round letting people know of the dangers.

Commissioner Moss: The second place is between Wilkie and Mountain View and Monroe. There is a pedestrian and bike bridge cantilevered over the top of the channel. Is that what you're proposing we could do without buying land on either side?

Ms. Tanner: I don't believe any of these propose cantilevering at this point. However, that has come up. What might be most desirable? Providing access for people to get close to the water and experience nature is of great value. Would we want to cantilever something over, or would we want to have it at the grade of the creek? We do need to provide them maintenance access, so there's some thought, since we're already building a path for cars in the creek, of building a path that people can walk on in the creek. Maybe there are walking paths above and below. These proposals don't include cantilevering at this point.

Commissioner Moss: I would love to walk at the creek level 99 percent of the time. If that's at all possible even within the current confines of the creek bed, that would be wonderful. I would prefer to start with the Boulware Park section because that's public land on one side, giving you a cheaper solution, and then extending below the Lambert Bridge as far as you could pay for it.
Vice Chair Cribbs: Thank you very much for all of this. Could you go back to the costs? To confirm, what's the percentage you factor in for design and permitting and all that? Did I understand you to say 25 percent or was that the contingency?

Mr. Snyder: That was the contingency. Design and permitting hasn't been factored into this.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Isn't there a rule of thumb about what costs you can crank into that?

Mr. Snyder: The rule of thumb I use for design is roughly 10 percent of the implementation cost. Permitting, maybe 5-10 also.

Vice Chair Cribbs: The construction management?

Mr. Snyder: Maybe another 5. Maybe another 25 percent on top of what this is.

Vice Chair Cribbs: These are in today's dollars, right?

Mr. Snyder: Correct.

Vice Chair Cribbs: How long do you think until this project is ended? Could you even think about that? What's the estimated time?

Ms. Tanner: The time that it would take to construct the project if construction were to begin …

Vice Chair Cribbs: Yeah, and you're starting to construct.

Mr. Snyder: Alternative 1 could be implemented in a single dry season, so over the course of a summer. Probably a phased approach would be good to do the upstream portion first and then 340 Portage the following year. If we were to start right now, we could probably expect to implement in the next five years.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Are you getting a sense yet of the community and what restoration plan they prefer? Has that come up yet?

Ms. Tanner: It has. We presented the three alternatives to the working group, but we didn't have the cost estimates at that time. I would look to Commissioner Reckdahl to add his sense of the working group. There's a mix of folks from the working group and the public who want to see full restoration. The majority of folks want to balance the interests of restoration with other plans. We were pleasantly surprised and happy to hear about a soft-bottom restoration project with the Water District in Mountain View right now, that this is modeled after. That gave us hope of feasibility and encouragement for alternative 1. I wouldn't want to say I could speak on behalf of all members of the community.
Vice Chair Cribbs: At what point, when the Water District comes in and says yes or no, do they say their final say?

Ms. Tanner: As Ben prepares his final report, we want to make sure we get their buy-in to the degree that we can. If the plans can conceptually meet the needs laid out by the Water District, hopefully that will be satisfactory for them. If we were to go from concept to schematic design, I imagine they would be involved in the engineering.

Mr. Tanner: They've been really helpful in communicating with us throughout our process. One of the questions we had for them was whether or not us increasing water surface elevations during a design event would be a non-starter. The indication was they would consider supporting the design and construction of increased flood walls upstream of our project. It's not a non-starter. That was encouraging. Having clarity about their comments from the beginning of this effort has been helpful in directing the process. I would imagine they would review the memo I develop. If the City were to choose to move forward, we could continue to have periodic check-ins with them. Review of a draft 30-percent plan set would be standard at the same time of engaging other resource agencies. I would probably invite Valley Water to be a part of that panel of resource agencies that would have CDFW, the Corps of Engineers, and other stakeholders.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I would concur with Rachel's assessment. There is big support in the neighborhood for naturalizing. We had an early survey where this was the number one thing they wanted, more than parks and developments. When we showed these three alternatives, overall people liked alternative 3 the best. There was some concern that we're losing a lot of parkland, so we'd have to trade that off. People will have to see what they get from that. Alternatives 2 and 3 were probably the most popular. We have Buckeye Creek up in Foothills Park that needs a lot of work. We're getting a lot of erosion up there. That's on the order of $10 million, and we just can't find any place to pay for that. Alternative 2A, which I love, I don't know how we're going to swallow that. Maybe we're going to be stuck with alternative 1A, one that goes through but also includes a park. That would probably be the best thing. We can see if we can get some grants to do alternative 2A. That'd be wonderful. On all these options, you showed pictures of the man on the side. No one was in the water. There will be public access all the way down into the water, if kids want to go into the water and play?

Mr. Snyder: That's correct.

Commissioner Reckdahl: You showed that cross-section of the stream. On the far right, that's El Camino. It really looks steep there. After it crosses El Camino, it really dives. Does the flow have a lot of velocity there? Are we going to get a scouring if we don't have concrete on the bottom? If we just have soil there, will we be eroding away the soil?
Mr. Snyder: There will be significant velocity and sheer stress, which would have sediment transport capacity. The bottom would likely be engineered with a mixture of gravel and cobble that would be resistant to erosion but would still allow for colonization by native vegetation.

Commissioner Reckdahl: We would be planting native vegetation in the creek bed?

Mr. Snyder: Correct. I suspect willow and other riparian plants would occur naturally, pretty quickly as well.

Commissioner Reckdahl: If we do go into the park and sacrifice some parkland to naturalize that, do we get some wetland credits for that?

Mr. Anderson: I would think you probably would. The area that they're looking at is mainly passive turf.

Mr. Snyder: My expectation is that you would be able to get wetland credit for that.

Commissioner Reckdahl: That would be worth something. Do you know how much wetland credit? Is it $1 million an acre?

Mr. Anderson: I'm not sure.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think this would be wonderful. I don't know if our pocketbook is big enough, but we should push forward and try to go for the big one. If we can't, we scale it back.

Vice Chair Cribbs: (inaudible)

Mr. Anderson: I can't speak to this project. The question was about who would pursue grants for this project. Rachel will probably address that. For the Buckeye Creek project, it would be a combination of CSD and Public Works Engineering pursuing that if we don't hire a grant writer to do it for us.

Mr. Snyder: As someone from the public mentioned earlier, Prop 68 and Prop 1 grants might be a good source of funding for this. Also, depending on the age of the Lambert Avenue Bridge, there could be grant funding for replacing that; although, I think I saw a date on it of 1990. It may be a little too young for an infrastructure grant, but that might be worth looking into.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Rachel and Ben, for your presentation and for all of your efforts. This is a very exciting concept plan. It's an opportunity to restore riparian environment, which we don't get very often. As Keith referenced, it does echo a similar plan we've had at Buckeye Creek in Foothills Park to restore a riparian environment, but
that's not going anywhere. It really is a concern. Hearing that there's community support broadly for the creek in this area is also very exciting and heartening. I also appreciate that you clarified the creek access would be included for the plan. That's something a lot of families will really appreciate. It's also going to be a concern for environmentalists in that walking and access into the creek is going to decrease the habitat value. That's something we're going to have to sort out. My biggest concern is the overall timeline with the NVCA project, the complexity of the project with so many disparate landowners and trying to tie this plan with so much unknown. I appreciate that you're looking at a parallel process. We have some information for how to move forward, but it's very difficult to assess tradeoffs, as you've asked us to, at this very early stage. Yes, we're all very excited about the plan; we're all very concerned about funding. The low-hanging fruit seems to be to develop the creek in Boulware Park where we already own the land. That makes a lot of sense and seems like something we should focus on and redirect some of our efforts to consider. That seems like something that we can move forward. If that section of the creek were restored, there could be broader support and potential funding opportunities to work on the rest of the project. It might sync with the timeline we're talking about.

Commissioner Olson: I'd like a little bit more information. Eminent domain just buys someone out at fair market value for their home. It doesn't necessarily help them find a new home at the tax base they're in. Correct?

Ms. Tanner: We don't have to purchase any homes for either of these plans. They're all commercial buildings. I'm not a lawyer or an eminent domain expert. You may purchase at fair market value, but would they be able to buy a similar property? Unknown. If they're a tenant business, would they be able to find a similarly priced space for lease in the City? That would not be known and may be difficult. Determining the fair market value and litigation would make it more difficult.

Commissioner Olson: Is there any enhanced ecological value of going wider in the creek than going longer? I'm trying to think about the tradeoffs between what we're calling 1A. Does that have as much ecological value as taking that shorter strip and making it wider?

Mr. Snyder: One of the things we're constrained with is the road and rail crossings. That's one of the reasons we haven't gone further longitudinally. We're looking to create as much riparian and wetland acreage as we can. I'm not sure quite how to address your question. A wider corridor gives the creek more of an opportunity to have geomorphic function, where it's eroding its own channel and moving back and forth within the corridor. That additional width would allow for that. There is some additional value in length in terms of community value. If we can make it longer, it will provide greater recreational benefit.

Commissioner Olson: It doesn't seem like there's a huge benefit going off the ones until you get to that last design where it's the full project. That seems awesome if money's no object and if no one cares that their property is being taken. That's going to be difficult.
A1, the longer, skinny project, seems much more feasible and provides benefits that we don't have. It looks like it will be a beautiful path. I really like the idea of doing the long part and the stretch by the park first.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Most of the time eminent domain is going in and taking the house. Most of the time there's a deal ahead of time, so it doesn't go to eminent domain. You shouldn't use the term eminent domain; you should be talking about acquisitions. In this case, if you're acquiring the Fry's parking lot, that developer likely would be happy to do that because they have open space requirements whatever redevelopment they have. That would be a credit towards their open space requirements. Some negotiations could be done.

Commissioner Moss: If you put a natural bed, and that natural bed starts washing downstream underneath Alma and on down to that next neighborhood, right now it's a culvert. Now, you're going to get dirt flowing through there. Does that mean the culvert is going to have to be raised a foot to compensate?

Ms. Tanner: We'd have to do any adjustments as it goes underneath the train tracks. The sediment movement is accommodated in the model.

Mr. Snyder: It's my understanding that Valley Water does sediment removal maintenance periodically. I would not anticipate that this reach would generate additional sediment. I would expect there will be greater issues with sedimentation within this reach because the water's going to be high velocity. Having a seal to act as a sediment retention structure could be a really good idea.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. It's getting close to 9:30, and we have another item on the agenda. I wanted to give Council Member Kou an opportunity to offer any Council perspective, if she'd like.

Council Member Kou: I'll refrain from commenting. Thank you.

5. Boulware Park Renovation Project Update

Chair Greenfield: The next item on the agenda is the Boulware Park renovation project update. Peter Jensen is joining us. Welcome, Peter.

Commissioner McCauley: Peter, with my apologies, I have to depart. My daughter is at home, and her babysitter needs to go home as well. I look forward to reviewing your report. Thank you.

Commissioner McCauley departed the meeting at 9:30 p.m.
Mr. Anderson: We have some new Commissioners who may not know Peter. Peter Jensen's the City's Landscape Architect with Public Works Engineering and partners very closely with Community Services, in particular the Parks Department.

Peter Jensen: Thank you, Daren. As Daren said, Peter Jensen, Landscape Architect for the City of Palo Alto. Good evening, Commissioners. Nice to meet you, Ms. Olson. Nice to have Council Member Kou here as well. I'm going to review the first process of the Boulware and the AT&T site or the Birch property site. We had a community meeting about that just recently to get some feedback, starting at a preliminary level as we build up the design. I'll talk a little bit about the design that was developed to provide cost estimates, to start the discussion about formulating a capital increase in the budget for the whole area, to devise a completed park space. Boulware Park exists in the green highlighted section. It's defined by Ash Street on this side, which segments the new property from the old property. The yellow is the AT&T property. This project was supposed to be a renovation of the existing Boulware Park. Fortuitously, it was postponed for a year due to some budget shortcomings. During that time, the property across the street, the AT&T property, came up for sale. The City finalized that sale just a few months ago. We've been waiting for that to happen to start this process again for the design. We knew once the property was dedicated parkland, which it is now, the neighborhood would want to see the land developed into usable park space. Currently, it is a vacant lot with nonnative weeds and trees. Staff invited the community to a meeting on a Saturday and focused on what facilities the community wants to see in the park. The community selected and prioritized their favorite facilities. Renovation of parks and the construction of new parkland are not cheap. There might be some stages or phases of park development. The priority questions were used to learn what we should implement first if we had to break the project into pieces. The list of facilities was a combination of existing site facilities and facilities called out in the Park Master Plan for every park renovation project, things like shaded seating, loop pathways, adult fitness. In the Ventura area, park space is limited. It is one of the most densely populated areas of Palo Alto. Expanding the parkland in this area is a no-brainer. The City should be congratulated on moving forward with the additional parkland. This slide shows the results of that community survey for facilities and priority of facilities. The number one facility is a restroom. The area along Ash Street has been a concern because of overnight parking. Education and outreach about current bathrooms have helped. A majority of the desired facilities are in that plan. The only thing missing from the initial list is the pickleball court. We added that because there has been a large interest in it recently, finding places and locations for that to happen. You can see that that was on the lower end of what people were looking for or would prioritize as far as in the park. As a way to facilitate more public input, we also started an online survey. It asks the same questions that were asked at the community meeting. From the community meeting, we did allow individuals to write down other facility options that they didn't see on the list that we had. We did add a few to the online survey, like horseshoes and bocce ball, other facilities that people thought would be a good addition to the park. We also asked a couple
of questions in there as well. We asked how the park should be constructed. What we see in the online survey is that most people would like to wait a few years and construct it all at the same time instead of breaking the project into multiple years and multiple phases. They're also okay with removing the aspect of Ash Street that separates the park. That is some feedback we wanted to get from them to understand how they felt about closing that off. The votes for the facility selection were very close to the votes taken at the community meeting. This plan was developed to start a cost estimate and to understand the funding that would be needed. The City is underway with setting up the capital improvement budget for the next five years. We wanted to make sure we didn't miss that cycle because the community would like to see this enacted sooner rather than later. Our goal would be to secure funding for fiscal year 2022, but the work would start in June 2021. From now until that time, we're looking at using the original funding for the park to work on design and produce the plans. Hopefully, right before that we'd have our plans and our bid ready and be ready to construct in June 2021. The design looks at removing Ash Street, which runs through this area. Now, you can see the park joins itself. By doing a review of the uses around the park, this side of the park is mostly surrounded by residential units, which tend to lean toward more programming or facilities in the park that take that into consideration so there is not a lot of friction between the park use and the residential use. That's why this side of the park has increased open green space. Boulware Park is not programmed for sports use. There are practices out there, but there are no games coordinated there. It's a quiet, passive turf use and buffers the residential uses from loud activity areas. Those things would include the playground space, redoing the basketball court, adding some dog park area, a picnic area, a restroom, and an adult fitness area. Boulware Park has one basketball court. This will be used to review with the community and get feedback on the areas. I've actually got some feedback already about the playground being too small. Boulware Park is not very large, but it has some very large playgrounds. It has two distinct playgrounds, a standard playground for kids older than five and a tot lot playground for ages two to five. The tot lot has a very large sand area. That's not overly developed because it's mostly sand. We can't get to that size in this design, but there is some desire from the community to maintain the square footage of the playgrounds. The existing AT&T building would remain. The creek remains on this side. It also starts to look at moving the picnic area to a more visible location. That is a concern for the residents, and placing it in an open area would resolve a lot of issues. We didn't do any of that development in this plan. As you can see, the development of the creek is an extensive and costly endeavor. The difficulty of option 3 for restoration of the creek is it takes a large portion of the usable space of the park. This space right here would be dedicated to the creek slope in the third option. There are options of incorporating some of the other ideas of the design to make the creek more naturalized in that area. The residents have brought up to me several times that the creek is used quite a bit for people that are walking from the Fry's area to El Camino. They use it as a cut-through. They also use it to store things, especially bikes that have been stolen. Channelized or not, people will still go down there. That's not a thing you should overly worry about. My goal for
tonight is to get some feedback from you on facilities, development of the creek. Planning
the green space mostly on this side of the park and against the creek does allow us in the
future to renovate that space. We would like to renovate the park a little faster than the
creek channelization is going to go, just as far as funding goes. We can build into the park
some buffering that in the future would allow such an expansion there. This is our overall
timeline of the construction. We're really early in the community input stage. There will
be a second community meeting that will look at this design and take feedback. We'll do
a third community meeting and hopefully get consensus on the design. That'll bring us
back to the Parks and Rec Commission to comment on the plan. Hopefully, after that we'll
start to look at doing a Park Improvement Ordinance. Through that time, we will be
working on the construction documents, bidding it with the expectation to construct the
park in June 2021. With that, I'll open it up to questions and answers.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Peter, for your detail and passion. We have four members
of the public to speak. I'm not going to limit you but ask you to be concise in your speaking,
particularly if you've already spoken. I want to invite first Ken Joye followed by Shani
Kleinhaus.

Mr. Joye: Ken Joye. I live in the Ventura neighborhood. My son is going to be 27 this
year, and we had his first birthday party at Boulware Park. It's a place that's been important
to our family for a long time. Thank you, Peter, for the work you've done to outreach to
the community and to bring this preliminary layout. It looks great. This is a regular topic
at the Ventura Neighborhood Association meetings, and we're very excited that progress
has gone as it has up to this point. I'm particularly excited by the schedule. The thought
that this could begin construction in summer of 2021 is really great. Jonathan Brown could
not be here tonight but wanted to make sure that the members of our neighborhood came
and represented for him.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Shani Kleinhaus followed by Nikki Narang.

Ms. Kleinhaus: I told you I'm going to be repeating myself. This is a really nice plan. It's
good to see an opportunity to expand the park. This was a hot topic at the CAC and in the
Parks Master Plan stakeholder group. Taking out a street and putting some park in there is
great. I'm going to ask to really look at the creek as an opportunity. Even if the creek is
concrete, the edges are still serving animals that move there. Plant natives and make it a
little wider than you think of right now. Thank you.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Shani. Nikki Narang followed by Herb Borock.

Nicky Narang: Hi. I'm Nikki Narang. I live on Fernando Avenue, been there ten years
now. I have a 3.5-year-old and a 5.5-year-old who have grown up in this park. We're just
thrilled, absolutely thrilled to see this happen. One of the things that's interesting to ask
during community outreach is why is this park not used today. We are there on a daily
basis. You don't see other families with young children there on a consistent basis. One of
the hypotheses here is this park attracts crowds that tend to loiter throughout the day and
into the evenings. I was very surprised to see the restroom be the number one amenity in
the community outreach. I'm just questioning are we also going to continue to encourage
that behavior, and will people continue to avoid the park. Is the restroom the amenity that's
going to encourage park usage in the future or will people still continue to avoid this park?
It's depressing to see more of your neighbors at Peers Park or Ventura Park than the park
on your street.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Herb Borock.

Herb Borock: Chair Greenfield and Commissioners. The staff report mentions the City's
purchase finalized the Birch Street property in the fall and has a schedule for a Park
Improvement Ordinance. I don't recall a Park Dedication Ordinance for the Birch Street
property. If it's already happened, I apologize for my poor memory. If it has not, you need
to have a Park Dedication Ordinance before you can have a Park Improvement Ordinance
for that property. In addition, you should also have a Park Dedication Ordinance for the
right-of-way on Ash Street and the part of the right-of-way of Chestnut Avenue below the
proposed cul-de-sac. Those activities need to be included in the schedule, including the
Park and Recreation Commission recommendation on those park dedications. That's one
of your purposes as a Commission. Adding the discussion of the creek restoration and
placing it on the same agenda as this item and placing it before this item makes it an
important thing that you have to discuss. I say, "No, don't do that." As you can see, there's
a schedule for the park that serves the community. Adding the possibility of treating the
reach as an extension of some restoration park in the future is a mistake and delays this
project for the park. The creeks in south Palo Alto became concrete-lined drainage
channels in 1988 following flooding earlier in that decade. They serve the entire reach of
that creek. If you're doing anything that would restrict flow, that affects properties
upstream. As a Priority Development Area, which will be adding more impervious surface
and additional development in the City, the last thing you want to do is any kind of
modification of the creek because it would make the creek less able to handle flood water.

Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Herb. Commissioner comments?

Commissioner Moss: Can we get a soft copy of his presentation and the previous
presentation? We didn't get that in our packet. We didn't get the pictures, the diagrams.

Chair Greenfield: I think we have requested it. Just make sure the Commission is
forwarded all presentations from this evening.

Commissioner Moss: As far as pickleball is concerned, I would prefer that it stay in
Mitchell Park and not be spread out all over the City because that focal point is very
important for their community. Do we have issues from the neighbors regarding parking
or lack of parking? How much parking is there now, and will we need more in order to encourage more people?

Mr. Jensen: Currently, the parking is along the street. There are no street restrictions to parking in that area. We have started to look at that. Especially in the area along this edge, we could push in there and make some head-in parking. That doesn't show on the design now, but we should discuss that with the community. There is a sensitivity to parking in that area because it has been used for overnight parking. The location next to the AT&T building and surrounded mostly by commercial buildings may be a more acceptable space for parking. We should look at that. The amenities will draw more people to the park.

Commissioner Moss: As far as overnight parking, we have issues with that all over the City. Enforcement will need to be beefed up at least initially. One of the speakers talked about naming basketball courts. I don't know if you want to make this a test case. I'm all for it.

Mr. Jensen: It doesn't hurt anything. It can be used to promote the facility, which is not a bad opportunity. That is something we could consider.

Vice Chair Cribbs: First of all, I was really happy to see the restrooms at the top of the list. That's a great thing. Was there ever a thought of doing a small building that could be used for a community gathering space, like we have at Mitchell next to the bathrooms?

Mr. Jensen: That was not brought up by staff or the community. The park is not large, and having a structure using …

Vice Chair Cribbs: Not a good idea.

Mr. Jensen: I don't know if it's not a good idea, but it wasn't expressed by the community as something needed. It wasn't brought up as a choice, but it could be considered.

Vice Chair Cribbs: It was really good to see the list of all the choices and the neighborhood input. I'm concerned, since this is such a great opportunity—that's a dense neighborhood in Palo Alto. Is there an opportunity to get more input from the community or are you happy with 38?

Mr. Jensen: We had a fairly good showing at the community meeting. We had about 26 people there. Of course, they come and go during the meeting. As of today, the online survey has accumulated 68 responses, I believe. It's doing a fairly good job. I did extend it to this week because it was supposed to close last Friday. We could extend it another week. The last few times I pushed it out over email to the community group, there have been spikes. We may try that one more time to see if we can get a few more folks. For the community in that area, having 60-80 responses is pretty solid.
Commissioner Reckdahl: The playground is right against the creek. If we expand the creek, that would be problematic. Was there any thought about rotating that playground counterclockwise around the cul-de-sac and exchange it with some of the turf area?

Mr. Jensen: That is something we can explore.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I assume this turf area is big enough for AYSO soccer on it.

Mr. Jensen: For tiny kids, yes. Not for adults.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Both Seale and Robles have small backstops for the smallest baseball teams. It's not a baseball field. That's pretty unobtrusive, and you get some functionality out of that. Otherwise, it looks beautiful.

Commissioner LaMere: I echo Keith's comments about the use of the turf area. There's a space for community garden plots. Is that existing or would that be new?

Mr. Jensen: There's a City pump station right here. There's an unused, small turf area.

Commissioner LaMere: It's great to look for spaces like that. As far as the turf area goes, what is the size or what's the distance on the top?

Mr. Jensen: It's about 25 percent larger or more turf area than what's there now. I can't give you the exact dimensions of it, but I'm going to say it's about 35 by 85 yards. It's broken up by the basketball court and the picnic table. It's open but not conducive to playing anything on it.

Commissioner LaMere: I also really like tying the two parks together as far as getting rid of the street, if that's doable and favored by the community. Thanks for all your work.

Commissioner Olson: You've really jammed a lot of things in here. This is great. It sounds like you have parking in mind. Is there lighting in the basketball courts in particular or is there any lighting in the park at night?

Mr. Jensen: There are a few lights now, mostly older streetlights for security. At the minimum, we would continue to do that. In the basketball area and dog park, brighter lights would be nice for night use. Concentrating those amenities away from houses makes it much easier to put light in. We would pursue adding light. The parks close at 10:00 p.m., so lights would be controlled to that time.

Commissioner Olson: I thought on the community list the creek overlook was pretty highly ranked. Is that appearing on here somewhere? Were we able to fit that in?
Mr. Jensen: This plan was made before the community meeting. I think we're going to add something for a creek outlook. I'm not sure what that means and the form it will take. We are going to work on developing that. It could be something similar to the cantilevered walkway at Wilkie but smaller. It would probably be used more for education about the creek and promotion of naturalizing the creek.

Commissioner Olson: I like that you fit the loop walk in, all the way around as well. The only thing I was thinking is it could use some shade for hot days. It's fantastic to be able to do that loop.

Mr. Jensen: The plan shows the existing trees. We will plant more. We try to use mostly native plant material, and we would use that here as well. The large area of ivy could be replaced with a pollinator/habitat area. I think we're going to do more of that in Rinconada Park when we renovate it. The Ross Road planting was difficult because there is no irrigation there. Plant material was chosen for Ross Road because no one would give it any love. We incorporated a few California natives in the Ross Road project, and they should do fairly well. Where we can, we should use native plant material. The concept of native plants has changed from California native to local native. Only in the last five years could we find local native plant material.

Chair Greenfield: I've been the community garden liaison for the past three years, and I'm all in favor of them. I am potentially questioning this garden spot because it looks small. I'm wondering how it compares in size to Johnson Park, for example. It's a half mile from the Ventura Community Garden. I'm concerned about management.

Mr. Jensen: That space is very small. It's probably double the size of this open space in front of us. It would not be large but would provide the opportunity for a garden. If the Commission and the community felt more is needed, the area close to the turf could be used for a community garden or bocce ball or things like that.

Chair Greenfield: I'd be interested in some guidance from Daren and Catherine down the road. I was concerned about the noise from the soccer field, but there is a basketball court there now. Maybe that's not a significant concern. Parking questions are exacerbated by talk of renovation projects. Those are discussions we'll need to have down the road. We want to make our parks safe and welcoming to families and everyone. We need to look into issues at the park as we plan for the future infrastructure of the park. Native here is good, but we need to focus on climate-adaptive species. I'm sure we'll add a lot more trees. As we talk about the creek restoration project, it doesn't seem to flow with the beautiful design for the park. I'm wondering if we need to reconsider this design not assuming something definite is going to happen, but a design that would lend itself well to adapting if we did add some creek restoration. I don't want to put this project on hold and wait for something to happen. We need to move forward with something. I'm not sure to what extent the creek restoration idea was floated at the community meeting, but that should be...
a front-and-center topic in the next presentation and get their feedback and see what comes out of this. We don't have many opportunities to restructure a park in the way we're doing right now, so we want to make sure we do it the right way.

Mr. Jensen: The easement from the back of the channel wall is 10 feet. In the design, we maintained a 20-foot setback for future development of the creek and to limit the impact on the usable space of the park. They did a fantastic job of restoring the creek side in the Mission area of San Luis Obispo. They used the channel walls in their design. There are many opportunities to mix those options and come up with a design. It's hard for the Commission to choose one of the three designs, but economics and usability of land focus development of the creek. Within the envelope shown on the plan, we could restore the side of the creek in the park and make it accessible without encroaching into it too much. I think the best of both worlds is in there.

Chair Greenfield: We have a park and amenity ad hoc. I don't know if the park design would be within its purview, but it's a decision we can have. Any further very quick comments?

Commissioner Moss: As far as getting down to the creek, that area of the open turf, if you had just one path—you don't have to have the entire length go down to the creek. You could have a little path down from there. That would be great rather than trying to put the whole thing sloping down to the creek.

Mr. Jensen: Right. I agree with you. There's a mix of things that could happen here. That can be developed and be a lot more naturalized. When we talk about the flow of the water or the building up of sediment, that interface is going to be the most fragile. That's going to happen right in that area. Leaving that area open for future development and laying it back more or developing some type of larger pool down there, it would behoove us to build it into the design. Closer to the road, you could start to use the walls and terrace it down but still get down to the bottom and then naturalize the bottom as well. I can't place a value on that play activity, and it would be nice to recreate that riparian situation in the park. That should be goal for every park over the next 100 years.

Council Member Kou: Peter, the park will have electrical outlets, right?

Mr. Jensen: It will. In the park, we try to control the amount of electrical plug access because a lot of people use it. This park doesn't have a group gathering area. The picnic areas and bathroom will have some opportunities for power, but we try to control those as much as possible.

Council Member Kou: The only reason I ask is because at Barron Park we have movie nights. We have one plug and have to unplug the movie to make popcorn.
Commissioner Reckdahl: That is a good point. This turf area would be a great spot for movies.

Mr. Jensen: The standards for electrical are a lot higher than they were when most of the parks in Palo Alto were built. In most parks, the infrastructure for that has either gone by the wayside or is barely hanging on. Today, we would use much tougher infrastructure.

6. Other Ad Hoc Committee and Liaison Updates

Chair Greenfield: The next item on the agenda is the ad hoc committee and liaison updates. It's well after 10:00 now, and I know we want to move out of here. The one item I would suggest we want to spend a little time about is tentative agenda planning, not necessarily for our next meeting but for our retreat. If it's okay with everyone, we'll move past the ad hoc updates.

VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 26, 2020 MEETING

Chair Greenfield: If we end up having a retreat between now and the next meeting, then we don't need to worry about the agenda. I can read what Daren has already suggested tentatively for next month. You can email me your comments. One is the 7.7 acres plan. This could be an action depending on what happens between now and then. Non-action updates on the horizontal levee project, community garden guidelines that we've been working on, and the first tee proposal that Anne is helping out with. Typically, we have a retreat, which is really a four-hour meeting, on a weekday. In the past, we've done it between 9:00 and 1:00 p.m. on a Friday morning. Looking at our calendar, last year we had our retreat 2 1/2 weeks after the January meeting. That would put us on February 14, which is Valentine's Day and the Friday of President's weekend, which might not be the best date. I'm going to request that staff send out a poll with some dates for Commissioners to provide input on what days work. I'm going to suggest that we look at days other than Friday. If we move to the next Friday, that's the Friday before our February meeting, which puts an extra burden on staff and Commissioners. I'm guessing that neither of these days is ideal. The previous Friday is probably too soon to pull this off. I'm looking for feedback on what other days of the week would potentially work. I've spoken with Daren already, and he said other days should be open to staff.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Monday through Thursday would be pretty hard. I'd prefer Friday. Fridays I have a little more flexibility. Saturday or Sunday, I'm not sure if we want to go there.

Commissioner Moss: It would be good to have a doodle.

Chair Greenfield: That's what I'm suggesting. I'm trying to see if we can whittle it down a little bit rather than have 20 dates on there.
Vice Chair Cribbs: I'm pretty flexible.

Commissioner LaMere: I'm fairly flexible, but I would need to see the dates, especially for the morning times. That doesn't narrow it down much, but I have flexibility.

Vice Chair Cribbs: What about if we did something in the afternoon and went to early evening instead of doing it in the morning, on another day during the week since Fridays left in February are not so good? Just a thought.

Commissioner Olson: I was going to say Fridays are generally easier for me to be flexible as well. Afternoons tend to be easier too. The further out they are, I can block it off and manage my calendar.

Chair Greenfield: Do afternoons help you at all, Keith?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Do a doodle poll. (inaudible) Wednesday afternoon.

Chair Greenfield: That gives me something to work on with staff. We'll work on getting a doodle poll out soon. Does anyone have any further comments or announcements?

VII. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice Chair Cribbs: I do, and they're both good. One is that the Palo Alto Masters is doing great. They've signed up about 30 people for this month. They're feeling really good about where they are. I'm excited about that. This is our new Masters team. In addition, Tim is going to start a bridge program between swimming lessons and Palo Alto Swim Club to make some noncompetitive thing. He's excited about that. I went to the Youth Council meeting today, and it was great. We should be very proud of our Youth Council. They are busy doing a panel discussion and community meeting about vaping, complete with a survey. They've picked a date; I think it's the 3rd of April. They were very pleased that we were interested. It would be great, Daren, if we could invite them to come to the Commission like we did a couple of years ago and have them give a report specifically on this vaping.

Commissioner Moss: The initial speaker we had talked about music at Mitchell Park, I went to two of his events, and they were fantastic as far as building community. He's got ten more scheduled over this year at the Mitch. I encourage people to notice his ad in the Palo Alto Weekly and get people to use our parks more in that way. I'm the GSI liaison, and you got this stormwater plan. We're going to cover this in March or April. If you look at the executive summary, I've been going to see how the parks could fit into this because this covers not only the parks but also all City land and all development on all private property. We want to focus our efforts on how the parks can help.
Council Member Kou: Commissioner Olson spoke about eminent domain. If I remember correctly, the grade separation Extended Citizen Advisory Panel mentioned to the Council that they had invited an eminent domain lawyer to speak at one of their meetings. I don't remember the date.

Commissioner Reckdahl: It's scheduled right now for February 5. When we confirm that, I'll mail that out to the Commission.

Ms. Bourquin: You were asking about the presentations, David. There are links, but I'm not sure everybody is seeing that in the packet. Are you not seeing that? If you hover over the attachments in your document …

Commissioner Moss: What I saw was just written description, no images. When you look at the attachment …

Ms. Bourquin: When you hovered over it and clicked on it, it didn't open up for you?

Commissioner Moss: It did, and I saw just description like this.

Ms. Bourquin: Within the staff report, down at the bottom of the attachments, if you hover over them, the links are there. The presentations will open up. I wanted to say that in case the public is having the same problem.

Chair Greenfield: Sometimes the presentations change between when they're posted in the packet and what's delivered here. It would be good to get updates. In the packets, maybe if you underlined anything that's a link, that might make it easier to recognize or change the font or come up with something.

Ms. Bourquin: I'll look at it and see what I can do about that.

Chair Greenfield: Everybody has a contact list. If any information on your contact is not correct, please be sure to let staff know.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Reckdahl at 10:30 p.m.