

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

City of Oakland

Wednesday, March 9, 2011 4:30 P.M.

Lakeside Garden, 666 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland, CA



CITY of OAKLAND
OFFICE of PARKS & RECREATION

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER:

A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission was held on Wednesday, March 9, 2011 at the Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland. Co-Chair, Commissioner Hammock, convened the meeting at 4:34 p.m. Dana Riley, OPR Assistant Director, conducted the roll call.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Judy Belcher, Osagie Enabulele, Wade Finlinson, Michael Hammock, Howard Matis, Barry Miller, Brad Ricards, Jeffrey Taylor, Calvin Wong, Ellen Wu,

Excused: Susan Montauk

Staff Present: Dana Riley, Gail McMillon, Diane Boyd, Mark Hall

3. DISPOSITION OF MINUTES:

A. Minutes of February 9, 2011

MOTION: Commissioner Hammock, Co-Chair, entertained a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

Moved by: Commissioner Ricards, **Seconded by:** Commissioner Miller, **Motion: Approved.**

4. SPECIAL ORDERS:

None

5. PRAC PENDING LIST:

A. Commissioner Report Update, Commissioner Taylor:
Pending

6. MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA:

Item 7A: Tree Permit Appeal for 5424 Carlton Street: Staff received a communication from the appellate requesting the item be moved to the April 13 meeting. The appellant was unable to attend the meeting due to illness.

Item 11A: Recommendation Concerning the Proposed Amendment to the Master Plan for the Oakland Zoo (Major conditional Use Permit No. CM09085): Pursuant to the Sunshine Ordinance no action is to be taken on the item. The item was properly noticed but all related material were not distributed within the required 72 hour time-frame. All speakers were present and allowed to speak. The commission will vote on the item at a special meeting scheduled for 5pm on Monday, March 14, at the Lake Merritt Garden Center located at 666 Bellevue Ave.

MOTION: Commissioner Hammock entertained a motion to move Item 11A after Item 7. **Moved by:** Commissioner Taylor: **Seconded by:** Commissioner Miller: **Motion Passed.**

7. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. **Tree Permit Appeal, 5452 Carlton Street:** The Tree Services Division denied the property owners' application to remove a coast live oak tree growing in the front yard of the home. The property owners appealed the decision. The PRAC put the review of the appeal on hold during the August, 2010 meeting pending further investigation. The Tree Division is returning to the Commission with findings and a recommendation to deny the appeal and require preservation of the oak tree.

This item was held over until April 13.

- B. **Request from the Center for Early Intervention on Deafness for Permission to Collect Onsite Donations at Lakeside Park on Sunday, May 1, 2011:** Dana Riley presented the staff report. The Center for Early Intervention on Deafness (CEID). This non-profit organization is requesting permission to collect donations onsite at Lakeside Park for their second Walkathon at Lakeside Park on Sunday, May 1, 2011. All proceeds are to go to the organization with infants and young children who are deaf and hard of hearing. The post event report was not available for review by the commission and there was no speaker or representative on hand. There were no problems reported from the 2010 event. Commission Taylor moved to hold the item over until the April meeting and amended that motion and moved that the request be approved under the condition that a post event report be made available in 2012 for this year's event or appear before the Commission.

MOTION: Commissioner Hammock entertained a motion that the permit request be approved under the condition that a post event report is made available in 2012 for this year's event or the Center for Early Intervention on Deafness will be required to appear before the PRAC Commission.

Moved by: Commissioner Taylor: **Seconded by:** Commissioner Enabulele: **Motion Passed.**

- C. **Request from the Girl Ventures for Approval to Collect On-site Donations and Scholarship Funds at Lakeside Park on Saturday, April 30, 2011:** Gail McMillon presented the staff report. Girl Ventures, a non-profit organization, requested permission to collect donations and scholarship funds at their registration table during their walkathon event on Saturday, April 30, 2011 at Lakeside Park. There was no speaker or post event report available on this item. Girl Ventures appeared before PRAC in 2010 and were granted approval to host the event. The organization raised \$5,000 in 2010 and has increased their goal by \$2,000 in 2011.

MOTION: Commissioner Hammock entertained a motion that the permit request be approved under the condition that a post event report is made available in 2012 for this year's event or Girl Ventures will be required to appear before the PRAC Commission

Moved by: Commissioner Taylor: **Seconded by:** Commissioner Ricards: **Motion Passed.**

- D. **Request From Women's Daytime Drop-in Center for Approval to Collect Entrance Fees and Have a Live and Silent Auction at Sequoia Lodge on Sunday, June 12, 2011:** Gail McMillon presented the staff report. The Women's Daytime Drop-in Center, a non-profit organization, requested approval to collect entrance fees and funds from a live and silent auction at Sequoia Lodge on Sunday June 12, 2011. The funds raised will provide financing for the Center's day support and housing services which help over 1,200 individuals each year. The speaker and representative for Women's Daytime Drop-in Center added that this was their 5th year hosting the event and the first time the Berkeley based organization sought permission to have it in Oakland. The facility will be rented from 1pm until 7pm with the scheduled program beginning at 3pm and ending at 6pm. The expected attendance is approximately 120pp. The

Women's Daytime Drop-in Center will charge a \$50 entrance fee. Wine will be served and consumption will be monitored. Security will be provided and the organization will carry a special events insurance policy.

MOTION: Commissioner Hammock entertained a motion to grant approval to the request to collect entrance fees and the have a live and silent auction at the Sequoia Lodge on Sunday, June 12, 2011.

Moved by: Commissioner Ricards. **Seconded by:** Commissioner Taylor. **Motion Passed.**

- E. Request for Approval of the Design and Implementation of a Community Agricultural Education/Edible Garden Area within King Estates Open Space:** The staff report was presented by Mark Hall with the Office of Parks and Recreation. People United for a Better Life in Oakland (PUEBLO) has submitted a proposal requesting approval for the general design and implementation of park improvements at King Estates Open Space to include the creation of a community agricultural education/edible garden area. Boundaries for the design were reference in site map provided. This was a community driven project inspired by similar project researched around the East Bay and initiated by the efforts of local 10th and 11th graders. The project will host both educational and hands on agricultural components. Representatives from the Oak Knoll Neighborhood Improvement Association (OKNIA) Park Committee, PUEBLO and local teachers addressed the commission. OKNIA is a group of volunteers who have worked in the park since the Master Plan was written and became involved with the PUEBLO project in spring of 2010. It was stated that OKNIA felt the renderings in Exhibit A. best reflected their idea of the proposed project and would like to see park staff, students and PUEBLO go on site to outline the scope of the program in the allotted 10,000 sq. ft. area. Once the specifics have been determined, OKNIA would like to see a community meeting held with the dual purpose of outlining the project to the surrounding neighborhood and recruiting volunteers. Teachers from the local empowerment schools discussed their support of the project and its connection with their outdoor education, science, watershed, open space and ecological programs. Students spoke on how the program would help provide them with more nutritional lunch options the importance of how the edible garden and supportive programming would serve as a deterrent from consuming junk foods. Students also emphasized the importance of the positive social and community benefits for youth and the sense of accomplishment for graduating seniors and their legacy.

Mark Hall and Grey Kolevzon from Pueblo/Youth Empowerment fielded questions from the Commission. A temporary irrigation system will be put in place until modifications are made to the existing system. Restrooms are not included in the design plan. PWA and other OPR Naturalist staff have been consulted on planting and the protection of native species. Commissioner Ricards said he would like to see public access and visitation considered in the plan. The site was selected based on the outcome of a year-long process including input from neighbors, students, teachers and OPR. The site sits next to the Youth Empowerment School. Sun exposure supports the existing olive trees and is a good location for fruit trees and vegetable garden. The site avoids being an intrusion to trails and foot paths. The MOU has not been finalized, but PUEBLO's role for maintaining the site will be outlined. Program organizers plan to partner with the City of Oakland and OUSD to develop and summer jobs program to teach students park stewardship. A study on open space in Oakland was conducted by a UCB professor in conjunction with the Oakland Food Policy Council. The findings were not included in this report, but can be viewed online. A crew of students will maintain the project over the summer. The City's water meter account is active and arrangements will be reached regarding reimbursement to the City for water usage. Commissioners Ricards, Matis and Miller requested that unanswered questions be answered before approving the project. Commissioner Wu suggested that the experts should be allowed to move forward with the process and the Commission should let the item pass. The Commission will have the opportunity to review specific concern when the conditional use permit is submitted.

MOTION: Commissioner Hammock entertained a motion to except the design and implementation of a community agricultural education/edible garden area within King Estates open space.

Moved by: Commissioner Wu: **Seconded by:** Commissioner Taylor:

Opposed: Commissioners Matis and Ricards: **Abstained:** Miller: **Motion Passed.**

F. Request from Friends of the Gardens at Lake Merritt for Permission to Fundraise and Collect Fees Onsite at a Community Event on Saturday, June 4, 2011 and Sunday, June 5, 2011 at the Lakeside Park Garden Center and Gardens of Lake Merritt:

Gail McMillon presented the staff report. The Friends of the Gardens at Lake Merritt (FOGLM) requested permission to allow fundraising activities and collection of fees onsite at a community event on Saturday, June 4, 2011 and Sunday, June 5, 2011 at the Lakeside Park Garden Center and Gardens of Lake Merritt. This will be the groups 3rd year hosting the event and their 2nd time requesting permission for the Commission. FOGLM speakers addressed the Commission. Working with OPR with and PWA staff and extended an invitation to the Commission. No post report available. No problems reported. Organizers estimated approximately 900 to 1,000 attendees at last year's event many of whom did not know the gardens existed. Last year's event was held for one day. The event is extended to 2 days this year to accommodate artists' displays and set-up. Booth rental space fees will be determined by the participating group and their intention to sell merchandise. Developing revenue sharing agreement and contact.

MOTION: Commissioner Hammock entertained a motion to approve permission for the Friends of the Gardens at Lake Merritt to host their June 4 and 5 community event and to fundraise and collect fees onsite at the Lakeside Park Garden Center and Gardens of Lake Merritt.

Moved by: Commissioner Ricards: **Seconded by:** Commissioner Enabulele:

Motion Passed.

8. COMMUNICATIONS:

Commissioner Wu suggests that times be placed on the agenda. Provide time frame for when items/projects will be completed.

Commissioner Ricards recommended that the Commissioners vote to carry the meeting over the 6:30pm mark.

Commissioners Enabulele and Taylor stressed the importance of preparing ahead of the meeting to streamline questions and the voting process and suggested that point of clarification be directed to OPR prior to the meeting.

Commissioner Miller would like someone from the Mayor's office to give a presentation on the vision of her administration.

9. PRAC COMMITTEE REPORT:

Special Events Committee: Wants verification when items can be placed on the consent calendar

Tree Committee: Met with PWA and discussed streamlining the process. PWA is willing to make concessions.

Ad hoc Committee: Regarding policy and ordinance and Commission's responsibility. Would like to discuss with the Director what needs to be done to streamline the process to order to get to more substantive issues.

Commissioner Miller: Will make a future presentation on park zoning.

Commissioner Wong: Conducting a survey which will be sent to Dana Riley and later presented to the Commission.

10. ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORTS:

- A. Karen Smulevitz from the Arroyo Viejo Advisory Council informed the Commission that the Advisory Council has been assembled and will hold its meetings on the 1st Wednesday of each month. Commissioner Taylor will contact the Center Director for the exact time and attend the meeting. The center wants to hold a fundraiser to purchase a receptacle for hot coals. Commission Hammock suggested the center contact PWA and Councilmember Brooks for potential support.

11. CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS:

- A. **Recommendation Concerning the Proposed Amendment to the Master Plan for the Oakland Zoo (Major conditional Use Permit No. CM09085):** Darin Ranelletti from the City's Planning and Zoning Division presented the staff report. The East Bay Zoological Society, which operates the Oakland Zoo and manages Knowland Park on behalf of the City, proposes to amend the approved 1998 Master Plan for the Zoo. The science and education center and related upgrades to the Children's Zoo were completed as specified in the Master Plan. The East Bay Zoological Society have proposed to revise certain elements of the Master Plan, which include replacing the previously approved shuttle bus system with a new aerial gondola system, constructing a new veterinary medical hospital and establishing a new overnight camping area. A complete list of the suggested changes can be found in the staff report. The proposed changes require approval from the City and are currently under review. The 1998 approved Master Plan is not under review. If the proposed changes are not approved by the City, the East Bay Zoological Society could continue to implement the already approved Master Plan. The City's review process is as follows: The PRAC would make a recommendation, then the Planning Commission would issue a decision on the land use permits and the environmental document. There hearing was scheduled for the Planning Commission on Wednesday, March 16th. The decision from the Planning Commission will be forwarded to the City Council for a final decision at a future hearing. It was reiterated that the PRAC would have the opportunity to ask questions, seek clarification and hear public comment at the current meeting. Action may be taken at the public hearing and PRAC Special Meeting scheduled for 5:00 pm, Monday, March 14, 2011.

In this section, Dr. Joe Parrott of the East Bay Zoological Society exhibited a Power Point presentation on the history of the Oakland Zoo and an overview of the proposed amendments to the Master Plan.

MOTION: Commissioner Hammock entertained a motion to limit the public speaking comments to 2 minutes each speaker.

Moved by: Commissioner Belcher: **Seconded by:** Commissioner Wu:
Motion Passed.

Supporter of the plan agree that Oakland Zoo is a thoughtful caretaker of Knowland Park and a responsible observer of wildlife and public educator. It was expressed that the expansion efforts would further enhance the Zoo's conservation and educational measures for the local and greater communities. The East Bay Zoological Board of Trustee Representative noted there would be no fiscal impact to the City of Oakland and the proposed plan would replace trees at a ratio of 6 to 1 rather than the 3 to 1 ratio in the 1998 plan. Many speakers sited the gondola as a welcomed addition for those who are wheel chair bound or with mobility challenges.

Others opposing the plan sited concern the changes would adversely impact native wildlife

namely, the Alameda Whip Snake. Some speakers wanted measures taken to ensure safety for CEQA protected and rare but none CEQA listed plant species such as the Bristly Leptosiphon plant found in the proposed wolf enclosure. Community speakers voiced concern regarding overuse of the resources at Knowland Park and the lack of a full environmental impact report (EIR) and encouraged PRAC not to proceed until one was provided. A request was made to extend the public input period for 90 days.

The Commission questioned presenters and speakers.

It was reported that there would be little traffic impact to local neighborhoods as the projected 20% Zoo visitor increase would occur during off-peak hours. Concerns raised regarding locally rare plant life are not list by the Fish and Wildlife Services. Oakland Zoo officials are also working with the Fish and Wildlife Services and California Fish and Game on mitigation efforts regarding the Alameda Whip Snake. It was noted that scotch broom is a great threat to the snake and the park's grassland.

James Mark, Environmental Collaborative Biologist and Project Consultant:

Referred Commissioner's to page 3.3-32 of the addendum for information regarding the Bistly Leptosiphon. It was reported that representatives from California Fish and Game and the Fish and Wildlife Services have weighed in on procedure's set forth and are in support of the mitigation efforts regarding the Alameda Whip Snake. Page 3.3-38 of the addendum was referenced. The Commission was referred to page 3.3-46 regarding tree removal and replacement. Scotch broom and eucalyptus are both a problem in the park. There was a pubic request for copies of the referenced material regarding the whip snake. Staff reported that a thorough and adequate environmental analysis compliant with CEQA requirements has been conducted. This included an updated analysis of all applicable regulatory requirements. Staff did not believe that there would be any new impact to the park. Friends of Knowland Park stated alternative plans should be considered.

No Action – Special meeting scheduled for 5pm on Monday, March 14 at the Lake Merritt Garden Center

12. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

13. COUNCIL REFERRALS:

None

14. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- A. 700 Forms are due in the City Clerk's office by April 1st.
- B. Mother of the Year nomination packets were distributed.
- C. Ethics training completion is due by March 30th.
- D. A social media survey is being conducted.

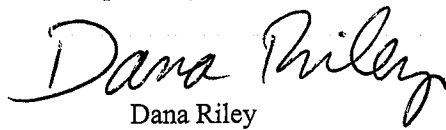
15. OPEN FORUM:

16. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

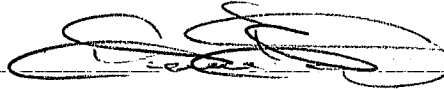
17. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Dana Riley
on behalf of
Audree V. Jones-Taylor
Secretary



Diane Boyd
Recording Secretary