

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
Wednesday, October 12, 2005 - 4:30 p.m.
Lakeside Park Garden Center, Oakland, CA

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER:

A regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission was held on Wednesday, October 12, 2005 at the Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland, California. Chairperson Webb convened the meeting at 4:30 p.m. Ms. Audree V. Jones-Taylor, Secretary to the Commission, conducted roll call. A quorum was present.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Valerie Abad, Rosa Linda Armendariz, Larry Magid, Holly McClure, Theresa Nelson, Brad Ricards, Jeffrey Taylor, Matthew Webb
Absent: Alex Hahn, Mario Juarez, Mary Ellen Tong
Staff Present: Audree Jones-Taylor, Michael Hammock, Jeanne Zastera, Mary Perisic, Claudia Cappio
Guests: Councilmember Desley Brooks, Jennifer Worth, Keith Miller, Helen Hutchison, Sandy Threlfall, John Sutter, Margaret Elizares, Joyce Roy, Marina Carlson, Caroline Kim, Charles Weber, Steve Lowe, Cathy Garrett, Tammyu Mentor, Suzanne Loosen, Robert Kidd, Jennie Gerrard, H. B. Nguyen, Ellen Wyrick Parkinson (Several other guests did not sign in.)

3. DISPOSITION OF MINUTES:

A. Minutes of September 14, 2005 meeting:

MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved approval of the minutes of the meeting of September 14, 2005. Commissioner Armendariz seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

4. SPECIAL ORDERS:

5. DETERMINATION OF SCHEDULE—OUTSTANDING AGENDA ITEMS:

A. PRAC Pending List
Feather River Camp Report from Camps in Common – November 9th

6. MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA:

Item12 moved up.

7. COMMUNICATIONS:

8. PRAC COMMITTEE REPORTS:

9. ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORTS:

- Feather River Camp – Director Jones-Taylor and Commissioner Webb met with Nate Miley, County Supervisor, Terry Cullinane of Camps in Common, and Harry Schrauth, regarding the

fee schedule. Camps in Common has increased the fees that they charge to groups, including the City, by a substantial amount. The City's Jazz Camp was priced out of using Feather River Camp this year. It was agreed that Camps in Common will submit its fee schedule to the City of Oakland which will be approved by City Council. Camps in Common will work with the City to make sure that Camp is accessible to City of Oakland user groups.

10. **CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS:**

11. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

12. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. Renaming of Bambino Field to the Oakland Athletics Bambino Field: Councilmember Desley Brooks asked the Commission to reconsider its action from the last meeting and to approve the renaming of the field. Renaming the field in honor of the Oakland Athletics will help to establish an on-going relationship with them. The A's donated \$100,000 in-kind to improve the field with the condition that the City maintain the field. The A's recommended a maintenance schedule to assist the City in the maintenance. Councilmember Brooks purchased two special mowers (push mower and riding mower) to be used on the field.

Commissioner Webb stated that renaming a public facility after a private corporation is a high honor, and given the fact that the City has been struggling with maintenance costs he suggested that the agreement with the A's be renegotiated to include maintenance. Councilmember Brooks replied that this is not a new field and is already receiving on-going maintenance by the City. Commissioner Abad asked Councilmember Brooks if the A's could provide training camps for Oakland youth at the field.

MOTION: Commissioner Taylor moved to approve renaming Bambino Field to the Oakland Athletics Bambino Field for a period of ten years, to be revisited at that time. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion, which passed with six in favor and two opposed (Webb, McClure).

- B. Minor Conditional Use Permit – Bertha Port Park: Jennifer Worth of the Trust for Public Land (TPL) gave a report. The City's Public Works Agency and the TPL have been working and the community to raise funds (\$350,000) to renovate the park, which is a mini-park in West Oakland. The proposed renovation will include the replacement of play structure, which requires a minor conditional use permit. Other improvements include new benches, picnic table and barbecue, new trees, a water feature and modifications to the landscape designed by Walter Hood. There is no net loss in open space.

MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved to endorse the Minor Conditional Use Permit for the replacement of a play structure at Bertha Port Park. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

C. **Public Hearing – Oak Street to Ninth Avenue Project – Draft Environmental Impact Report:**

Claudia Cappio, Director of Development with the City's Community and Economic Development Agency (CEDA), gave a report. The purpose of the hearing was to provide a forum for public and PRAC review and comment on the Draft EIR to add to the information base used to determine, identify and mitigate environmental impacts of the project. Public comments from this meeting will be forwarded to CEDA.

Michael Ghielmetti, of Signature Properties, gave a brief description of the proposed development. The project area is 64 acres, bounded by Embarcadero Road, the Oakland Estuary, Fallon Street and 10th Avenue. The proposed mixed use development would include up to 3,100 residential units, 200,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial space, up to 3,950 parking spaces, 28.4 acres of parks and public open space, two renovated marinas and a wetlands restoration area. Signature Properties has been working with the public for four years, meeting with civic organizations and neighborhood associations regarding the proposed project.

Boris Dramov of Roma Design gave a Power Point presentation. Roma Design has 25 years of experience working on the transformation of urban waterfronts. Approximately 28.4 acres would be developed with parks and open spaces, which includes Estuary Park, Jack London Aquatic Center and restored wetland areas. There would be access to the Bay Trail and future connections to the Lake Merritt Channel. A main focus of the development is to bring Oakland to the waterfront.

Commissioner Webb directed that members of the public who wish to speak would have two minutes each. After public comment, Signature Properties would have five minutes to respond.

Comments from the Public:

Keith Miller – President of California Canoe and Kayak

- Originally did not like the project, but is now supportive. Likes the numbers of people it can bring to the waterfront.

Helen Hutchison – President, League of Women Voters of Oakland

- The League supports compliance with the Estuary Policy Plan (EPP), which was developed through a long process and that should be respected. The total amount of open space in the area should be as stated in the EPP.
- Concerned about parking problems.
- Concerned about the lack of visual access to the waterfront
- Concerned about the ability of homeowners around the park to limit public use.
- Does the plan facilitate the connection between Lake Merritt and the waterfront?
- Does the guarantee for maintenance costs include the cost of the pier maintenance?

Sandra Threlfall – Executive Director of Waterfront Action

- Supports the EPP. Waterfront Action does not have a position on housing, but supports 41.5 acres instead of 28.4 acres of open space.
- Estuary Park would not be visible so would not be used by the public.

John Sutter – East Bay Regional Park District Board of Directors (speaking as an Oakland citizen)

- Concerned about the waterfront – this is our property, our public land. This land was acquired only after a long fight. This is a program to privatize our waterfront.
- The EPP was developed by the City after a two-year study and is part of the City's General Plan. It calls for a lot more open space, but the development would reduce the open space by 40%. The EPP would open up Estuary Park, and all of the land west of 5th Avenue was to be open space.
- The Measure DD Coalition passed a motion which expressed concern over the loss of open space, and a number of environmental organizations are opposed to the development.

Marina Carlson – Oakland resident

- The citizens of Oakland passed Measure DD. We should not alter a well thought out plan.
- We should retain the 9th Street Terminal and Dock.
- There are geological hazards of earthquakes and erosion from building on fill and mud.

Margaret Elizares – Oakland resident

- Concerned about earthquakes – do not build on bay fill muds.
- The project does not comply with the EPP. There is insufficient open space and shore access to this area.
- Insufficient parking and no public transit.

Joyce Roy – Sierra Club and Oakland Heritage Alliance

- The Sierra Club supports the EPP open space aspect. The main purpose of the plan was to provide for public oriented activities and enhance public access.
- The Oakland Heritage Alliance is very concerned about the Ninth Avenue Terminal. It would be more useful as a Fort Mason type of facility, with solar panels on the roof. Could be a well used and important public resource. We don't want to lose it.

Caroline Kim – Oakland resident

- A 3100 residential unit project does not meet the EPP. The correct process has not been followed.
- The developer's plan does not mention traffic problems caused by the railroad, as well as limited access to roads and freeway. Impact on residents of Fifth Avenue. Local small businesses may go out of business.
- The development will not help Jack London Square.
- There is only minor consideration for wildlife and habitat.
- The development will bring 6,000 residents, with no schools and infrastructure to accommodate them.

- Suggests that Signature Properties work with community groups such as CALM to create something beautiful.

Charles Weber – Fifth Avenue, Oakland resident

- Supports Alternative Plan 3, which reuses all of the Ninth Avenue Terminal and greatly reduces the number of units.
- The Ninth Avenue Terminal could be the Fort Mason of the East Bay. If we tear it down we would lose the ability to maintain the pier under the structure, and it would either fall down or revert back to the City to maintain.
- The parks would become private parks for the people who live there.
- It would be a travesty to lose this.

Steve Lowe – Oakland Resident

- Agrees with all comments about Ninth Avenue Terminal being the Fort Mason of the East Bay. The building is unique in the East Bay. There is another building like it in Alexandria Virginia, the Torpedo Factory, and visitors have energized the area.

Comments from the Commission:

Commissioner Webb

- The proposed project plan states that 44% of the site would be open space, as opposed to 60%, which was mandated by the Estuary Policy Plan.
- Concerned that the buildings would create a barrier between the citizens of Oakland and the park, and that the park would become a defacto park of the property owners.
- Believes that 3100 units in that area will create a traffic nightmare, especially during rush hour to access 880.
- Concerts in the park close to residential units will not be tolerated, as experienced with Estuary Park and the adjacent condominiums.
- Distressed that the EPP has been scuttled.

Commissioner Abad

- Who will be responsible for park maintenance?
- Who will benefit from the park and waterfront access?
- Where will visitors park their cars?
- Will there be a recreation center?
- Who will patrol the parks?
- With over 3000 residential units there will be a need for a school in that area.
- Consider having a school and recreation center together.

Commissioner Ricards

- Encouraged pedestrian connections along the Lake Merritt Channel to the waterfront.

Commissioner McClure

- Concerned about parking.

Commissioner Magid

- Has the Bay Conservation and Development Commission review taken place?
- What changes are proposed to the acreage immediately adjacent to the Jack London Aquatic Center?

Commissioner Nelson

- Concerned about privatization of public land. The 43% open space is inadequate. The EPP required 60% open space.
- Why is the City selling the land vs leasing the land?
- Why was no specific plan provided as per the EPP?
- One parking space per unit will not be adequate, and there will be parking issues impacting public access.
- Can the housing be moved to provide for better view and access to Estuary Park? People will not go to the park if they cannot see it.
- Will the waterfront become a private playground of the residents?

Commissioner Armendariz

- Believes that the waterfront park should be accessible to all Oakland residents. It can easily turn into another part of Oakland that low income people will not be able to visit.
- How are you creating a sense of community?
- If you are trying to build a neighborhood you will need a school. Talk to the OUSD about options for a school.

Commissioner Taylor

- Concerned that young people will assume it is not their park because it is not visible.
- Does not want a park that only the residents will use.
- Need to have a recreation center in the area.
- How does this development address the needs of people who live in Oakland?
- Oakland has families that are being squeezed out of their city.
- Have you had a conversation with the Jack London Aquatic Center?

Response from Michael Ghielmetti Signature Properties

- Maintenance - The open space will be maintained by the project through a homeowners association or a special district for that area. They will enter into a maintenance agreement with the City. The open space will be owned by the public, maintained by the project, but managed by the City. The residents would know that they are paying for the park maintenance but that the parks are City parks for public use.
- Parking – All streets will have public parking along the street. There will be diagonal parking on the street in the retail area, some small parking lots, and structural parking. They are working with Cal Trans to install parking under the freeway. Each of the residential buildings will have parking.
- Transportation – The developer is working with AC Transit for bus service to the area, and BART for shuttle service.
- Seismic protection - All Uniform Building Codes for seismic protection would be complied with for the project.

- Jack London Aquatic Center – The plan includes a residential building adjacent to JLAC.
- The BCDC Design Review Commission reviewed the plans. They will again meet with the BCDC if the City of Oakland approves. They will need to get a permit from the BCDC and many other boards.
- Traffic – We think we will be successful getting AC Transit bus service to the site. We will commission ourselves to do provide shuttle services to help lessen the traffic impact.
- Moving housing from Estuary Park area - The reason we put housing by Estuary Park is to help activate the park with critical mass. Parks are heavily used in other developments, such as the one in Vancouver.
- View access – Maximizing visual access with street alignment.
- 43% vs 60% open space – The quality of open space will become more vibrant because of the greater number of people use the parks.
- We intend to have a Community Center at the 9th Avenue Terminal Building.

Comment from Claudia Cappio, Director of Development

- Specific Plan – Referring to the Draft EIR, IV A 16-17, staff believes we are getting what the plan would provide and that we are meeting the requirements of the Specific Plan.

End of public hearing. The purpose of the public hearing was to receive comment. No action was to be taken at this time.

13. COUNCIL REFERRALS:

14. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- OPR had a wonderful "Four Flavors of Jazz" Concert at Woodminster Amphitheater.
- OPR is in the process of hiring three center directors for Studio One, Bushrod, and Redwood Heights. Program Directors interviews will be held on October 20th.

15. OPEN FORUM:

16. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

17. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Audree V. Jones-Taylor
Secretary

Mary Perisic
Recording Secretary