



A Regular Meeting of the Parks And Recreation Commission Minutes
Thursday, May 8 , 2008
Albany Community Center
Edith Stone Room, 1249 Marin Ave.
7:30 p.m.

- 1. Call to Order:** 7:38p.m. Commissioners present: Chair Pilch, Mullarkey, Piller, Trout and Wilmsen. Excused Commissioners Linden and Como.

Staff present: Public Works Manager Richard Cunningham and Robin Mariona

- 2. Approval of Minutes: April 10, 2008:**
Motion to approve minutes as corrected made by Commissioner Trout and seconded by Commissioner Wilmsen. Motion carried all in favor.
- 3. Public Comment:** None
- 4. Announcements/Communications:** Chair Pilch stated that he had attended the Spring Arts and Music Festival and it had been a nice event. He stated that Bike to Work Day would be taking place on Thursday May 15th, and urged all to participate if possible.
- 5. Director's Report:** Manager Cunningham stated that Commissioner Piller would be arriving late, and the Commission may want to change the order of the agenda items to accommodate. He further stated that Commissioner Piller and volunteers had weeded the right side of the Vet's Building entrance and would complete the left side on June 17th. Commissioner Piller wished to thank members of the ball team and some individual citizens such as Alan Maris.

Chair Pilch asked if there were any updates on the BART retrofit project. Manager Cunningham stated that the City had received 65% plans from BART and as expected they had followed a conservative path of putting things back as they were. He stated that the City would continue to negotiate and had not signed off on any modification to the letter of agreement. He stated that City administrator Beth Pollard wanted to be sure that Albany received the same treatment as El Cerrito and Berkeley and temporary re-routing was important to Albany while BART was working on the retrofit. Manager Cunningham stated that plans were available at the Community Development Department.

Chair Pilch questioned the condition of the turf at Memorial Park and reinstallation of landscape fabric. Manager Cunningham stated that landscape fabric would not be reinstalled due to dog damage, but mulch would be used. He questioned the Commission as to whether new turf should be installed on the south side of the Park before or after 4th of July. Commissioner Trout was in favor of waiting until after and putting up notification of those plans on the 4th. Commissioner Wilmsen and Chair Pilch agreed.

- 6. Discussion and possible action on matters related to the following items, which could include reports and/or proposed resolutions if any:**

Motion:

Motion to move item 6-1 to the end of the agenda made by Commissioner Mullarkey and seconded by Commissioner Trout. Motion carried all in favor.

6-2. Update from the Tree Task Force- The newly formed Tree Task Force will update the Commission on their recent meetings. Commissioner Trout stated that the Task Force was working on revising the approved tree list and had sent a letter to Gates and Associates regarding using the Ohlone Greenway for experimental street trees. He stated that the Task Force was also considering ways to spend their budget of \$10,000 before July 1st. Some of the ideas were; providing free trees to block captains, start up costs for a community tree nursery, working with a graphic designer to provide templates for the City website and a trees of Albany calendar, providing funds for demonstrations on corner planting, and street strips planting.

Commissioner Wilmsen stated that Urban Forester Tony Wolcott had been working on block parties and there would be a planting on June 16th. The Task Force was working on information sheets for homeowners. Commissioner Trout stated that one of the Task Force members would be dropping out, and the opening would be posted.

Public Comment: Albany residents questioned what was happening at Walker's Pie Shop and the Eucalyptus trees. Commissioner Trout stated that they were waiting for a report from the City arborist before taking any action. Chair Pilch stated that Mr. Wolcott would be returning in the next couple of meetings, and to watch for the posting of the agenda on the City website.

Commissioner Trout stated that street trees increase property values and well-forested commercial areas attract more foot traffic.

6-3.Update on Parks Projects- Updated information from the Public Works Manager re parks projects. Manager Cunningham stated that on June 2nd the notice of completion for all items the contractors could be held responsible for would go to Council. Minor projects would be completed using the balance of the funds remaining from the park projects. Commissioner Piller questioned if there would be recycling receptacles added to the parks. Manager Cunningham stated that appropriate recycling receptacles would be purchased and placed with surplus funds, and hoped it would become a Citywide mandate.

Commissioner Piller asked about the condition of the turf at Terrace Park and the status of signage. Manager Cunningham stated that the turf had been given a good resting period, and it remained to be seen what the effects of use would be. As for signage, he stated that it was a question for Director Leach that he could not answer.

Commissioner Piller questioned Manager Cunningham about the status of the plaques that were possibly slated to be installed on the fireplace and barbeque at Memorial Park. Manager Cunningham stated that a plaque with Council member names was intended for the right side of the barbeque and Commissioners on the fireplace. It was stated that there would not be sufficient space to include all of the names of the Commissioners working during the project time period. Commissioner Mullarkey suggested not naming any members specifically, but rather recognize all who worked on the Commissions during the time period from beginning to the end of the Master Plan and park projects.

Motion:

If it is decided to create a plaque for the space provided on the fireplace at Memorial Park, motion to recommend to Council a plaque, recognizing all Park and Recreation Commissioners from 2004 through the present, without specific names, made by Commissioner Mullarkey and seconded by Commissioner Trout. Motion carried all in favor.

Manager Cunningham asked for direction on the plaque area designated for the Council.

Motion:

If it is decided to create a plaque for the barbeque at Memorial Park, motion to recommend to Council the creation of a plaque that included names of all Council members from the inception to completion of the parks project made by Commissioner Piller and seconded by Commissioner Wilmsen. Motion carried all in favor.

Motion:

Motion to recommend to Council, support for recycling bins at all parks and other public areas throughout the City made by Commissioner Trout and seconded by Commissioner Wilmsen. Motion carried all in favor.

Manager Cunningham stated that the bleachers at the Memorial Park tennis courts had been installed.

6-4. Update of the Artwork at Memorial- The Memorial Park public art project is anticipated to be opened in time for the Spring Arts and Music Festival in the park on May 4. Manager Cunningham stated that there had been disputes about the lettering on the artwork plaque. Chair Pilch read a memo from Art's Committee chair Nan Wishner stating that there were a few things that remained to be finished. The plaques needed to be ordered and installed and the Art's Committee would address the final finish on the concrete at their May 19th meeting.

6-1. Preliminary Report on Budget for Landscape and Lighting Assessment Districts, 2008-09 FY. The City has two assessment districts that were established pursuant to the provisions of the Streets and Highway codes. Each year it is necessary for the Commission to review the scope of work and budget activities within each district for the next fiscal year. Manager Cunningham stated that some of the significant highlights were the allocation of \$10,000 for resurfacing of the tennis courts at Terrace Park, an increase of playing field maintenance budgets, an increase in sidewalk maintenance budget and the allocation of \$10,000 for the Tree Task Force that would not expire.

Manager Cunningham stated that the Community Center tower was a concern. The dollar sum designated for repair was not necessarily sufficient and the amount needed would be contingent on the outcome of litigation. He further stated that despite the positive fund balance it would be necessary to raise further capital for the purchase of property on Albany Hill, and possible compromise with the developers would need to be reached.

Manager Cunningham stated that staff did not recommend designating funds for Catherine's Walk, as it did not connect to public thoroughways, it presented liability issues and staff could not make improvements that were up to engineering standards due to the cost, which was estimated at \$250,000. Commissioner Wilmsen stated that it added character and value to the neighborhood.

Commissioner Piller questioned what funds could be used for the Veteran's Building. Manager Cunningham stated that the 96 funds only could be used, but they fell far short. He further stated that money from Measure R could also be used for the Vet's Building.

Commissioner Piller stated that it was his feeling that most of the funds would be needed to repair the Community Center tower and he would be reluctant to allocate the funds for anything else until those costs were clearer. Manager Cunningham suggested that the repair of the tower might be incorporated into a broader plan, to add a second story to the Community Center.

Motion:

Motion to state that after reviewing the Landscaping and Lighting report and noting that many items had been accomplished, the Commission was not prepared to make recommendations to Council for further expenditures made by Commissioner Piller and seconded by Commissioner Mullarkey. Motion carried 4 in favor and 1 abstention.

Manager Cunningham stated that it should be noted that a Commission subcommittee had met with staff to go over the report in detail, and had interacted and participated in the allocation of \$10,000 for open space maintenance and Terrace Park tennis court resurfacing.

- 7. Future Agenda Items:** Chair Pilch stated that Commissioner Mullarkey would be chairing the Commission in June and recommended items for the future were; signs at the parks, the status of the plaques at Memorial Park and the joint use agreement with the AUSD.

Commissioner Piller stated that all were welcome to participate in the next weeding project on June 17th

- 8. Adjournment: 9:12 pm**