

Attachment #3

DRAFT

**A Regular Meeting Of The Park And Recreation Commission
Minutes
Thursday, December 8, 2005
Albany Community Center
1249 Marin Ave.
7:15 p.m.**

- I. Call to Order:** 7:20 p.m. Commissioners present: Chair Piller, Riffer, Linden, Parker, and Larman.

Staff present: Melinda Chinn, Barbie Gary, Bill Algire, and Rich Cunningham

- II. Review of Minutes-November 10, 21 and 30, 2005:** Motion to approve the minutes of November 10, 2005 made by Commissioner Riffer and seconded by Commissioner Kindle. Approved 5-0. Motion to approve the minutes of November 21, 2005 as amended made by Commissioner Riffer and seconded by Commissioner Parker. Approved 5-0. Motion to approve the minutes of November 30, 2005 made by Commissioner Parker and seconded by Commissioner Linden. Motion approved 3-0, with 3 abstentions. The meeting of November 30 was an informational meeting only due to a lack of quorum.

- III. Public Form:** None

- IV. Comments/Announcements by Commissioners:** Commissioner Larman informed the Commission that he will be resigning from the Commission once a replacement commissioner has been appointed. Commissioner Linden noted that she spoke with the City arborist, Steve Batchelder regarding the health of the ginkgo tree located at the Community Center. The Commission recommended that staff comply with the recommendations of the arborist regarding the care of the tree.

- V. Comments/Announcements by the Director of Recreation & Community Services:** None

- VI. Discussion and possible action on matters related to the following items:**

1. Introduction and discussion of an IPM Program:

- 1.1** Mike Blankinship from Blankinship and Associates introduced the topic and discussed how the Commission might proceed with the development of an IPM program. Public Works Manager, Rich Cunningham, introduced Mr. Blankinship and mentioned that his role tonight was to frame the concept of an IPM program and that the City has not committed to a contract with him at this time for developing an IPM program. Mr. Blankinship led the Commission through an outline describing what an IPM program is, how it is done, why it is

used and how it can be applied in Albany. Chair Piller inquired about the next step the Commission should take and Mr. Blankinship suggested that the Commission evaluate a policy statement, share it with the City Council who could enact an ordinance for an IPM policy. The next step would be to define how the policy would be implemented within the City. He also noted that the policy should be very broad.

Commissioner Larman asked Mr. Cunningham if current practices would change much when a policy was adopted and Mr. Cunningham replied that technique would not change much since the City has, by default, already adopted many of the discussed strategies. Commissioner Riffer stated that the Master Plan already gives a broad statement of principle of an IPM philosophy and specifics need to be detailed out for staff to provide more guidance. Mr. Blankinship noted that the City should determine their resources, establish what pests are at each site and a threshold for these pests so that detail can be broken out by site or facility.

Albany resident, Roger Carlsen, commented that in Albany some people are opposed to the use of any pesticides and some people accept the use for specific chemicals if no other options are available. He suggested that the City should determine what chemicals are acceptable and how and when they would be used. Resident Lloyd Henrys suggested that the Commission look at other communities with IPM programs or the Bio Integral Resource Center for guidance in developing a plan and possibly utilize a Cal student to identify pest problems. Mara Duncan, Albany resident, asked if Mr. Blankinship has worked with other cities that have an IPM program prohibiting the use of chemicals and he responded in the negative.

Chair Piller presented the future schedule for the planning of the IPM policy which would include examining other nearby communities' IPM policies and receiving recommendations from staff regarding obtaining an independent consultant and determining a budget. Director Chinn noted that the expertise of a consultant is preferred and the City would complete an RFP process to obtain a consultant. Mr. Cunningham agreed and suggested that the City know what they want in a policy before beginning the RFP process and can then find a consultant who is adaptable and represents the community. The commission directed staff to proceed with the next steps that staff has recommended and continue this discussion at the January meeting. Chair Piller noted that if funding is needed to proceed, the commission should go to the City Council as soon as possible to request funding. Resident Nan Wishner inquired if the public would be involved with the IPM planning process and Chair Piller responded that all meetings are open to the public.

2. Parks Rehabilitation Project:

2.1 Review and discussion regarding actions taken by the City Council regarding the parks rehabilitation project at the November 7 and December

5, 2005 meetings: Chair Piller noted that the City Council reserved several issues for the Commission to further discuss, including the number of trees slated for removal at Ocean View Park, the proposed community room at Terrace Park, turf removal and maintenance at Memorial Park and the budget for art projects in the park.

- 2.2 Discussion and action regarding the Commission's recommendation to the City Council regarding the use or non-use of chemicals for turf removal in the parks rehabilitation project:** Chair Piller noted that the industry standard for turf removal is the use of Round-up or similar chemical versus mechanical removal. He stated that City staff was not sure yet if soil at Memorial Park field would need to be removed regardless of which method of turf removal is used. Staff is intending to conduct soil samples in the next few weeks and will know one way or another by the next commission meeting. Chair Piller also commented that the City could not get a contractor to warranty the turf regardless of the removal method. Commissioner Larman inquired about other options for turf removal, such as scalping, and Landscape Architect, John Cahalan, noted that the soil needed to be broken up and soil amendments added. Mr. Cahalan stated that some topsoil would be imported regardless of the removal method to regrade the field.

Mr. Algire suggested the Commission review their handout on Turf Management and Weed Maintenance that he had provided them. Ms. Wishner asked for clarification regarding the use or non-use of chemicals on the turf at Memorial Park and inquired if other non-chemical alternatives are available or if discontinuing the irrigation of the grass was an option to kill the turf. Mr. Blankinship replied that other methods would not completely eliminate the turf. Chair Piller asked staff for their recommendations on how to proceed and Mr. Algire noted that there is still time before the removal specifications need to be determined but a general idea regarding the use, limited use or non-use of chemicals for turf removal would be helpful.

Chair Piller suggested that the issue be tabled until staff has more information and completed additional research regarding the core tests for the soil. Chair Piller also noted that the Commission would need to address how the new turf will be maintained in the future. Commissioner Linden asked if the soil amendments and topsoil would be screened before it is brought in and Mr. Blankinship noted that the City would be able to specify what they want. Motion to table the discussion regarding turf removal methods made by Commissioner Kindle and seconded by Commissioner Riffer. Motion approved 6-0. This issue will be revisited at the January 12, 2006 commission meeting and staff will report this to the City Council at their December 19th meeting

- 2.3 Review of Commission Meeting of November 21, 2005 and discussion and actions pertaining to Ocean View Park area south of the Teen Center.** Chair Piller summarized the outcome of the November 21st meeting regarding tree removals at the park and noted that in response to the concern about the number

of trees slated for removal, staff worked with Mr. Cahalan to reconfigure the plan for the picnic area. Mr. Cahalan presented the new layout and announced that only 13 redwoods would be removed under the new plan instead of 24. He commented that some trees needed to be removed to allow more light in the area and make the picnic area ADA accessible. The new design eliminated some picnic tables and moved the picnic area slightly, added a teen patio, boulder climber rock, swings, a small preschool play structure and revised the volleyball court to be a grass court rather than sand.

Chair Piller clarified that the arborist identified one pine tree was diseased and Commissioner Riffer added that the arborist also pointed out other pine trees were in questionable condition. Commissioner Larman commented that he liked the new design elements and suggested that native trees and plants be planted around the concrete picnic area. Commissioner Kindle asked why large trees were marked for removal rather than smaller trees and Commissioner Parker asked if even more trees could be saved by moving the picnic area slightly.

Commissioner Linden stated that she felt the new plan was a great improvement and possibly more trees could be saved if several picnic tables were eliminated. She expressed concern about the how barbeques might affect the trees. Commissioner Linden also suggested the design consider the use of portable sidewalks to protect the tree roots and cautioned bringing in redwood chips to cover the ground of the picnic area. Resident, Bart Grossman, remarked that he thought the design was conventional, that the volleyball court would go unused, and that the redwood grove should be left alone and the picnic area relocated behind the grove. Ms. Wishner suggested switching the locations of the swings and the ADA accessible picnic area to save more trees and to investigate phasing out the pines and replacing with new trees. Commissioner Kindle suggested removing the 13 smallest trees and shifting the picnic area slightly.

Chair Piller reminded the commission and audience that the commission is trying to meet the needs of the community by providing an improved picnic area but also being sensitive to the number of trees removed. Ms. Duncan commented that children like the shade of the trees and felt that the picnic area will probably never be utilized. Discussion continued regarding the merits of the new design, how it will be used and if it met the needs of the community. Mr. Algire noted that the City needed to move out of the conceptual stage and into the design stage 45 days ago and direction from the commission is needed to proceed. Commissioner Riffer inquired if the cost of new design would be similar to the previous design and Mr. Cahalan confirmed that it would be similar. Commissioner Linden noted that she would prefer to see the trees slated for removal posted before making a decision to which Mr. Algire replied that the trees can be posted and Mr. Cahalan would make the design changes suggested by the commission. Motion to accept the plan as revised with the following changes: removing the 13 smallest trees subject to the contingency that Mr. Cahalan can determine that the plan as presented can be reconfigured to accommodate that restriction. Motion made by Commissioner Kindle and

seconded by Commissioner Parker. Motion approved 4-2. Commissioner Linden made a second motion to direct Mr. Cahalan to redraw the design, have the trees labeled for the public to view and the commission to make a visit to the site once posted. Motion seconded by Commissioner Larman and the motion received a 2-4 vote so failed to pass. Chair Piller noted that staff would mark the trees so that commissioners could visit the grove on an individual basis as of December 12th.

- 2.4 Review of the Commission Meeting of November 21, 2005 and discussion and action regarding the proposed Terrace Park community room:** Chair Piller summarized the discussion from the meeting and that the final consensus was to eliminate the community room from the design due to parking and safety concerns. Motion made by Commissioner Parker to recommend to the City Council to eliminate the community room from the park plan. Motion seconded by Commissioner Riffer and approved 5-0. Chair Piller noted that many community members have commented that they would like to see the funding from the community room stay at Terrace Park for cost overruns such as drainage. He noted that the Commission can recommend to the City Council to keep the money at the park, however, the money may be needed for other park projects and extra money would go to the contingency fund. Regarding the lighting at the park, Chair Piller noted that park neighbors were concerned about lighting. He noted that lighting would be at the restrooms for security purposes.
- 2.5 Review of the joint meeting with the Arts Committee for November 30, 2005 and action regarding the art component of the parks rehabilitation project:** Chair Piller stated that the Arts Committee would be responsible for determining how the 2% of the entire park improvement project budget will be divided between the parks. Arts Committee representative, Nan Wishner, gave the Commission an overview of the Arts Committee's priorities for art projects at each park. Motion to accept the recommendations of the Arts Committee for conceptual designs made by Commissioner Kindle and seconded by Commissioner Linden. Motion approved 6-0.
- 2.6 Discussion and action regarding whether a memo to city staff from the City's historical building consultants (dated 11/21/05) regarding the proposed Memorial Park improvements warrants a change in the Commission's previous recommendations to the Council regarding the Memorial Park improvements.** Chair Piller asked the commission if the commission wants to recommend to the City Council that they rethink the plans for the park based on this study and memo from Siegel and Strain. The memo opposes the new park plans because the plans are not historically accurate. Commissioner Linden noted that she appreciates historical preservation of buildings and finds the memo interesting and inquired if grants could be obtained in the future to keep the building historically accurate. Mr. Algire noted that thus far, the County Staff have approved of the park improvement design. Chair Piller suggested that the memo be part of a staff report to be presented to the City Council. Motion made by Commissioner Riffer to proceed with presenting the memo to the City Council and recommend that Council proceed with the approved current design. Motion

voted 4-0 with one abstention. Commissioner Larman recused himself due to the close proximity of his residence to the park.

3. New Facility Use Agreement between the City and the Albany Unified School District:

- 3.1 Discussion and action on how the Commission intends to proceed with negotiation of a new facility use agreement with AUSD. Item postponed until the January 12, 2006 meeting

VII. Nomination and Election of Commission Chair and Vice-Chair for 2006:

Commissioner Linden made a motion to nominate Commissioner Riffer as the Chair of the Park & Recreation Commission. Commissioner Riffer accepted the nomination and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Kindle. Motion approved 6-0. Commissioner Parker nominated Commissioner Linden for the position of Vice-Chair and Commissioner Linden accepted the nomination. Approved by a vote of 6-0.

VIII. Staff Reports: Item postponed until the January 12, 2006 meeting.

IX. Adjournment. Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Kindle and seconded by Commissioner Riffer. Meeting adjourned at 11:32 p.m.