



**WATERFRONT COMMITTEE
REGULAR (ALTERNATE) MEETING
MINUTES**

**Community Center
1249 Marin Avenue
Monday, September 22, 2008 – 7:30 P.M.**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Parker at 7:33 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Brian Parker Kathy Diehl Eddy So
 Bill Dann Clay Larson
 Steve Granholm Francesco Papalia

Staff Present: Ann Chaney

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3-1. Approve minutes from July 14, 2008 meeting (attached)

Approval of minutes postponed until the next meeting.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

5. DISCUSSIONS AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS, WHICH COULD INCLUDE REPORTS AND/OR PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS IF ANY:

5-1. Report from Police Chief Mike McQuiston regarding activities at Albany Waterfront Park

Chief McQuiston provided an update of activities conducted at the waterfront to enforce park regulations. The City recently conducted maintenance of the access roads to improve the ability to respond to situations at the park, and to provide routine patrols. Signage regarding park rules will be installed in the near future.

Dispatch reports from June 2008 through September 2008 were summarized.

Granholm asked what the goal is for frequency of patrol.

Chief McQuiston replied that they are working to institutionalize the area among the patrol force to recognize the area as a public park.

Dann asked about dog bites and if police responds to these calls.

Chief McQuiston replied that the police do respond, and work with Berkeley Animal Control.

Larson stated he finds the City's enforcement of overnight camping inconsistent. He recommends City Council determine a policy for enforcement.

Chief McQuiston replied that accessibility to the area was limited, but is now improved following maintenance of the roadways. A major enforcement program was conducted in 1999.

Diehl asked about management of off-leash dogs, whether the police department is reactive or proactive. Chief McQuiston replied that currently they are reactive.

So asked about the dispatch reports, and how the current reporting period compares to other years, and whether there is any particular season that crime increases.

Chief McQuiston replied that the summer months seem to bring an increase to crime as more people are active in the area. The area is fairly isolated, and extra caution should be taken after dark.

Papalia asked about the number of homeless, and whether there are more during certain seasons.

Chief McQuiston replied that summer is conducive to an increase in campsites. It is difficult to determine the current number of active campsites.

Papalia asked about enforcement of dog leash laws.

Chief McQuiston replied that currently dogs are allowed to be off leash on the bulb, but under control.

Papalia asked about public gatherings in the area and how they are enforced.

Chief McQuiston replied that he has been in discussion with staff regarding what type of activities and events should be sanctioned. Evening parties at the bulb have been discouraged.

So asked about the goal of patrolling the area, and would like the area to be incorporated into regular patrols, such as once a night.

Chief McQuiston replied that it is difficult to identify a particular frequency of patrolling the area given that police patrolling varies significantly depending on what must be responded to on a daily basis. There are particular areas that require frequent patrolling, and the waterfront will likely be incorporated into this as accessibility continues to improve.

Parker asked how the police department coordinates with EBRPD.

Chief McQuiston replied that EBRPD manages their own property, at times the two will work in cooperation.

Parker asked about vandalism at the park, and how well the new portable restroom is faring.

Chief McQuiston replied that it seems to be fairing well. There are varying interpretations of vandalism, and the area seems to attract creativity, which can be considered as art.

Parker noted that the definition of art at the waterfront should be an issue that is further defined by the Committee or perhaps the Art Commission.

Parker asked about public education, and encouraged the police department to increase their networking with the community.

Chief McQuiston replied that they are working on increasing the amount of information provided on the City's website and other methods.

5-2. Request by Albany Police to install “No Parking Tow-Away” signage for the hours of 11:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. at the entrance of the Waterfront Park (see attachment)

Chaney reported that the signage is intended to discourage illicit activities in the area. The Traffic & Safety Commission recently approved this item, and will be taken to City Council for approval. Chaney noted the 90 degree parking is actually Golden Gate Fields property that has been provided for park users. Larson suggested that the code sections be researched by the City Attorney to ensure they are appropriate. Papalia asked how enforcement is possible on private property.

Chief McQuiston replied that enforcement on private property is allowable and is conducted.

So asked whether there will be a specific frequency for patrolling the signage.

Chief McQuiston replied that the frequent patrols of the area will cover enforcement of signage.

Larson motioned the Committee support the limitation on parking as identified in the staff report, with the caveat that the City Attorney reviews and makes a determination that the City has the authority within the ordinance. Seconded by Papalia.

Vote: unanimously approved.

5-3. Report from Fern Tiger Associates regarding waterfront visioning process (information will be distributed at the meeting)

Fern Tiger Associates (FTA) provided an update, and a binder of information regarding the work they have conducted to date.

FTA is 4.5 months into the project, with Phase I scheduled to end in January. A total of 71 interviews have been conducted, representing a strong cross section of the community. A number of site visits have been conducted, and a significant amount of research has been completed.

FTA focused on the “hot button” items. Six critical issues have emerged:

1. A lack of trust, a history of conflict

There have been particular sides identified with conflicting visions for the area. This makes it critical that all information developed and identified in this process is well documented and cited.

2. Financial and open space tradeoffs

There are concerns about financial stability of the City and the schools. There is also a high value placed on open space. There is a concern that there is difficulty identifying a balance between the two. This process will identify tradeoffs to both interests and provide guidance on how to make educated decisions.

3. Land status, status of GGF

Some believe that public funds can be used to purchase the property, the property owner has publicly stated that the property is not going to be sold. This process needs to include a framework/roadmap on how to retain the property should the opportunity arise.

4. Capacity and interest of community to engage in a planning process regarding the land

It appears that there are fewer than 100 people actively involved in waterfront planning discussions. There is also a potential underlying sense that there is a negativity regarding the topic. FTA will respect the dynamic of the community and the history of earlier processes, and ensure that the current process is fair, well documented and transparent. The current process also needs to be engaging, informative and exciting.

5. Regional vs. local decision

The waterfront provides regional access, however Albany residents feel strongly that the decision should reside with them as they are responsible for, and directly impacted by any land changes. FTA will design an engagement process that recognizes the regional concerns with Albany residents leading in the decision making process.

6. What is the property site and how is it defined

While the focus is on GGF, it is critical to make sure the relationship between the property and adjacent properties is considered. FTA will create a process that does not limit discussion and that considers the broader impact at the waterfront.

FTA identified a number of contradicting opinions they have heard regarding the waterfront.

FTA's outreach engagement strategies fall into 6 major goals: build trust, excitement & interest, information & knowledge, audiences & participation, awareness, and serve as a model.

FTA has researched a number of public engagement models with a goal to reach 600 adults and also include a special outreach component for youth. The outreach will take place over 12 weeks and involve small groups of people.

There are four potential models FTA is considering for Part 1:

1. 60 days, 60 dialogues, self organizing model – small group sessions, hosts invite 10-15 people to a group.
2. Random sampling model – an assignment for participation by different methods, 10-12 workshops held, people are assigned to small groups at the workshops, lasting for 4 consecutive weekends. There are also various options for setting up this type of workshop in particular zones within the city.
3. Citywide date with the waterfront – multiple citywide sessions regarding the waterfront would occur in one day. Small groups would be formed at the workshops.
4. Block by block model – FTA is leaning towards this model. The city is divided up into approximately 60 sections by adjoining blocks. Each section would be invited to attend a session, convened at a certain day and time, focus would be to engage residents among neighbors. Individual invitations would be delivered.

Part 1 would take place between March and May, with an official launch to be developed. The outcome of Part 1 will be synthesized over the summer and used as a basis to develop Part 2, which would take place beginning in September. There is the potential to develop task forces following Part 1 to analyze particular issues further.

FTA will be doing presentations to all City Commissions/Committees and Council in October to engage them in the process. They will also be working with the School District, and are developing background information for the community.

Following Part 2, FTA will synthesize a report and present it in winter 2010. FTA is researching how to brand the process.

So asked for time to review the materials provided and for FTA to attend a future meeting. So would like the ability for the public to ask FTA questions regarding the status report, and that these be part of the public record.

FTA replied that this is a status report based upon the findings from interviews conducted, and that there are not specific responses that need to be made now.

Papalia appreciates the objectivity and level of information provided by FTA. Supports FTA picking the public engagement model that they think will work since they are the experts.

Diehl agrees with So and would like to discuss the item again at a future meeting.

Larson would like the project area to be clarified.

Parker recommended the item be agendaized and the Committee review the minutes to determine what was said.

FTA stated that waterfront planning should include the entire property area, and consider the City as a whole.

Parker stated he supports a community engagement process that includes multiple dates and suggested phone calls be made to those who are invited in addition to mailing an invitation, and would like it to be well documented to ensure all are aware.

Parker asked about the need for a survey and subconsultants.

FTA replied that the process is providing much richer data than a survey could provide. The item will be reviewed at a later time in the process to determine if it is necessary. FTA is continuing to conduct environmental and economic review, and will identify if there is a need to retain subconsultants later in the process.

So asked if FTA has the capacity to assist members of the community that speak different languages. FTA indicated they will determine the need and seek out assistance as necessary.

Public Comment:

Allan Maris: agrees this is a regional issue. Feels educating the public is extremely important.

FTA indicated some city staff and some interest groups that were interviewed are non-residents. FTA will conduct a heavy public information and outreach campaign.

Thelma Rubin: asked about the model that includes hosts at the meetings, and whether they will be given guidelines.

FTA replied that they would seek out hosts and identify locations for the meetings to ensure accessibility.

Ed Moore: requests documents provided ahead of time to allow time for review by the public. Would like consideration of re-zoning and wants non-resident input to be included.

FTA replied the materials will be provided following the City Council meeting. FTA is reviewing re-zoning concepts. Albany residents indicated that they would like the planning process to focus on residents. FTA is analyzing how to include a regional discussion as well.

FTA will return to the Committee in October.

So would like to ensure the public has opportunity to submit questions and comments, and have them as public record.

Parker suggested questions and comments be submitted by Wednesday October 8 to allow time for review prior to the next Committee meeting.

5-4. Report from Planning Review Subcommittee regarding possible topics for updating city waterfront planning documents

The Committee agreed to postpone this item to the next agenda.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

6-1. Observations from walking tour of Waterfront Park held on September 13

The Committee agreed to postpone this item to the next agenda.

6-2. Report on Coastal Clean-Up held on September 20

The Committee agreed to postpone this item to the next agenda.

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

7-1. Next meeting October 13, 2008

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:56p.m.