



WATERFRONT COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING Minutes

**Community Center
1249 Marin Avenue
Monday, April 13, 2009 – 7:30 P.M.**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Diehl at 7:35 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Dann Granholm Papalia
 Diehl Larson So

Members Absent: Parker
Staff Present: Ann Chaney
Others Present: Fern Tiger Associates

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3-1. Approve Minutes from March 9, 2009 and March 30, 2009 meetings

March 30 minutes approved as amended. March 9 minutes will be revised and provided to the Committee for additional review.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Dann announced the April 19th Earth Day cleanup at the waterfront.
Papalia reported Penelope Leach provided an update regarding dogs in parks. The City Council will be considering establishing an ordinance with limitations on hours that dogs will be allowed off-leash in parks. The Park and Recreation Commission will be providing recommendations to City Council. The Committee is encouraged to coordinate on this ordinance with the Park and Recreation Commission.
Papalia also reported that he attended an East Bay Regional Park District meeting (EBRPD). The EBRPD approved seeking grant funds to analyze the feasibility of Albany beach restoration. Papalia encouraged EBRPD to include a restroom facility in the restoration plans. EBRPD agreed to this request.

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

5-1. Consider Committee attendance at trial run of visioning seminars - Fern Tiger and Associates

Fern Tiger reported that the trial run will consist of a group of people accustomed to facilitating and have done a number of community sessions that will provide input on the seminar methodology. It is important to ensure the materials and seminars conducted are neutral and unbiased.
Granholm agreed with Fern Tiger and feels the Committee should not interfere in the trial run or publication.
Larson agreed with Granholm, but noted most publications include a pre-publication phase of review. So stated he does not see why observation of the trial run by committee members could impact the neutrality of the process.
Diehl agreed with Granholm.
No action was taken on the item.

5-2. Measure WW

a. Present proposals identified by Committee for Local Grant Program allocation - \$771,363 Citywide

So provided three proposed projects, the second proposal is the bay trail, which may not qualify for the funding stipulations. So focused on his first and third proposed projects: 1) remove re-bar & construction debris – this would improve safety of the park and existing rebar/construction debris could be a liability and discourages the State park from taking over the property. The staff estimate for this project is \$250,000, about 1/3 of the total funds.
2) repair the south pier – this could provide increased recreational opportunities for the park users, and greater accessibility to the bay. The cost estimate is based on a similar project conducted in Virginia at approximately \$350,000, ½ of the total funds.

So suggested Chaney review the property boundaries to determine if the pier improvement areas are within Albany's jurisdiction.

Larson cited that the Measure WW guidelines require consistency with any planning documents developed for parks. The City's Recreation & Open Space Park Master Plan excludes the bulb area. Chaney replied that the pier area is under the State Park control and included as part of the Eastshore State Park plan.

Papalia provided a proposal to improve the areas adjacent to the cove including the seating area with new landscaping and improvements to the "triangle" area (intersection of the paths) west of the cove that includes fruit trees in raised beds, terraced triangle planting area and new trees to the south and west to protect the space. Two four-foot walls would be constructed in the "triangle" area to protect and terrace the area. The project would also include relocating bike racks, installing picnic tables and seating areas. The plant species were selected by Tony Wolcott the City's Urban Forester and the tree species are tough species that would adapt well to the weather conditions at the waterfront. Tony would manage the planting, with assistance of the community at a planting work project. Estimated cost is between \$15-20,000, and meets all of the Measure WW requirements.

Larson asked if the plants are native.

Papalia stated they may not all be native, but are adaptable to the environment.

Larson asked if an irrigation system is needed.

Papalia replied that there is remaining drip irrigation system, and the parking lot area may have pressure water valves that can be connected to – Tony is researching this item.

Granholm stated he liked the idea, but would like the Waterfront Committee to assist with the design phase to discuss specifics regarding plants.

Diehl agreed with Granholm.

Larson provided a proposal, as taken from the Open Space & Recreational Master Plan to improve Albany's linear waterfront park. The project includes enhancing the existing park and installation of a drinking fountain. There is a lot of maintenance that should be done including graffiti, weeding, improving the fencing. It would include enhancing the cove and replace the existing irrigation with actual plumbing of potable water that serves a drinking fountain, educational enhancements to the area, a bathroom facility. The price was estimated at \$75,000 within the plan, but Larson thinks this estimate is low.

Dann provided three proposals: 1) to develop an enclosed area for children and park users that would be protected from the dogs that are off leash. The area would be located near the bathroom area. Cost estimate is approximately \$50,000.

2) Improve accessibility at the end of Madison Street at Albany Hill.

Granholm stated a path exists – Dann removed this item.

3) Alternative energy studies at the park – researching solar or other alternatives. Cost estimate is \$20,000.

Diehl suggested the alternative energy item be included with other improvements that may otherwise require traditional electricity.

Diehl provided a proposal to create a plan to assess and remove rebar. This would help improve accessibility at the waterfront for all ages, and help leverage additional funding if a plan was developed. Estimate is \$95,000, 12% of total funds.

Public Comment:

Alan Marris: a cost estimate has been developed for irrigation at the waterfront by maintenance department staff. Encouraged the \$27 Million component of Measure WW fund the concrete/rebar removal.

Caryl O'Keefe: supported Diehl and So's recommendation to remove safety hazards at the bulb.

Brian Parsley: agrees with O'Keefe, and would like to see improvements to remove safety hazards.

Granholm stated his proposal is that the \$27 million of Measure WW for Eastshore State Park improvements/expansion cover the costs of his recommended projects for the Albany waterfront. To prepare a two special area plans - one for the Albany Plateau, and one Bulb and Neck, similar to what was done for the Brickyard Cove and Berkeley Meadow area. The special area plan for the Plateau should be consistent with Eastshore State park General plan, with informal recreation picnic area, turf area, restrooms and landscaping, non-native plants should be replaced with native plants. The second project is to implement the plan.

The third project is to develop a specific plan for Albany Bulb and Neck, including all governing agencies. The plan would include how the land would be transferred to the State. Cleanup of the area will be required, while trying to maintain the character of the area.

The fourth project is to implement the specific area plan for the Bulb and Neck.

Larson stated safety issues can vary, the cleanup proposals seem to be inconsistent with the Open Space & Recreation Master plan and may create contention with community that would prefer the "let it be approach" for the area.

So disagreed, noting that cleanup of the area would provide a direct benefit for recreational users and help remove the risk of safety hazards.

Granholm agreed with Larson, many parks have inherent safety hazards. The special area plan could help outline a publicly supported plan for managing the area.

Dann supported removing major safety hazards.

Papalia encouraged the Committee to select a project that takes action to improve the waterfront, and suggests implementing the cove redesign, incorporation of potable water, and establishment of enforceable dog leash regulations to encourage recreational use by Albany residents. This will help reclaim the waterfront for Albany.

Diehl presented the rating sheet for the proposed projects.

Bay trail extension was deleted.

Diehl revised her proposal to rebar assessment and removal.

Dann's two proposals - no dogs allowed area and alternative energy source were added to the rating sheet.

Committee members ranked their top three preferred projects. Chaney tallied the rankings.

Waterfront trail improvements – 11 votes

Rebar assessment removal – 9 votes

Cove triangle improvements – 9 votes

Chaney will provide a written summary of the rankings for the Park and Recreation Commission meeting.

b. \$27 million for Eastshore State Park improvements/expansion

Diehl reported that the City Council asked the Committee to provide recommendations for land acquisition and improvements with an interim report due back to the City Council in June 2009. A dialogue will need to be initiated with EBRPD, the Committee will need to identify what they would like to see done. There may also be an opportunity to ask City Council for a time extension. Diehl suggested the Whitney Dobsen be invited to the May Committee meeting to discuss whether EBRPD has a plan for how funds may be spent. Diehl would also like the Committee to have an opportunity to identify projects and identify a priority project to recommend to EBRPD.

Granholm stated he would like specific/special area plans developed and implemented, similar to what was done in the Berkeley Meadow and Brickyard areas.

Larson suggested staff identify how the Committee should engage with EBRPD.

Chaney reported the funding also includes expansion of the park. Hartman of GGF attended a recent City Council meeting and detailed how the property bid process would be working.

Papalia suggested recommending acquisition of the Bulb, and that the funding available under Measure WW would enable EBRPD to improve it as necessary for recreational use.

So supports discussing the potential projects with EBRPD. EBRPD may be hesitant to acquire the Bulb because of potential liabilities of the land.

Granholm stated he proposed the special area plans because it is how the EBRPD typically conducts its planning process, and would serve as a forum to resolve transfer issues as part of the planning process.

Diehl summarized that three different ideas have been proposed:

- 1) Granholm's proposal to develop and implement specific area plans
- 2) Diehl's proposal to acquire additional land from GGF

3) Papalia's proposal to offer acquisition of the Bulb as-is with the funding available under Measure WW for EBRPD to improve the land as needed

Larson suggested adding So's proposal to continue the pier. So agreed.

Larson suggested continuing to the next meeting.

Public Comment:

Alan Marris – suggested the conversation with EBRPD include specific positions regarding Measure WW.

Edward Moore – encouraged the Committee to collaborate with Berkeley and EBRPD to pursue purchase of the GGF property.

Caryl O'Keefe – suggested acquisition of the Bay Trail extension.

Brian Parsley – agrees with Papalia.

Diehl clarified that there is also funding available for the Bay Trail within Measure WW.

So asked staff if there was any requirement for transferring the property to EBRPD.

Chaney replied that a lease was entered into between the City and the State regarding transfer of the property. Chaney suggested providing a copy of the lease for the Committee's review.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS

6-1. December 31, 2008 correspondence from Ed Moore regarding Ferry Terminal EIR/EIS and Waterfront as a cultural landscape eligible for the National Register of Historic Places

Edward Moore noted that the communication also includes a 4-page letter regarding the property. Fern Tiger's study and publication should further detail the cultural landscape.

6-2. Proposed Berkeley Humane Society "Bay to Barkers" event at the waterfront

Chaney reported that the Humane Society has inquired about holding their annual event at the waterfront. The event will be held on GGF property, which GGF has agreed to support. The event will be held on August 2nd from 10 – 1pm. They also would like to do a dog walk, which will include a portion of the Albany waterfront, on portions of EBRPD land and City land.

Diehl suggested this item be placed on the May agenda.

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

(Commission/Committee/Board Member announcement of requests for future agenda items. No public comment will be taken on announcement of future agenda items).

7.1 Next Meeting: Special Joint Meeting of Waterfront Committee and Park & Recreation Commission - April 27, 2009.

Next regular meeting – May 11 to include: Measure WW funding for the Bay trail, lease agreement between the State and City for the Bulb, Measure WW funding - \$27 Million for expansion/improvement to Eastshore State Park, Bay to Barkers event, bike rack request, signage at waterfront.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 p.m.