



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

**MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT
PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Administrative Office
5050 El Camino Real
Los Altos, CA 94022

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

DRAFT MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Director Cyr called the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee to order at 2:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Jed Cyr, Craig Gleason, Karen Holman

Members absent:

Staff present: General Manager Ana M. Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk Maria Soria, Executive Assistant/Deputy District Clerk Shaylynn Nelson, Planner II Mattea Curtis, Capital Project Manager III Ivana Yeung, and Skyline Area Superintendent Chris Barresi

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Public comment opened at 2:02 p.m.

Deputy District Clerk Shaylynn Nelson reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 2:02 p.m.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- 1. Approve the September 19, 2023 Planning and Natural Resources Committee Meeting Minutes.**

Public comment opened at 2:02 p.m.

Ms. Nelson reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 2:02 p.m.

Motion: Director Gleason moved, and Director Cyr seconded the motion to approve the September 19, 2023 Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting minutes.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 2-0-1 (Director Holman abstained)

2. Addition of a Legacy Road as a new Trail Segment at Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve, including Use Designation and Proposed Trail Name (R-23-141)

Mattea Curtis presented on the new trail segment in Russian Ridge. She provided a history of the site and shared the staff recommendation to designate the site as a trail, name the trail and include it in the formal trail network. Ms. Curtis reviewed the Board Naming Policy and described the steps staff undertook to arrive at the proposed name of “Fog Drift Vista.”

Chair Cyr expressed support for designating the site as a trail since the public is utilizing the site.

Director Gleason stated Fog Drift Vista is an appropriate name for the trail segment but expressed an interest in naming a future site “Badger’s Byway.”

Director Holman requested and received a summary of the written public comment that was submitted by Mike Vandeman in opposition to public access to open space, particularly for mountain bikes on trails.

Director Holman inquired if the rock outcroppings at the site were protected throughout the demolition process.

Capital Project Manager III Ivana Yeung confirmed the rock escarpments were protected.

Director Holman inquired if fog drift occurs at the trail segment.

Skyline Area Superintendent Chris Barresi confirmed that fog drift is visible.

Director Holman expressed her appreciation for the name Badger’s Byway and inquired if badgers are present at this location.

Mr. Malone stated badgers have been identified in the vicinity of the site, including Skyline Ridge, Russian Ridge, and the Audubon property.

Director Holman noted that she is not opposed to Fog Drift Vista but would like to honor the badger’s status. She inquired if there is a longer trail that could be named after the badger within approximately the next year.

Mr. Malone stated there is not an opportunity in the immediate future to name a trail after the badger but there will be opportunities in the future with new trail openings.

General Manager Ana Ruiz stated there may be an opportunity to name a new trail after badgers within the next five years.

Director Gleason expressed support for emphasizing the vista at the trail segment and remarked Badger's Bypass can be used in the future for a larger, more sustainable trail that honors the badger's habitat. He suggested a future site in Cloverdale as a potential opportunity.

Chair Cyr echoed Director Gleason's comments and suggested honoring the badgers with a more expansive site in the preserves.

Director Holman supported naming the trail segment Fog Drift Vista but noted she highly considered Badger's Byway. She stated that the Committee's motion should be explicitly clear to enable the full Board to consider this item on the Consent Calendar without questions.

Director Gleason inquired if this item would appear on the Consent Calendar if given unanimous approval by the Committee.

Ms. Ruiz recommended that this item go on the Consent Calendar if there is unanimous approval from the Committee. The Board can access the minutes to review the Committee's trail naming discussion.

Chair Cyr stated the item did not need to occur on the Consent Calendar and could be forwarded to the Board with the advisement that the Committee had a thorough discussion on the trail naming.

Ms. Ruiz confirmed that is an option but noted the Committee could proceed with the Fog Drift Vista name for this site and record in the minutes or the motion that the Committee would like to recognize badgers with a future trail naming opportunity within the grassland badger habitat area.

Director Holman inquired if there are other naming opportunities aside from new trails that could acknowledge badgers, such as Badger Meadow.

Ms. Ruiz explained the District does not typically name meadow areas but acknowledgements can occur through renaming existing trails or interpretive signs.

Chair Cyr stated that interpretive signs are a valuable way to raise awareness.

Director Holman suggested a two-part motion. The first part to name the Smith Driveway "Fog Drift Vista" and the second part a direction to staff to consider opportunities to highlight the importance of badgers in the Skyline area.

Chair Cyr queried if the second part belongs in the motion or if it should be a sidebar directive for staff.

Director Holman explained she put it in as part of the motion as it was one of the options specifically for this Smith Driveway location.

Ms. Stevenson clarified that the first part of the motion is the general manager's recommendation with the addition of the Committee directing staff to do additional work aside from trail designation and naming.

Director Holman confirmed the first part of the motion is the general manager's recommendation and the second part of the motion would be to direct staff to consider opportunities to recognize the badger.

Ms. Stevenson clarified and received confirmation that the second part of the motion does not pertain to this trail segment or the naming of the trail segment but is separate direction that the full Board would need to approve.

Ms. Ruiz explained this item would not occur on the Consent Calendar because the full Board needs to discuss and consider both the original recommendation and the additional direction.

Director Gleason clarified and received confirmation that the item would not occur on the Consent Calendar because part two of the motion is newly added.

Director Gleason inquired if it matters if the motions are separate.

Ms. Ruiz recommended two motions so the full Board can view the approval process.

Mr. Malone suggested that the General Manager's recommendation be used for the first part of the recommendation and the second part can remain as written.

Director Gleason confirmed and received confirmation that Director Holman consented to splitting the recommendation into two separate motions. He inquired if the Committee would like to incorporate the name Badger's Byway into the second motion.

Ms. Ruiz stated that the staff report will have context as to why the second motion was added by the Committee.

Public comment opened at 2:45p.m.

Deputy District Clerk Nelson reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 2:45 p.m.

Motion: Director Holman moved and Director Gleason seconded the motion to forward a recommendation to the Board of Directors to add a 0.5-mile legacy road to a vista point as part of the trail network at Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve, and designate the trail as multi-use, with the proposed trail name of "Fog Drift Vista" Trail.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0

Motion: Director Holman moved and Director Gleason seconded the motion for staff to explore and make recommendations for ways to highlight the presence and importance of badgers in the Skyline Area, for example, by interpretive signage or a trail name.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Cyr adjourned the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee at 2:46 p.m.

Shaylynn Nelson
Deputy District Clerk