



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Administrative Office
330 Distel Circle
Los Altos, CA 94022

May 9, 2017

DRAFT MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Director Riffle called the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee to order at to order at 2:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jed Cyr and Curt Riffle

Members Absent: Pete Siemens

Staff Present: General Manager Steve Abbors, Assistant General Manager Ana Ruiz, Assistant General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Planning Manager Jane Mark, Planner II Leslie Chan, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Jennifer Woodworth, Senior Property Management Specialist Elaina Cuzick

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

No speakers present.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion: Director Riffle moved, and Director Cyr seconded the motion to adopt the agenda.

VOTE: 2-0-0 (Director Siemens absent)

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Approve the March 28, 2017 Planning and Natural Resources Committee Minutes

Motion: Director Riffle moved, and Director Cyr seconded the motion to approve the minutes for the March 28, 2017 Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting.

VOTE: 2-0-0 (Director Siemens absent)

3. Public Access Conceptual Design Alternatives for the Red Barn Area of La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve (R-17-56)

Assistant General Manager Ana Ruiz spoke regarding the District's interdisciplinary project team that manages projects for the La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve. Public access in the Red Barn Area was first described in the 2012 La Honda Creek Open Space Master Plan and included in the District's Vision Plan and Measure AA.

Planner II Leslie Chan introduced Mark Brandi and Richard Larson from Moore, Iacofano, Goltsman, Inc. (MIG), the District's consultants on this project.

Mark Brandi described the location of the Red Barn Area, its viewshed, and the iconic Red Barn located on the property. Mr. Brandi summarized the opportunities and constraints analysis of the site that examined site topography and setting; site land use and circulation; environmental resources; and environmental health. Mr. Brandi explained the useable space of the site is relatively small due to the site's topography and creates potential use conflicts among vehicular, pedestrian, equestrian, and agriculture uses. Additionally, Mr. Brandi summarized the results of the Phase I & II environmental study.

Director Riffle suggested wildlife crossings might be needed in the area to prevent animals being struck by vehicles along Highway 84.

Mr. Brandi reported no animal fatalities have been reported for that area of the highway and the Weeks Creek riparian corridor will be monitored.

Director Riffle inquired if the repurposed structure could be an option for farm labor housing.

Elaina Cuzick Senior Property Management Specialist reported San Mateo County Supervisor Don Horsley did tour the residence before its demolition and agreed with the District's determination that it was not suitable for farm labor housing. There is an ongoing request for farm labor housing in the area, and another location may be more appropriate due to this site's constraints.

Mr. Brandi provided an overview of and displayed the two conceptual design alternatives that seek to meet the goals and objectives to preserve and enhance cultural and natural resources and provide site-sensitive public access, including education, accessibility, and recreation uses. The design alternatives also seek to minimize potential use conflicts.

Richard Larson presented the detailed alternative site plans and described the various elements of the plans, including entrances, parking and picnic areas, and potential interpretive locations.

Director Riffle inquired if the District's agricultural tenant was consulted and provided input regarding the design alternatives.

Ms. Chan reported staff and the consultants met with and received input from the tenants before creating the design alternatives, and the tenant reviewed the conceptual design alternatives.

Director Riffle requested additional information regarding the \$4 million cost estimate.

Ms. Chan explained the cost estimates for both alternatives are similar at this point, and a large portion of the costs are associated with site grading needed due to the differing heights for Highway 84, the main public access area, and the outboard area of the site.

Mr. Larson explained paving and potential lighting also add to the expense.

Ms. Chan reported staff recently met with immediate neighbors and members of the equestrian community and summarized the public comments received. Finally, Ms. Chan provided the preliminary project schedule with public access beginning in Fall 2020.

Director Riffle spoke in favor of using the garage building and interpretive areas for public education programs and in favor of interpretive areas focused on the ranching history of the area.

Ms. Ruiz explained interpretive and education areas are identified in the Master Plan. The Master Plan also identifies other options for interpretive opportunities, including signage, events, and self-guided tours.

Director Riffle spoke in favor of working with neighbors.

Public comment opened at 4:09 p.m.

Terry Mahoney, a neighbor, expressed his concerns regarding negative parking and traffic impacts on the area. He spoke in favor of spreading out the impact to other areas, including to the Sears Ranch Road area. He thanked the District for the work done on the project, but encouraged preserving the rural nature, including keeping the parking area gravel.

Barbara Hooper, a neighbor, asked regarding a rendering of the proposed site showing the view from Highway 84. Ms. Hooper expressed her concerns regarding increased parking and traffic concerns and spoke in favor of parking areas at Sears Ranch Road or the Driscoll Event Center or even shuttle buses.

Public comment closed at 4:14 p.m.

Director Cyr spoke in favor Alternative 1 and the possibility of including an additional equestrian parking space in the design. Director Cyr also spoke in favor of the additional parking spaces and zig zag trail included in Alternative 2 and the centrally located restroom facilities. Director Cyr spoke in favor of educational opportunities for the site.

Director Riffle spoke in favor Alternative 2 and its ability to blend parking needs, educational opportunities, and the rural character of the site. He looks forward to the blending of the two alternatives. Director Riffle also spoke regarding the potential for a shuttle to eventually serve the area and designing to accommodate that future use.

Ms. Ruiz requested direction on whether a previous draft design concept, which explored an expanded parking area with tradeoffs to cost and visitor use areas should be further developed for reconsideration.

Director Riffle spoke in favor of proceeding with the staff-recommended design concepts balancing the parking capacity with the other program elements.

No committee action required.

ADJOURNMENT

Director Cyr adjourned the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee of Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 4:23 p.m.

Jennifer Woodworth, MMC
District Clerk