



Recreation and Park Commission
Davis Senior Center Valente Room, 646 A Street
Thursday, October 15, 2015
MINUTES

Commission Members Present: Ira Bray (Chair), Cecilia Escamilla-Greenwald (Vice Chair), Will Arnold, Emily Griswold and Travie Westlund

Commission Members Absent: None

Council Liaison Present: None

Public Present: Justin Walters – The New Home Company

Staff Present: Christine Helweg, Katherine Hess – Community Development Administrator (Nishi Project), Martin Jones, Kerry Daane Loux, and Heidi Tschudin – Contract Project Manager (MRIC)

Chair Ira Bray called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

1. Approval of the Agenda

A motion was made by W. Arnold, seconded by T. Westlund, to approve the agenda. The motion was approved unanimously.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from September 17, 2015.

A motion was made by T. Westlund, seconded by W. Arnold, to approve the meeting minutes as presented by staff. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Public Comments

None.

4. Written Communications

None.

5. Continued Discussion and Comments on Draft EIR for the Mace Ranch Innovation Center

Contract Project Manager Heidi Tschudin reviewed comments from the previous month's discussion and asked if the Commission had any other comments to add prior to the DEIR deadline.

Commission Comments:

T. Westlund – no further commentary at this time.

E. Griswold – did more research on privately owned and maintained public spaces. Davis Commons would be about the closest example here in Davis as to this maintenance arrangement. A San Francisco firm recently did a study and several areas were highlighted, such as:

- Ensuring public access to the space
- Having adequate design review
- Public access to restroom facilities
- Hours of operation
- Code of Conduct (i.e. public protests or demonstrations on private property?)
- Clarity of Maintenance responsibilities (required signage)
- Sustainable design
- Land designation guarantee for public ownership

C. Greenwald – no further comments.

W. Arnold – Ready to move forward with existing comments.

I. Bray – dedicated acreage appears to be sufficient for project based upon the current calculation formula, 13.6 acres is very close to the acreage defined for a community park per the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan which does require a public restroom.

A motion was made by W. Arnold, seconded by C. Greenwald, to compile all the comments provided by the Commission and submit as formal comments to the DEIR for the MRIC. The motion approved unanimously.

6. Review and Comment on Nishi Gateway Project

Community Development Administrator, Katherine Hess, provided a brief summary on the project's background, the context of the project and status to date. Staff solicited Commissioner comments as to the overall merits of the project. If the project moves forward, the earliest consideration for a public vote would occur in June 2016.

Commission Comments:

W. Arnold – concerned with the vehicular access crossing over tracks, bike & pedestrian traffic, wants to ensure easy public access to the greenbelt and park areas, concurs with other Commissioner comments for a public restroom.

C. Greenwald – hoping that a “no-vehicles” model is still being explored for this area.

E. Griswold – feels that many of the proposed concepts are best practices and sustainable concepts, concerned that the more sophisticated landscapes will need more specialized, trained staff than the City currently has, and whether this is sustainable longterm for the City? Given the density of the proposed housing, the need for turf space may be more of a priority even if it is contrary to existing water conservation efforts. Concerned also about the need for increased security around the detention basin due to homeless encampments.

T. Westlund – inquired if the community garden areas are going to be public spaces? The parks and recreation concepts appear to be consistent with Master Plan, concerned about the housing proximity to I80 and the train tracks.

I. Bray – this project would potentially have the highest density of any other project in the City limits. For future projects, the City really needs to re-consider its formula for calculating park

lands that better takes into account the density of the project. Concerned about the type of landscaping because if it is all drought tolerant or resistant material, and does not include small areas of turf, where will these residents play? Need flexibility of design, need a public restroom.

A motion was made by W. Arnold, seconded by C. Greenwald, to approve and concur with determinations as presented in the staff report, and to forward comments to the Planning Commission and request their consideration of the issues and concerns explicitly expressed by the Recreation and Park Commission.

The motion passed as follows: 4 Ayes (Arnold, Bray, Greenwald, Griswold) 1 Naye (Westlund)

7. Continued Discussion and Recommendation on Proposed Park Names for Cannery

Park Planner Kerry Daane Loux gave a brief update on the proposed street names adjacent to the park and greenbelt properties in the Cannery. Representative Justin Walters from The New Home Company spoke briefly to the revised proposal of park names based upon the Commission's comments last month.

A motion was made by W. Arnold, seconded by T. Westlund, to confirm that no further community input should be sought by staff, and that the Commission recommends the proposed park names as revised and presented by the New Home Company, with the exception of "Piece Park". The Commission would like that area to be named "Piece Paseo".

The motion passed unanimously.

8. Consider a Proposal to Establish an Off-Leash Dog Exercise Area in Chestnut Park

Parks Manager Martin Jones gave a brief summary of the history of this proposal and his most recent discussions with one of the residents who had submitted the proposal to the Commission.

W. Arnold – not eager to go against the established standards that this Commission has already put in place, Commission has done its due diligence in establishing these standards and feels that the existing proposal would severely impact other existing uses within the park.

C. Greenwald – given the multi-uses of the park, it does not feel it is an appropriate use of this area – safety must come first.

E. Griswold – unfortunately not too sympathetic to this proposal, safety is foremost and this proposal is not compatible with other uses in the same area of the park.

T. Westlund – does not think it is a suitable use in this particular park.

I. Bray – agree with staff's concerns about not meeting approved standards that have been recently adopted by the City Council.

A motion was made by T. Westlund, seconded by E. Griswold, not to consider the area in Chestnut Park due to the non-compliance to the existing Levels of Standards recently established for off-leash dog exercise areas. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Commissioner Announcements

T. Westlund – concerned about the drought tolerant landscaping being done in Mace Ranch park and in Wildhorse and would like for the Commission to consider a future discussion about these areas and have the Commission review all future landscaping plans.

E. Griswold – discussed her interest in developing more parklets around the City, and her neighborhood’s most recent experience in showcasing one of these areas, announced the upcoming Plant Sale on October 31 at the Central Park Gardens & Pumpkin Patch.

C. Greenwald – requested a brief update from staff on the Rainbow City Playground Project.

10. Liaison Reports

a. City Council Liaison – no report

b. Finance & Budget Commission – T. Westlund stated that the FBC discussed revenue generation through the use of a Utility User Tax and how to designate its specific uses rather than creating a balance for the General Fund. FBC is interested in determining specifically what the City’s needs are, and then determining what % of tax is needed.

c. Open Space & Habitat Commission – no report.

11. Staff Reports & Updates

Superintendent Helweg announced that a new Parks & Community Services Director has been selected and an announcement will be forthcoming from the City Manager’s Office. The new Director is not anticipated to begin for probably another month or so depending on the candidate.

Meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m. by consensus

Respectfully submitted:

Christine Helweg
Parks & Community Services Superintendent