

MINUTES

Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission September 17, 2013

Commissioner Sarah Chvilicek called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

1. **Roll Call.**

Members present: Nathan Daniel, Thomas Guinn, Scott Pierson, Ed Harney, Janet Davis, Jim Nadeau, Sarah Chvilicek, Anne Buckley and Allan Sheakley.

Staff present: Eric Crump, Jennifer Budge, Cheryl Surface, Al Rogers, Bill Ware, Andy Mink, Deputy District Attorney Leslie Admirand and Joanna Schultz.

2. **Public Comment:**

No public comment.

3. **Approval of the Agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of September 17, 2013.**

Motion by Commissioner Nadeau to Approve the Agenda for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of September 17, 2013. Second by Commissioner Buckley. Motion carried

4. **Approval of the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of April 2, 2013.**

Motion by Commissioner Nadeau to Approve the Minutes for the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission Meeting of April 2, 2013. Second by Commissioner Chvilicek. Motion carried

5. **PUBLIC HEARING: Special Use Permit Case No SB13-011 – Washoe County Regional Shooting Facility – To allow grading of approximately 35,000 cubic yards and approximately 6 acres of disturbance to create new earthen berms and to increase the height and width of some existing earthen berms at the Washoe County Regional Shooting Facility.**

Jennifer Budge, Park Planner explained that in the past these items have not been brought to the Parks Commission for approval. They've recently discovered that under Development Code, Parks Commission may review and approve Discretionary Permit decisions for active recreational uses. Decisions rendered are appealable to the Board of County Commissioners.

Ms. Budge gave a presentation on the project.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding feedback from residents and distance of the notices sent, Ms. Budge said all adjacent neighbors were noticed. With the size of the parcel we exceeded the noticing requirement. Ms. Budge received one call requesting more information on the project.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding vegetation on berms, Ms. Budge said we can use dry water and there is a well so temporary irrigation is an option.

Commissioner Daniel also commended staff on pursuing grant opportunities and bringing in funding especially with the reductions in staffing.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding hearings or public meetings for this project, Ms. Budge said it was done during the Master Plan process that identified the project list. There were several public meetings and a technical advisory committee made up of the user groups was involved.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding neighborhood meetings, Ms. Budge said there were two meetings with adjacent neighbors as well as a meeting with the Citizen Advisory Committee.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Nadeau after giving reasonable consideration to the information contained in the staff report and information received during the public hearing, the Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission approves the Special Use Permit Case No. SB13-011 for the Washoe County Regional Shooting Facility having made all five findings in accordance with the Washoe County Development Code Section 110.810.30:

1. Consistency. That the proposed uses is consistent with the actions, programs, policies, standards and maps of the Master Plan, the Warm Springs Area Plan and the Washoe County Regional Shooting Facility Master Plan;
2. Improvements. That adequate utilities, roadway improvement, sanitation, water supply, drainage, and other necessary facilities have been provided, the proposed improvements are of property related to existing and proposed roadways and an adequate public facilities determination has been made in accordance with Division Seven;
3. Site Suitability: That the site is physically suitable for type of development, i.e. new and enhanced safety berms and for the intensity of such a development;
4. Issuance Not Detrimental: That the issuance of the permit will not be significantly detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare; injurious to the property or improvements of adjacent properties; or detrimental to the character of the surrounding area;
5. Effect on a Military Installation: Issuance of the permit will not have a detrimental effect on the location, purpose or mission of the military installation.

Second by Commissioner Daniel. Motion carried.

6. Discussion and recommendation on a proposal to install a security fence around the Wilbur D. May Arboretum and Botanical Garden located within Rancho San Rafael Regional Park.

Eric Crump, Park Operations Superintendent explained this is to discuss and possible consideration of a security fence around the Wilbur D. May Arboretum. This is not an item that is typically brought to this Commission but, unlike many of the parks, Rancho San Rafael

Regional Park includes the Arboretum and has a very detailed and robust Implementation Plan.

Mr. Crump said though the Implementation Plan does not call for a fence around the entire Arboretum, it does call for fencing within certain areas of the Arboretum. It also has a key theme, which is security and has its own section about security. Vandalism within this park and all other parks has increased over the last decade. This is something we want to do to protect the assets.

Bill Carlos, Horticulturist gave a presentation on the proposed fencing project.

Mr. Crump added that there used to be a Rancho San Rafael Advisory Board. Their sole purpose was to see the Implementation Plan through and make sure any changes or development done to the park is consistent with that plan. Over the last several years we haven't been doing a lot of development and the last time we tried to reach out to this group we were unsuccessful in getting a quorum. We felt that this Commission would be a good public body to bring this item to.

In response to Commissioner Chvilicek regarding Phase IV and fencing around Sierra Street, Mr. Carlos said there is a ball park fence. The hope is that the new fencing will secure the Arboretum more than what the current fencing is doing at this time.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding is the Phase I fencing addressing where most of the access has been and damages occurring, or would all four phases have to be completed to really secure the Arboretum, Mr. Carlos said all four phases would have to be completed to really secure the area. The way it is currently we could get vandalized in any area at any given time. Lately vandalism has been occurring at the north end with several incidents of people lighting fires. We are starting at this access point as that is where a lot of the traffic is coming in.

In response to Commissioner Pierson regarding safety and security, Mr. Carlos said in the past year staff has filed 31 vandalism reports. Two years ago four of the backflow devices were stolen and it flooded the northeast area of the Arboretum. There was extensive damage and this takes staff away from their normal duties of making sure the Arboretum is not taken care of and it is safe for the public to walk through. The vandalism is becoming more severe.

In response to Commissioner Guinn regarding when other phases will be completed, Mr. Carlos said it will depend on funding. The first phase has been funded and hoping that as the first phase is done we will have additional funding.

In response to Commissioner Buckley regarding what does the red line represent on the map, Mr. Carlos said it is the borderline of the Arboretum.

In response to Commissioner Sheakley regarding time of year vandalism is happening and any patrolling, Mr. Carlos said lately it has been happening regularly. There are peak periods which are Spring and Summer when the kids are out of school and more people are in the parks. They do not have any type of patrol, the fencing would be the second line of defense. Mr. Carlos has visited other Arboretums with fencing and they still had the same issues until they hired night security.

In response to Commissioner Chvilicek regarding marketing plan on fencing, Mr. Carlos said the goal is to protect, preserve and safety.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding will this item go to the Board of County Commissioners for approval, Mr. Crump said he does not anticipate taking this to the Board as it does not require their approval. This item was brought to this Commission to show that we went through a public setting.

Public Comment:

Sue Smith said she lives across the street from the park. She is a member of the Arboretum Society, her daughter was married there in August. Her concern is the gardens are going to be blocked off and made accessible for people with keys but others will not be able to walk through. It is a public garden and not a private garden.

Sharon Martin said she volunteers at the Arboretum. Another issue Mr. Carlos has discussed with them is the homeless people in the park. If someone is walking alone in the park you are not sure who you would encounter in the bushes. Bottles with explosive materials have also been found in the park. It would be nice to be somewhat assured that the park is somewhat secure.

Nancy Peppin said she is a neighbor and on the Rancho San Rafael Advisory Board. She feels that maybe we are not protecting enough. The pond is not part of the Arboretum and neither is the Great Basin Adventure but she would be concerned about those areas not being protected.

Mr. Carlos added that they are not trying to lock people out, they're biggest concern is preserve the asset. The hours for the Arboretum will be the same as Park hours.

Susan Stewart said she has been involved with the Arboretum since it opened. She was a librarian at the University and would come over to the Arboretum. It was so quiet, families were in the park and the solitude was glorious and loved every minute of it. After many years she also came to the Arboretum and donated for benches and trees, etc. She worked seasonally in the Arboretum about 6-7 years ago and loved it. She feels this is her home away from home. It is quiet, beautiful and well-kept by staff and volunteers. For herself as a person enjoying the park it is a gem. She has been to other Arboretums and continues to volunteer and it surprises her that there is no fencing to protect it. Her brother was visiting, they took a walk around the Arboretum and there are more homeless people now than 10 years ago. She feels the Arboretum needs to be looked after, it is a gem that we all signed petitions for 30 years ago and the idea is not to keep people out who want to enjoy it.

Katherine Rush said she is the May Arboretum Board President. She is not speaking for the Board but for herself. As a tax payer she expects her money goes to something that does not consistently repair vandalism. Having traveled all over the country she has visited everything from zoos, gardens to arboretums that are consistently fenced and has some kind of security system or guards through the night to make sure that there is a minimum amount of vandalism. Homelessness is kept to a minimum. She feels that for the Arboretum to move forward and to attract people it needs to be fenced. She has a big concern when a Ranger stops her to tell her that she should not walk in the Arboretum alone or stopping joggers to tell them that certain areas of the Arboretum are not safe.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding will the phases limit access, Mr. Carlos said we don't want to limit access to the Arboretum. As the phases start it will limit access points for people who shouldn't be coming in. What we're trying to do as we move through the process of the phases is guide people to either the west or south entrance.

In response to Commissioner Chvilicek regarding borderline marked in red does not follow Arboretum border, Mr. Carlos said the Arboretum extends out to Sierra Street and the red line just shows where we've developed it.

Commissioner Chvilicek summarized an email that was sent by Tina Nappe. She says she understands the budget but prefers not to have tax dollars or public money used to correct vandalism. Though she is not real thrilled about the fence she will go along with the fence to protect the Arboretum.

In response to Commissioner Daniel regarding park closing at 7:00pm and access by public after closing, Mr. Crump said by letter of the law no, they cannot enter the park after closing. There is no one to enforce but if they are doing legitimate uses there is no one to stop them. It's really to capture the illegitimate use which is typically against the law.

Motion by Commissioner Daniel to approve installation of a security fence around the Wilbur D. May Arboretum and Botanical Garden located within Rancho San Rafael Regional Park. Second by Commissioner Sheakley. Motion carried.

7. Appearance: Derek Kirkland, Project Manager for Tahoe Transportation District State Route 28 Corridor Management Plan. Presentation and update concerning Tahoe Transportation District Nevada SR 28 DRAFT Corridor Management Plan.

Cheryl Surface, Park Planner introduced Derek Kirkland.

Derek Kirkland, Project Manager for Tahoe Transportation District State Route 28 Corridor Management Plan gave a presentation.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding website, Mr. Kirkland said www.tahoetransportation.org.

8. Presentation of "Park or Program of the Month" featuring the Rancho San Rafael Regional Park.

Eric Crump, Park Operations Superintendent introduced Andy Mink, District Manager for the North Region.

Andy Mink gave a presentation.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding who named the park, Mr. Mink said the Herman's had a brother named Raphael Herman. Somewhere along the way the spelling was changed.

9. Park Reports

Eric Crump, Park Operations Superintendent highlighted reports.

Jennifer Budge, Park Planner highlighted Planning report.

Commissioners Harney and Chvilicek said they would like to attend the October 10th meeting on the Pyramid Highway/US 395 Connection. Commissioner Chvilicek also requested a presentation by the group to the Park Commission. Ms. Budge said she would make the request.

Commissioner Daniel will attend the State Question I (SQ-1) meeting.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding when SQ-1 expires where do the funds go, Rosemarie Entsminger, Fiscal Compliance Officer said we are investigating now the information that we've received. There is a very small piece of legislature that might extend it. She has not received written confirmation of that language applying to us, and willingness for the State to extend our Memo of Understanding. She is hoping by the next SQ-1 meeting it will be all sorted out.

In response to Commissioner Nadeau regarding Ballardini Access Trailhead, Cheryl Surface, Park Planner said they open bids on September 11th then to Board of County Commissioners on September 24th to either award the bid to Spanish Springs Construction or to reject all bids.

10. Commissioner's Comments.

Commissioner Chvilicek requested that NDOT make a presentation to the Park Commission on the impacts to Parks with the Pyramid Highway/US 395 Connection.

Commissioner Buckley reminded staff that Park Commission would like to have a fiscal workshop.

Commissioner Nadeau would like an update on TMWA's work off of Mayberry.

Jennifer Budge, Park Planner said that there was a citizen request to put WC-1 on the October agenda.

11. Public Comment

No public comment

12. Adjournment

Chairman Chvilicek adjourned the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Schultz