



**City of Santa Barbara
PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

**PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Regular Monthly Joint Meeting of
THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS AND RECREATION
COMMISSION**

Wednesday, June 28, 2006

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER – The Park and Recreation Commission was called to order by Chair Forsell at 4:03 p.m. at City Council Chambers.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present

Steve Forsell	Park & Recreation Commissioner
Ada Conner	Park & Recreation Commissioner
Beebe Longstreet	Park & Recreation Commissioner
Arnoldo Gonzalez	Park & Recreation Commissioner
Laura Spracher	Park & Recreation Commission Intern

Commissioner Absent

Daraka Larimore-Hall	Park & Recreation Commissioner
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Staff Present

Nancy L. Rapp	Parks & Recreation Director
Nancy Woods	Business Manager
Santos Escobar	Parks Superintendent
Billy Goodnick	Landscape Architect
Randy Fritz	Street Tree Inspector
Allyson Biskner	Associate Park Planner
Karla Megill	Executive Assistant

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA – None

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – None

PUBLIC COMMENT – No one wished to speak.

COMMISSIONER COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT REPORTS

Commissioner Longstreet reported on the activities of the Douglas Family Preserve Technical Advisory Committee. She indicated she attended the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Arroyo Burro Estuary and Mesa Creek and congratulated staff on their efforts.

Commissioner Conner reported that she attended the 2006 Youth Leadership Awards Banquet and it was an excellent event.

Commissioner Gonzalez said he also attended the Annual Youth Leadership Awards Banquet and concurred that it was a wonderful event. He further reported on the activities of the Arts & Crafts Show Advisory Committee.

Chair Forsell reported on the activities of the PARC Foundation. He said he attended the Alice Keck Park - Botanic Gardens Public Reception and Book Signing event. He said it was a well-represented event and further that the book is very interesting and fascinating.

YOUTH COUNCIL REPORT

Intern Spracher provided this report. Ms. Spracher reported on the Annual Youth Leadership Award Banquet. She said the Youth Council has elected their new officers who will take office on July 5th. Ms. Spracher said that she and Christina Gonzalez are going to attend the Sister Cities Youth Summit in Washington DC the second week in July, where they will be able to interact with teens from all over the world about what they are doing in their communities.

Ms. Rapp interjected that the Sister Cities organization has reached out to Teen Programs, and in particular the Youth Council, asking them to become involved in some of their activities. She further said that Teen Programs has been working with the Sister Cities organization that has visiting exchange students from one of our Sister Cities and Puerto Vallarta, and a reception is being held in their honor on Wednesday, July 5th, 2:00 p.m., in Room 15 of City Hall. She invited the Commissioners to attend the Event if they are able to. Ms. Rapp indicated that the Sister Cities organization is paying for the teens' travel to Washington D.C., and also for the two teens will be traveling to Puerto Vallarta this summer.

1. **Summary of Council Actions:** There were no comments on the Council actions.

2. **Approval of Minutes:**
Regular meeting of May 17, 2006,

Commissioner Longstreet moved, seconded by Commissioner Conner, and passed 4/0 that the Commission approve the minutes of the regular meeting of May 17, 2006.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

3. **Street Tree Advisory Committee Recommendations**

Ms. Rapp advised that the Street Tree Advisory Committee did not have a quorum and did not meet during June. She indicated that staff is making the recommendation regarding the tree removals. She further clarified that there was an error on the agenda regarding the justification for items 3A (1) & (2) and

indicated that the staff report contains the correct justification for the recommendations of staff.

A. Approve the following setback tree removal requests:

1. 2323 Anacapa Street – *terebinthifolius*, Brazilian Pepper
2. 42 Northridge Road – *Araucaria bidwilli*, Bunya-Bunya

Removal of the tree located at 42 Northridge Road is contingent upon; 1.) Owner pays for removal of tree and grinding of stump to mineral soil. 2.) Cost of planting a 24" box Jacaranda Tree.

Commissioner Conner said the tree across the street from this tree was removed without City approval.

Commissioner Longstreet moved, seconded by Commissioner Gonzalez, and passed 4/0 that the Commission concur with the recommendations of staff and approve and/or deny the tree removal requests identified in items 3A (1& 2) with the conditions identified.

B. Deny the following street tree removal request

1. 712 Grove Lane – *Pyrus kawakamii*, Evergreen Pear
2. 121 Barranca Avenue – *pinus pinea*, Italian Stone Pine

Commissioner Conner moved, seconded by Commissioner Longstreet, and passed 4/0 that the Commission concur with the recommendations of staff and approve and/or deny the tree removal requests identified in items 3B (1& 2).

ADMINISTRATIVE AND STAFF REPORTS

4. Integrated Pest Management 2005 Annual Report

Mr. Escobar provided a presentation on the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) 2005 Annual Report.

Ms. Rapp said that the decreases in the amount of red and increases in the amount of green are very significant. She said that the goal is to reduce overall the amount of materials used, but also, more importantly is seeing the reduction in the more toxic pesticides and increased use of the least toxic materials.

Commissioner Longstreet commended staff and the IPM Advisory Committee on their efforts in this area. She said she hopes Council supports the yearly budget items so we can continue to refurbish our parks.

Chair Forsell pointed out that one chart reflects descending pesticide use over the past seven years. He said that many people think that IPM got started two years ago, but in actuality, the City has been working on it for many years, and it has gathered speed over the last couple of years due to additional funding. Mr. Forsell asked regarding the ground squirrel problem at Shoreline, how we are doing. Mr. Escobar said that staff went out today and set out over 60 traps. He further said that an organic, corn-based material, called rodetrol has been added and the squirrels are eating it. Mr. Escobar said that staff is making some progress with the squirrel problem.

Chair Forsell asked whether the signage is effective. Mr. Escobar responded saying that there are large signs in the parks that no one has tampered with or vandalized over the past six months. He said the signs on the picnic tables are gone as fast as they are posted. Mr. Escobar said that the Park Rangers are trying to educate people. He further said that staff will be working with the Marketing and Communications staff to put information on Government Channel 18, asking community members not to feed the squirrels.

Chair Forsell asked regarding termites, how the heat treatment is working. Mr. Escobar responded saying that the City is using heat treatments along with tenting, which is actually working very well. He said that this method of treating termites costs about 50 percent more, but using the heat treatments is safer for our employees and people using the facilities.

Chair Forsell asked regarding the Green Gardner Program, how many staff have been certified. Mr. Escobar said that five additional staff have gone to the Advanced Green Gardener Course, and the Department is working hard to have all staff certified.

Commissioner Gonzalez asked what the alternative to Roundup is. Mr. Escobar said hand-weeding or a chemical called Burnout.

Intern Spracher said the Teen Center received the heating treatment.

Commissioner Longstreet moved, seconded by Commissioner Conner, and passed 4/0 that the Commission accept the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) 2005 Annual Report and recommend approval of the report to City Council with commendations to staff and the IPM Advisory Committee for their efforts.

5. Status of Franceschi House Rehabilitation Project

Ms. Rapp said it has been quite a while since the Commission received a report on this project. She said that several years ago, the Franceschi Park Master Plan was completed for improvements to the park itself, and the City has an agreement with the Pearl Chase Society (PCS) whereby the PCS is fundraising to renovate and restore the Franceschi House. She said that Barbara Chen Lowenthal, PCS President will provide the Commission with a status report regarding the status of

the Franceschi House Rehabilitation Project, and then Billy Goodnick, Project Coordinator, will provide an overview of the status of the Franceschi Park Improvements and talk briefly about what the Advisory Committee has been working on.

Ms. Barbara Chen Lowenthal, Pearl Chase Society, provided a presentation regarding their progress in fundraising and design for the rehabilitation of Franceschi House. She thanked Mr. Escobar for his help and assistance with the project.

Ms. Rapp said there have been problems with vandalism at the House over the past few years, and she asked Ms. Chen Lowenthal to address this and how they are trying to resolve the issue. Ms. Chen Lowenthal said she has met with the Beat Coordinator for the area and also secured the house with new locks and a temporary construction fence around the perimeter. Ms. Rapp said having a construction fence around the house is not a pleasing sight, but it has been effective, but it is not the preferred method of securing the site. Ms. Chen Lowenthal agreed with Ms. Rapp that the fence is unsightly, and the PCS even contemplated removing it, but Officer Alvarado said he did not think removing the fence would be a good idea. Ms. Chen Lowenthal said that they have tried to reinforce the doors and the places where there are openings, but they do not want to board it back up again. She said the PCS has spent a great deal of money on the House so far and does not want to take a step backward. Ms. Chen Lowenthal said the House is now clean and watertight, and it is just the break-ins that are a problem.

Commissioner Longstreet asked whether motion lighting can be installed. Ms. Lowenthal said that motion-sensor lighting has been installed on all 4 corners of the house. Ms. Longstreet said that as unattractive as the fence, she agrees it should remain. Ms. Chen Lowenthal praised the efforts of Schipper Construction in assisting with keeping the House secure, saying they check on the project site frequently.

Chair Forsell commented that the fundraising is going slow. Ms. Lowenthal said their campaign has not yet been announced. She said their campaign professionals have asked the PCS not to announce it until the end of the summer when they are closer to the Landmarks Commission review and closer to their 50 percent fundraising goal. Mr. Forsell commented that the documents presented to the Commission indicated they are about half-way to their fundraising goal, and that the total amount of the project is now around \$2 million. Ms. Chen Lowenthal said that one of the things that occurred after the environmental review, and a couple of years after the Master Plan Committee working, was that the Building Division advised that the house must have an elevator from the bottom to the third floor, and that requirement is going to cost an additional \$120,000.

Commissioner Conner asked where the elevator is going to be placed. Ms. Lowenthal said that the elevator will start on the bottom floor near where the restroom is going to be as you walk into the house and turn to the right. She further

said it will avoid the library, the Eucalyptus Room, and actually land where the kitchen was on the upper level. Mr. Goodnick clarified that the elevator will be to the right of the Franceschi stairway.

Commissioner Gonzalez asked how the house will be protected once the project is completed. Ms. Lowenthal said that once the project is finished, it will be returned to the City. She said that the PCS will have a docent program in the house and be responsible for opening and closing the house on the days that the docents are present. She said that the exterior of the house is City property. Ms. Chen Lowenthal indicated that the PCS is responsible for what goes on inside the house on a daily basis and for managing it, which will be through a docent program. She further indicated that the environmental report for the project identifies what days certain activities can occur in the house, and the docent program will be developed around those guidelines. Ms. Chen Lowenthal stated that if a docent is not available, the house will stay locked.

Ms. Rapp asked Ms. Lowenthal to provide a timeline for the project. Ms. Lowenthal said that the architect and structural engineer have indicated they are a good 3 to 4 months away from getting all the professionals necessary input for the working drawings to go for preliminary approval to the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC). She said that according to the PCS Franceschi House Campaign staff, they are hoping that with the announcement of the campaign, it will speed things up and it will be somewhere between 12 to 18 months, which the architects indicate it will be about how long it will take to go through the City HLC and building permitting approval process for the house, notwithstanding the environmental review which the project has already been through.

Ms. Brigitte Forssell, Riviera Association Board member representing the homeowners' association on the Franceschi Park Advisory Committee, addressed the Commission, and expressed concern over the project and the impact of the project on the neighborhood. A copy of these comments are on file in the Parks and Recreation Department.

Chair Forsell asked Ms. Forssell to provide information in advance if she will be speaking at length.

Ms. Lowenthal responded saying that the PCS does maintain their records according to the agreement and protect the anonymity of donors. She said that the amount of the \$2,000,050 estimate is not based according to the information provided by Ms. Forssell. She said that three construction firms submit bids. She said that there will probably be another review when the structural engineers and the mechanical engineers take a look at the proposal for the house. Ms. Chen Lowenthal said, however, that the PCS does have an agreement with the City that these people can donate and volunteer part of their costs to the project, and so far they have all been more than happy to do that. She said the PCS is paying them, but some of them are discounting their services as a part of the project because they believe in it. Commissioner Conner asked for some clarification about the 1986 estimates. Ms. Lowenthal replied saying that during the environmental review

that kept coming up, and as part of the process, three local firms bid the project, which is how the \$2,000,050 was arrived at.

Ms. Rapp said that staff has discussed with the Pearl Chase Society, the same concern that Ms. Forssell has brought up. She further stated that she thinks the costs estimate will need to be verified as we draw closer to what the PCS believes the cost of the project is going to be and what their fundraising is. Ms. Rapp said that once all the plans are completed and before going out for any construction bids, you get separate cost estimates. She said that the City is still holding funds, and before those funds are released, and before we go into a new agreement, the City will expect to have verified updated project estimates and also showing how the project will be financed, e.g., what portion is through in-kind services, what hard costs are. Ms. Rapp said that we need to know what the project is going to cost and that sufficient funds have been raised to cover that cost before we would begin construction.

Commissioner Longstreet asked for clarification regarding how much the City is contributing towards the project. Ms. Rapp said the City is providing \$300,000 to the project; \$150,000 initially, and \$150,000 after the Pearl Chase Society has raised half of the money. Ms. Rapp said that the PCS has indicated they would hold off on requesting the \$150,000 until once they have completed all of their fundraising.

Commissioner Longstreet commented that we are going forward with this project, Council has made a commitment to it, and at this particular juncture, the City has a limited amount of money that they have committed to it. She said that the burden is resting on the PCS to complete the project, and staffs' and the Commission's job it to watchdog the project so things do not start before the money is in place. Ms. Longstreet said that she understands the concerns, but thinks those concerns are being addressed. She further said that until construction is ready to begin, no estimate really makes any sense, because costs change, material costs increase, etc.

Commissioner Gonzalez asked what are the options of the Historical Society to renovate the condemned house. Ms. Lowenthal responded that the Franceschi House was a gift to the City in the 1930's by Alden Freeman. She said he gave the house and the park to the City, and it was used for a while, but in the 1970's it was condemned. Ms. Chen Lowenthal said that a local contractor was trying to restore it for a while, but that fell through. She said that a couple other organizations got involved and then the community got involved, and City Council and the PCS agreed that the PCS would come up with a plan to rehabilitate the house. Ms. Chen Lowenthal said that although the house is condemned, the PCS is fundraising and working to bring it back to live, basically.

Mr. Goodnick provided a presentation regarding the progress on Phase I of the Franceschi Park Master Plan Implementation and the activities of the Franceschi Park Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Longstreet commended the Advisory Committee for the amount of work they do.

OLD BUSINESS

6. Appoint Two Park and Recreation Commissioners to Front Country Trails Task Force – For Action (Attachment)

Ms. Biskner requested that the Commission select and appoint two liaison Commissioners to a City/County/Los Padres Forest Service Front Country Trails Task Force and indicated that the commitment will for one to two years.

Chair Forsell volunteered to serve saying he is a frequent user of the trails. He said he believes it is going to be a difficult task to resolve.

Commissioner Longstreet volunteered to serve on the Task Force.

Chair Forsell commented on the need to have structured and efficiently-run committee meetings.

Commissioner Longstreet said that the ground work has been done already. She said the whole process does not need to be restarted. She said there are definitely some background information and technical studies the Commission will need to be brought up to speed on. She agreed with Chair Forsell that the meetings need to be structured and efficiently-run.

Ms. Rapp said she understands the Commission's concerns and said that staff from all three agencies have been discussing that the process needs to be identified and it needs to be a public process. She reminded the Commissioners that they have years of experience in facilitating public meetings like this, as does at least one of the County Commissioners. Ms. Rapp said there are very experienced people at the helm. She said that staff from the three agencies are planning to put a lot of pieces in place and present them to the Task Force, so they can respond to that with a time frame. Ms. Rapp said that City staff are working very closely with the higher administration level staff in the County and Forest Service so it will be a productive and efficient process, and also a public process, which was the main concern. She stated that the April meeting was intended to draw out people to speak to the matter.

Chair Forsell asked when the meetings will begin. Ms. Biskner said it is anticipated they will begin in September.

7. Park and Recreation Commission Tour of Project Sites – For Action (Attachment)

Ms. Rapp asked the Commission if the tour can begin at 5:15 or 5:30 p.m. The Commissioners concurred.

Ms. Rapp highlighted the proposed agenda. She said the Commissioner would tour the following sites: Ortega Park, Stevens Park, Creeks Steward Program with a picnic meal, MacKenzie Park, and Sheffield Reservoir Open Space Park.

Ms. Rapp suggested a tour in the fall of Franceschi House by the Pearl Chase Society. Commissioner Longstreet said she would like also to address Wildland Fire Issues.

COMMISSION AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Rapp reminded the Commission about the Joint meeting with the Creeks Advisory Committee meeting of July 10th, 5:30 p.m.

Ms. Rapp reminded staff of the July 4th Fireworks at 9:00 p.m. She said there will be food and beverage vendors on Cabrillo Boulevard near West Beach. She said there will also be a local radio station doing synchronized music to the show.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 5:34 p.m., with no further business to come before the Commission,

Commissioner Forsell moved seconded by Commissioner Longstreet, and passed 5/0 that the meeting be adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Rapp
Parks and Recreation Director