

**MINUTES** of a regular meeting of the Parks Commission held Thursday, December 13, 2007 at 2:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers are as follows:

**PRESENT:** Dennis Bolt  
Steve Guggisberg  
Patricia Holohan  
Brian King, Chair  
Lauren Mudge, Student  
Kristin Saukel, Vice Chair  
Tina Sray

**ABSENT:** Mick Gallagher, Council Liaison

**STAFF:** Gary Van Dorst, Quality of Life Interim Director  
Rick Cross, QOL Operations Manager  
Janet Sherman, Senior Administrative Assistant

#### **CALL TO ORDER – ATTENDANCE**

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On motion of Commissioner Saukel, seconded by Commissioner Sray, the minutes of the regular meeting of November 8, 2007, were unanimously approved as submitted.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### **A. Street Tree Committee Update**

Gary Van Dorst updated the Commission on the strategy for planting 1,000 trees. It is anticipated the post card will be finalized soon, the letter to transmit the post card has already been finalized and mailing should begin in a couple of weeks to two different zones—one zone in the area around The Terrace and another zone somewhere in the south area of the City. Once folks have been identified who are willing to have street trees planted and will make the commitment to water the trees, we are prepared to go forward with the planting.

A Council Report will be presented the evening of December 18 to remove 10 out of 19 trees on Cedar Avenue based on the arborist's recommendation and report. This action is based on matters related to public health and safety.

Commissioner Saukel inquired about the status of removal of the trees on Marilyn Lane. Rick Cross stated there are probably 13 trees that are in a state of 50% or greater decline

and should be removed. Commissioner Saukel stated these trees are diseased liquidambar and stressed the importance of campaigns to educate the public.

**B. Recreation Advisory Commission Update**

No report.

**C. Park Liaisons Update**

Commissioners reported on their assigned parks (see attached list).

Chairperson King reported that he noticed a new tree planted at Sylvan Park near Colton Avenue and University Street with an old plaque at the base. Rick Cross explained that a very large oak tree, perhaps 80 or 90 years old, fell over in a windstorm. As West Coast Arborists was removing the tree, they found a plaque buried approximately 12 inches underground. The plaque said the groundskeeper in 1929 planted that tree. West Coast Arborists donated a very large 36-inch box tree, planted it at the location of the fallen tree, and raised the plaque back up to the surface.

**CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS**

**A. QOL Director's Update**

None.

**B. Information on the Development Impact Fee program related to park development fees.**

Commissioner Guggisberg stated he received the information he was looking for, read it, and it would bring up a question later in the meeting.

**C. Information on a policy for the naming of new public/park facilities.**

Commissioner Saukel volunteered to obtain a copy of the most recent draft policy for the next meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Discussion and Possible Action – RBY Field Lighting at Community Field (Craig Kundig)**

Craig Kundig, RBY Board member, introduced himself and stated he is RBY's new liaison to the City. He began by asking about unfinished business that needs to be brought to fruition. Rick Cross explained that he has a file showing everything that has not been completed at both Texonia and Community Parks since the field switch took place.

Mr. Kundig said RBY is considering the installation of lights at field number seven (the new field that was just built) and field number six (the other field that borders Clement Middle School). Parents are complaining to RBY that they cannot leave work early at this time of year to take their children to practices. There are 1600 children participating in RBY, boys and girls combined. Lights would allow the games to start at a reasonable time and allow time for a second game to accommodate more participants. The cost for materials is estimated at approximately \$90,000 and labor at \$60,000 to \$70,000. Before starting on ways to raise the money, RBY wants to know if installing the lights is feasible. Mr. Kundig brought a proposed lighting plan (using Little League standards) for the Commissioners to review. He said he met with the Recreation Commission and received their blessing yesterday.

Commissioner Sray asked how late games would be run if the fields were lighted. Mr. Kundig said he would guess 9:00 p.m. at the latest. Commissioner Sray asked whether anyone had talked to the neighborhood residents to see if any of them were in opposition. Mr. Kundig said he had not, but there were no residents across the street. He said these lights are hooded and specifically designed to target the fields.

Commissioner Bolt asked for an explanation of RBY's usage of the fields. Mr. Kundig explained RBY takes over the fields immediately after football, spends most of January reseeding the fields, begins practicing in February, and games begin (6 days per week) in late February or early March. Games continue into June and another season (winter ball) begins after a six to eight week gap. The winter ball season is three games per field on Sundays (because football has already started by then) for 12 weeks. RBY uses the fields for a total of about 8 or 9 months per year.

Mr. Kundig reminded the Commissioners that they were kind enough to allow RBY to put up advertising banners last year, which raised in excess of \$10,000 that helped with their light bill and other expenses. Last year banners were removed after each game and there were some tagging issues because the banners were placed low. Before bringing a new banner proposal for this year, he brought pictures to show placement of the banners up high to discourage taggers and RBY would like to leave them up permanently throughout the season this year.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. Discussion and Possible Action – Update from DRBA and Redevelopment Agency to rehabilitate Ed Hales Park to an urban plaza type of facility.**

Mr. Van Dorst explained he does not support the development or redevelopment of Ed Hales Park as a park. He strongly endorses and supports the redevelopment of Ed Hales Park as an urban square, a piazza or market place. His reasons are as follows:

“First, I do not support the development of a suburban type park with grass and water features. Under the best of conditions, such a park will always require high maintenance. The maintenance of lawn areas and

flowerbeds is labor intensive and it is difficult under the best of circumstances to maintain turf in good condition at this location because of usage. Water features are also very expensive to maintain. Further, the proposed design is not particularly different in character than what is already in place, and, it is a space that invites transients.

Second, and foremost, our goal should be to create a space that will promote large gatherings of people. That is a space that lends itself to the simpler design of an urban square. I would like to join with Mr. King in proposing that the space be opened up to the street and that the street (Fifth Street) be paved along with the current turf with cobbles or some other type of paver suitable for street traffic. I would support using removable bollards to separate the sidewalk from the current 'park' and the installation of removable bollards at the entrance at Redlands Boulevard that could be used to open the entire area to form a square or market place. Such space would lend itself to a midday farmers market, concerts, or other vendors similar to Market Night and could easily be utilized on weekends, or weekdays. I would support removing most of the benches, especially those that block off the current park and which delineate the space—in effect, opening the space to form a large, continuous square.

I would argue that an urban square better meets the needs of our downtown businesses, that any space that is conducive to large gatherings of people such as a farmers market, a concert, or flea market, serves downtown businesses better in two ways. With the right marketing, it will increase foot traffic for downtown businesses and the events themselves will displace transients.

This proposal is not radical. It is nothing short of what we see in every community and city I have ever visited in Europe and it is similar and somewhat smaller in scope and scale than what I just saw last week at Pioneer Square in Portland.

So—preserve the existing stage with ADA improvements, pave the turf—extend the decorative paving, cobbles or whatever you use across the street to form a square. Remove the water feature and limit the benches to avoid chopping up the space. And then market the space to large gatherings of people, for concerts, outdoor vendors and farmers markets. And finally, be prepared to watch the transients disappear and get lost in the milieu of a vibrant space that could bring large groups of people together instead of what we have now.

We are a country that has based the design of our cities on the Roman grid. This is probably attributed to Jefferson and the National Land Act in the late 1700s. It was an unfortunate and important departure from the

neighborhood squares and public places at the center of neighborhoods where people met and interacted. In a small way, I am proposing to bring a little bit of that European character to our downtown.”

Chairperson King stated he is in favor of keeping the current stage with ADA modifications. He felt that moving the stage farther back would result in a disconnect with State Street. Perhaps more could be done on the State Street side to better tie State Street and the entire intersection to the park. He wondered if, along the lines of the removable bollards, there is some sort of system of tables and benches that could be moved when not in use. He said he would like to see a landscape architect brought in because he did not feel the current engineering firm has enough expertise with this type of project. Mr. Van Dorst and Mr. King were invited to the January 8, 2008 DRBA meeting at 8:00 a.m. because DRBA would like to hear their ideas.

Commissioner Sray said it makes sense financially to turn the green space into hardscape. Commissioner Guggisberg requested that Director Van Dorst's comments today be included in the minutes. It was moved by Commissioner Guggisberg and seconded by Commissioner Sray to support the verbal presentation Director Van Dorst has made so that he can carry that forward to DRBA, Economic Development, and whatever agencies are going to be involved in the January 8 meeting. Commissioner Saukel felt that a motion was not necessary according to Parliamentary procedure. Mr. Van Dorst said that a motion by the Commission provides him the opportunity to say when he stands in front of DRBA that this is what the Parks Commission wants conceptually and they have reached a consensus. The motion carried by AYE votes of all present, with Commissioner Holohan having departed prior to the vote.

Debra Nester, Redlands resident, asked if there is some kind of disease affecting the trees in Ed Hales Park. Rick Cross replied that an arborist has evaluated the trees and, although we are waiting for the report, the sharpshooter (a type of insect) is killing those trees. Ms. Nester apologized for her incorrect assumption that the trees were being neglected. She said she liked Mr. Van Dorst's idea for the park, except she would like to see some trees planted there. Mr. Van Dorst explained he would envision leaving shade trees along one side of the park. Ms. Nester complained people are deliberately smoking in the park despite the posted No Smoking signs and there have been some problems with alcohol. She would like to see the brick wall come down to create an open area, but would like to see some seating with back support. Ms. Nester also complained about individuals that she has been told are drug dealers hanging out near the park. She requested to have a City tree planted on her property and asked what kind of trees were going to be planted. Mr. Cross explained the trees would be planted according to a City plan that specifies specific trees in various areas.

## **CONTINUED PARK MASTER PLAN WORKSHOP**

### **A. Development of a recommendation for a list of facilities to be included in parks.**

- 1) Continued discussion on existing parks – Review existing amenities and recommend any potential modifications to the facilities and uses included in the existing park facilities.**
- 2) Future park sites – Review possible future park sites based on the General Plan and recommend any potential facilities to be included in these park sites.**
- 3) Future park sites – Review possible additional park locations to be included in the General Plan update including general size, type and amenities to be included in the facility.**

Chairperson King reported the subcommittee met twice since the last Commission meeting and is still researching park standards for cities similar to Redlands. Irvine has some good, comprehensive information. The Recreation Advisory Commission still wants some input, but we have not reached that point yet.

## **PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND COMMENTS**

Joe Gonzales informed the Commissioners that the Recreation Advisory Commission is still waiting to see what develops with the Park Master Plan and to give their input on facility needs for the recreation program at the appropriate time.

Commissioner Bolt commended the organization that is maintaining the tennis courts at Clement Middle School. The courts are lighted at night, are being used, and many improvements have been made. He encouraged the Commissioners to drive by and look at them. It is an excellent example of rehabilitating underutilized, existing facilities.

Commissioner Sray wished everyone “Happy Holidays.”

## **POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

- Parks master plan workshop.
- Information on the policy that was developed, but never adopted, for naming public facilities.
- RBY lighting proposal, if they are ready to present it.
- Payback schedule for the Sports Park, so the Parks Commission will know when funds will again be available to purchase and develop parks.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:58 p.m. The next meeting of the Parks Commission will be held at **2:30 p.m., Thursday, January 10, 2007** in the City Council Chambers, 35 Cajon Street, Suite 2, Redlands.

**JANET SHERMAN**

Senior Administrative Assistant

## **Park Liaison Reports December 13, 2007**

Brookside Park – Commissioner Guggisberg reported that overall the park looks good. The water fountain by the playground was plugged. He was happy to report that the Recreation Department finally removed the soccer goals from the field and those areas are beginning to fill in. There are some bad cracks in the upper parking lot that will need attention soon and the drains need to be cleaned. There are still the two drains that are below grade from the lower parking lot that drain out into the soccer field and are creating tremendous mud holes this time of year.

Caroline Park – Commissioner Saukel reported the park looks fabulous and Dr. Hill is doing a good job. There was no trash, graffiti, or broken sprinklers. The lawn and plants were well trimmed. Mr. Van Dorst stated the 40 cubic yard waste bin at the park is emptied every three to four weeks.

Community Park – Commissioner Bolt reported the park is looking good. There is graffiti on the playground equipment. There are caution barriers around the mounting for the spring toy that is out for repair, but the wood chips could easily bury the nuts and bolts and someone could get hurt. The drinking fountain next to the playground equipment is not working. The fields, especially where football and baseball have been played, are in very poor condition. Overall, the park is in good shape. Some lights around the walkway on the south side of the park are not functioning properly. Rick Cross said the department is aware of the issue and is working on getting the lights repaired.

Crafton Park – Commissioner Sray reported the park is looking very good, as usual. The turf is in good shape with some dormant areas. The sand in the volleyball area and the ground covering in the playground area look good. The graffiti on the wall was painted over. Commissioner Sray asked whether sandblasting is ever used to remove graffiti on block walls, rather than painting. Rick Cross stated both methods are used. He explained the graffiti program was formerly run by the Police Department who painted everything. The program moved to the Quality of Life Department about three weeks ago and still needs some fine-tuning. Commissioner Sray said the benches are in good shape, but are a little weathered. The parking lot was very clean with no trash.

Ed Hales Park – Nothing reported.

Fire Demonstration Garden – Commissioner Saukel reported all the graffiti she observed last month was cleaned and there are now red globes on the lanterns. Mr. Van Dorst stated a Quality of Life Department employee removed the graffiti. Commissioner Saukel asked if the paint color used when covering the graffiti could be matched to the surface that is being painted—for instance, white paint was used on the brown building. Mr. Van Dorst explained it is very difficult to match the paint because recycled paint is used. The Department recently took possession of about 100 gallons of various paint hues from the Household Hazardous Waste facility at the County, which gives a little more flexibility.

Ford Park – Commissioner Saukel reported the park attendant is doing an excellent job. There was no trash anywhere. There was graffiti on the beige dumpsters, which the park attendant just learned he is allowed to paint, and the park attendant will paint it soon. The concrete gutters on the slope near the tennis court were full of dirt and weeds all the way to the drain pipes and need to be cleaned out. The wood on the park benches is very worn and the paint is peeling. Several of the trees have bacterial scorch and dead branches that are hanging. No hanging branches that would be safety issues were observed. The plaque on the rock is gone. The parkway into the park is filled with dead or dying oleanders. The park attendant cleaned all the dead and dying plants off the hillsides around the ponds. That would be a good place to put mulch to help control the weeds and erosion.

## Park Liaison Reports

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Franklin Park – Commissioner Saukel reported the park looks good.

Jennie Davis Park – Nothing reported.

Prospect Park – Commissioner Saukel reported the parking lots, overlooks, parkways, and walkways have lots of weeds, but large green plants are being trimmed all over the park. There is trash, broken glass, beer bottles, and graffiti everywhere. Maybe there could be a priority that the bathrooms and graffiti be cleaned by the park attendants first upon arrival at work before getting to other routine maintenance. There is a light post by the brown arbor near the bathrooms. A wisteria vine has grown over this light post, completely encased the bulb, and might be a fire hazard, depending on how hot those lights get. There is graffiti on nearly every flat surface in the park. There are green and white paint markings from the track teams going up Prospect Drive and Kimberly that will not come off. The right drain near the main stone raised bed is plugged again. There are palm branches piled on all the parkways all the way around the park. There is a broken street light with barriers around it on Cajon Street. It has been that way about a month. Someone has knocked down some of the barriers and moved some of the wood into the park. Rick Cross stated there is only one Electrical Division employee right now and he is working on major problems with traffic signals at this time. Commissioner Saukel reported there are a broken riser and another broken sprinkler on England Drive near the green belt curve where a car went over the edge in the park. Some of the galvanized lines are broken as well. There are no signs in the park that say smoking and drinking is prohibited. Several people have mentioned to Commissioner Saukel that if there were signs near the overlooks and in the parking lot, it might be helpful.

Smiley Park – Commissioner Guggisberg reported everything looks good overall. Damage is occurring to the sidewalks near the A.K. Smiley Library and Police Annex. They are cracking, breaking apart, and becoming a safety issue. There is a dead tree next to the Verizon building just north of the Police Annex. In the west area along Parkwood, an old eucalyptus tree is still tearing up the sidewalk. The former Harrison residence on Olive Avenue has a water leak near the telephone pole along its property that is causing a large flooded area in the park. Commissioner Guggisberg said he is still wondering where the water fountain went that was by the Mission Gables House and the concession stand. The RCMA has put in some red brick pavers and is now listing the names of donors in that area. He said he thought there were not going to be names placed in the parks. Rick Cross said he was not aware of the pavers.

Sylvan Park – Commissioner King reported there is new graffiti in the zanja. The coil-spring playground equipment was gone. Rick Cross explained it was sent out to be repaired along with one from Community Park. There are six maple trees in the Section “A” picnic area that look terrible. Rick Cross said four of the trees were removed last year, and it was hoped the rest would survive. Commissioner King reported seeing squirrels everywhere in the park. He said, except for the items mentioned, the park looks great and a similar park could not be built today.

Texonia Park – Student Commissioner Mudge reported the park looks good. There are some muddy spots by the softball fields and one spot of graffiti on the playground.