



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

**MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT
PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Administrative Office
5050 El Camino Real
Los Altos, CA 94022

Tuesday, September 19, 2023

DRAFT MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Director Cyr called the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee to order at 2:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Jed Cyr and Craig Gleason

Members absent: Karen Holman

Staff present: General Manager Ana M. Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Maria Soria, Executive Assistant/Deputy District Clerk Loana Lumina-Hsu, Planner II Mattea Curtis, and Senior Capital Project Manager Scott Reeves

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

ROLL CALL VOTE: 2-0-0 (Director Holman absent)

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Public comment opened at 2:01 p.m.

Deputy District Clerk Loana Lumina-Hsu reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 2:01 p.m.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Approve the July 25, 2023 Planning and Natural Resources Committee Meeting Minutes.

Public comment opened at 2:01 p.m.

Ms. Lumina-Hsu reported there were no public speakers for this item.

Public comment closed at 2:01 p.m.

Motion: Director Cyr moved, and Director Gleason seconded the motion to approve the July 25, 2023 Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting minutes.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 2-0-0 (Director Holman absent.)

3. Review the Existing Conditions, Site Opportunity and Constraints Analysis and Conceptual Design Alternatives for the Proposed Bear Creek Redwoods North Parking Area (R-23-105)

General Manager Ana Ruiz provided opening remarks and provided an overview of the Committee review process for the Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve project. Currently, staff is focused on opening four miles of trails in the northeastern part of the preserve, where the terrain is gentler and more accommodating to a wider variety of trail users. Additionally, staff is proactively seeking parking solutions to address the anticipated future increase in visitation.

Planner II Mattea Curtis provided the staff presentation on the Bear Creek Redwoods North Parking Area Conceptual Design Alternatives, covering the technical studies, opportunities and constraints, a summary of stakeholder feedback, and a conceptual design overview. She continued by outlining the next steps in the process. She highlighted the goals for the North Parking Area, which include providing approximately 50 vehicle parking spaces, 8 equestrian trailer parking spaces, a connection to the new Phase II trails, and implementing Transportation Demand Management Strategies (TDMs). Ms. Curtis also discussed the existing conditions of the 2.5-acre project area.

Ms. Curtis reported that the proposed parking area was thoroughly studied as part of the larger Preserve Plan and the accompanying environmental review document. Moreover, a traffic study indicates that there are adequate lines of site at the proposed North Parking Area site.

Senior Capital Project Manager Scott Reeves presented the conceptual design alternatives for the proposed parking area. He described Option 1 and Option 2 along with the TDMs proposed, and stated both design options would meet ADA accessibility requirements. Additionally, the planned infrastructure is expected to meet municipal storm water requirements.

Mr. Reeves presented the public feedback received regarding perceived impacts on the meadow, emphasizing that the meadow contains habitat value. Staff worked with the Natural Resources Department to explore options for preserving as much of the meadow as possible while reducing

visual impacts and reducing the need for extensive retaining wall and engineering efforts for the parking area.

Mr. Reeves compared various factors for each conceptual design option and explained the difference between value and cost, strategies for minimizing impacts to visual resources, integration of TDMs, alignment with project goals and policies, and alignment with public comments. Option 2 presents a high value for the cost, results in minimal impacts to visual resources, and requires less grading than Option 1.

Director Gleason commented that he heard the public asking why parking cannot be located off Bear Creek Road at Gate BC01, and requested a more detailed explanation that can be included in the background material for the project.

Mr. Reeves stated that, aside from the traffic on Bear Creek Road at Gate BC01, constraints exist on the capacity for parking spaces that can be provided while also incorporating the required 22-foot-wide driveway. This would involve a substantial amount of impervious materials, significant tree loss, and the construction of extensive retaining walls at this other location. Implementing a parking lot near Gate BC01 would deviate significantly from the goal of accommodating 50 spaces and 8 equestrian parking spaces.

Public comment opened at 2:44 p.m.

Mike Bushue, a member of the Equestrian Trail Riders Action Committee, spoke in support of Option 2 and stated a preference for tandem parking over Option 1. He spoke in support of including dedicated equestrian parking.

Nancy Cole had technical issues and was not able to provide a virtual public comment.

Public comment closed at 2:54 p.m.

Chair Cyr spoke in support of Option 2.

Director Gleason spoke in support of Option 2 and highlighted the importance of the views and the meadow. Additionally, he expressed that there is an interest from the public for a site tour to see project area.

Ms. Ruiz explained the site is difficult to visit as there is no parking nearby and the current pathways are not open to the general public. Ms. Ruiz stated that she will discuss accessibility for a future public meeting, alternatively staff will provide additional photos of the site as part of future presentations.

Chair Cyr stated the Committee is in support of Option 2 and requested that staff add additional photos of the site in the presentation.

Director Gleason requested a more natural and less jarring design for the parking lot striping to be considered. He also expressed openness to considering both options, with a preference for Option 2.

Chair Cyr proposed presenting both options along with a comprehensive comparison to the entire Board, emphasizing the reasons why Option 2 is the preferred choice.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Cyr adjourned the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee at 3:00 p.m.

Loana Lumina-Hsu
Deputy District Clerk