



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

REAL PROPERTY COMMITTEE

College Track
1877 Bay Rd
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

DRAFT MINUTES

February 16, 2016
2:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Director Hanko called the meeting of the Real Property Committee to order at 2:06 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Nonette Hanko, Cecily Harris, and Yoriko Kishimoto

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: General Manager Steve Abbors, Assistant General Manager Ana Ruiz, Assistant General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Real Property Manager Mike Williams, Planner III Gretchen Laustsen, and District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Motion: Director Harris moved, and Director Kishimoto seconded a motion to adopt the agenda.

VOTE: 3-0-0

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Trish Mulvey inquired whether the San Francisquito Creek watershed would be connected to the Bay Trail along the other side of East Palo Alto once the levee project is completed.

Mr. Williams responded to Ms. Mulvey's comments.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Selection of Pro Tem Committee Chair

Director Hanko nominated Director Harris to act as the Pro Tem Committee Chair. Director Kishimoto seconded the nomination.

VOTE: 3-0-0

2. Approval of Real Property Committee Minutes for June 23, 2015 and July 8, 2015.

Motion: Director Hanko moved, and Director Kishimoto seconded a motion to approve the June 23, 2015 and July 8, 2015 Real Property Committee meeting minutes.

VOTE: 3-0-0

3. Presentation on the status of acquiring the Ravenswood Bay Trail easement across the lands of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission for the purpose of constructing a new portion of trail to connect the San Francisco Bay Trail between University Avenue to the north and the Ravenswood Open Space Preserve, the City of East Palo Alto's Cooley Landing, and the Palo Alto Baylands to the south.

Real Property Manager Mike Williams provided the staff presentation describing a proposed trail section designed to close a connection gap in the Bay Trail between the Ravenswood Open Space Preserve and the Don Edwards Wildlife Refuge. Mr. Williams described the history of the preferred trail alignment and the easement exchange with the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC). Mr. Williams explained that the project will be funded by a combination of grant funds and Measure AA bond funds. Following review by the Real Property Committee, an environmental review of the project will take place. Finally, Mr. Williams outlined the terms and conditions of the easement, including the District's obligations to provide patrol, construction, and maintenance of the trail.

Planner III Gretchen Laustsen described the proposed trail alignment and its goal to minimize impacts on the wetland habitat and nearby University Village neighborhood. Ms. Laustsen described the propose design of the trail and the bridge planned to span the pond on the site. Finally, Ms. Laustsen described the environmental documents to be prepared for the project and the environmental review period for the project, which will include additional opportunities for public input and comment.

Director Kishimoto inquired whether electronic bicycles would be allowed on the trail segment.

Ms. Laustsen stated that the District's ADA policies would govern whether the bicycles would be allowed.

Director Kishimoto inquired whether sea level rise had been included as a factor when the trail segment was designed.

Ms. Laustsen explained that sea level rise and King tides were taken into account for the design of the bridge and boardwalk, but portions of the trail that follow the existing service road may be inaccessible at times during very high water levels.

Director Harris inquired regarding access to the trail segment outside of normal District preserve hours due to the trail being used by commuters.

Mr. Williams explained that the District is in ongoing discussions with the City and County of San Francisco regarding this topic and has proposed trail hours of 5:00 am to 10:00 pm with gates at either end of the trail segment to prevent trespassing.

Public comments opened at 2:44 p.m.

Grayelin Young inquired regarding the distance between the proposed trail and the fence bordering the University Village neighborhood.

Mr. Williams explained a privacy buffer has been negotiated, and the trail would be on the opposite side of the service road from the fence.

Mary Flamer inquired if the proposed bridge will be for recreational use or for walkers.

Ms. Laustsen explained that the bridge would be part of the overall trail alignment and that each section of trail has been designed to be compatible with the type of habitat that the trail would be crossing.

Jerry Hearn inquired regarding the East Palo Alto Four Corners Project and its impact on the trail design.

Ms. Laustsen explained that East Palo Alto had previously identified the area for multimodal traffic, and the proposed trail design would not restrict any future plans for multimodal traffic.

Trish Mulvey inquired if the proposed trail could be underwater in the future.

Ms. Laustsen explained that sea level rise and King tides were taken into account for the design of the raised boardwalk and bridge. However, portions of the trail that follow the existing service road may be inaccessible at times due to high water levels. Staff hopes that future levees will be incorporated into the Bay Trail.

Bill Leikam inquired regarding the ability of wildlife to travel north to south along the connection corridor.

Mr. Williams explained that the Department of Fish and Wildlife was consulted as part of the design, and they recommend that the trail not be enclosed so it could tie into the Don Edwards Wildlife Refuge.

Pearlie Young-Rainer expressed her concerns regarding the proximity of the proposed trail to a nearby school, including concerns related to trespassers or dogs.

Mr. Williams explained that the easement requires patrol and enforcement by District staff, and dogs would not be allowed on the proposed trail and are not currently allowed in the Ravenswood Open Space Preserve or on the land owned by the SFPUC. Additionally, there will not be a direct entrance to the trail from the University Village neighborhood, but the entrance will be from University Avenue.

Laura Thompson, project manager for the San Francisco Bay Trail, thanked the District for making the proposed trail connection possible and spoke in favor of the funding received for the project from various sources, including grant from San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties.

Martin Peña inquired whether University Avenue from Purdy Avenue to the Ravenswood Bay Trail will be paved in the future.

Mr. Williams explained that this request would have to be undertaken by East Palo Alto, but the District will mention it to their City staff.

Public comments closed 3:04 p.m.

Director Kishimoto inquired if access to the trail from the University Village could be created.

Mr. Williams explained that this determination is in City of East Palo Alto's jurisdiction, and the land there belongs to the SFPUC. Staff will mention this issue to both agencies at a future meeting with those agencies' staff.

Motion: Director Hanko moved, and Director Kishimoto seconded a motion to approve the recommended trail alignment and the terms of the easement as presented.

VOTE: 3-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

Director Harris adjourned the meeting of the Real Property Committee at 3:11 p.m.

Jennifer Woodworth, MMC
District Clerk