



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

## **PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Administrative Office  
330 Distel Circle  
Los Altos, CA 94022

**March 28, 2017**

### **DRAFT MINUTES**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Director Riffle called the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee to order at to order at 2:30 p.m.

#### **ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:** Pete Siemens and Curt Riffle

**Members Absent:** Jed Cyr

**Staff Present:** Assistant General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Sheryl Schaffner, Planning Manager Jane Mark, Planner II Bryan Apple, District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth, Engineering and Construction Manager Jay Lin, Planner III Lisa Bankosh, Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington

#### **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

No speakers present.

#### **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**Motion:** Director Siemens moved, and Director Riffle seconded the motion to adopt the agenda.

**VOTE: 2-0-0**

#### **COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

##### **1. Selection of Committee Chair for Calendar Year 2017**

**Motion:** Director Siemens moved, and Director Riffle seconded the motion to nominate Director Cyr as the Planning and Natural Resources Committee Chair for calendar year 2017.

**VOTE: 2-0-0** (Director Cyr absent)

**2. Approve the October 5, 2016 Planning and Natural Resources Committee Minutes**

**Motion:** Director Siemens moved, and Director Riffle seconded the motion to approve the minutes for the October 6, 2016 Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting.

**VOTE: 2-0-0** (Director Cyr absent)

**3. Schematic Design of the Alma College Parking Area and Bear Creek Road Trail Crossing at Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve (R-17-39)**

Planner II Bryan Apple, Planner II provided the staff presentation reviewing the project goals and the proposed location of the Alma College parking lot. Staff encountered several design constraints related to the proposed location of the parking lot, including western pond turtle breeding ground, mountainous topography, nearby creeks, and Alma College cultural landscape. Mr. Apple introduced Bill Harris of landscape architectural firm Harris Design.

Mr. Harris displayed and described several conceptual design options for the parking area and the recommended schematic design to address the various design constraints. Mr. Harris also described the proposed at-grade road crossing for the trailhead, including location and traffic signs. The estimated construction costs for Phase I of the parking lot and at-grade crossing are \$1.2 million.

Director Siemens inquired when and how the western trail network would be opened to the public, and suggested signage indicating a future trail will be built in the area.

Mr. Apple explained staff is currently working on potential trail connections for the trail network in the western side of the preserve.

Director Siemens inquired when cyclists will be able to access the preserve trails.

Mr. Apple explained bicycle access will be part of the Phase II of the Preserve Plan as part of a multi-use trail. The proposed multi-use trail will end in the Alma College parking lot area.

Director Riffle expressed his concern regarding the proposed size of the parking lot and asked regarding alternate parking areas and signage for safe parking areas.

Mr. Apple explained an additional parking lot would be constructed as part of Phase II, if needed.

Assistant General Manager Ana Ruiz reported staff will be monitoring the parking lot and preserve use to address parking issues as they arise. Also the eastern trail system, which are more accessible and will most likely receive more use, will not be opened until additional parking areas are built.

Director Riffle suggested interpretive and warning signage related to the Western Pond Turtle breeding area.

Mr. Apple reported Natural Resources staff is creating a Western Pond Turtle mitigation plan to help address these concerns.

Directors Riffle and Siemens suggested the proposed shrubbery radial spokes from the pond are not necessary and to prioritize public access and Western Pond Turtle protection.

Director Riffle suggested including the proposed benches in the memorial bench inventory and suggested including members of the public in the design process.

Director Riffle expressed his concern regarding pedestrians crossing near the parking lot entrance.

Mr. Harris discussed various options to address the concern and reported once the undercrossing is complete; the at-grade crossing will be decommissioned.

Director Riffle suggested providing public access to the pond's edge.

Public comment opened at 3:37 p.m.

No speakers present.

Public comment closed at 3:37 p.m.

Mr. Apple introduced Robyn Cooper of Fall Creek Engineering to present information regarding two proposed undercrossing options. Ms. Cooper described the combined or separated undercrossing options, including the constraints and advantages of each. Ms. Cooper also discussed the potential flooding of an undercrossing due to storm water flow and possible debris blockages.

Mr. Harris displayed various renderings of a potential combined or separated undercrossing. A combined undercrossing could cost between \$500,000 and \$750,000, and a separated crossing would cost more due to required walls and the western trail approach.

Mr. Apple further discussed the pros and cons of the combined and separated undercrossings.

Director Siemens suggested evaluation of the current culvert is necessary before the parking lot was constructed.

Mr. Apple reported the culvert under the parking lot currently appears to be structurally sound, and replacement would require additional permitting and delays. Staff and the consultant will further evaluate the culvert.

Director Riffle expressed concern regarding flooding the undercrossing in large storms.

Ms. Cooper explained the undercrossing would be designed to minimize impact on the trail; however, the type of large storm that could cause trail flooding would also likely require closure of the preserve and parking lot.

Public comment opened at 4:11 p.m.

No speakers present.

Public comment closed at 4:11 p.m.

Mr. Apple reviewed the proposed schedule for the project

**Motion:** Director Siemens moved, and Director Riffle seconded the motion to:

1. Confirm the recommended schematic design for the parking area to allow the General Manager to direct staff to proceed with further design development.
2. Confirm a recommended phased approach to construction of the Bear Creek Road trail undercrossing Option A as presented.
3. Recommend to the full Board of Directors a contract amendment with Harris Design to complete design and engineering for a combined culvert-trail undercrossing.

**VOTE: 2-0-0** (Director Cyr absent)

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Director Riffle adjourned the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee of Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 4:21 p.m.

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Jennifer Woodworth, MMC  
District Clerk