



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

March 10, 2021
Board Meeting 21-09

SPECIAL AND REGULAR MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

The Board of Directors conducted this meeting in accordance with California Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20. All Board members and staff participated via teleconference.

APPROVED MINUTES*

SPECIAL MEETING

President Riffle called the special meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 5:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Larry Hassett, Karen Holman, Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, Yoriko Kishimoto, Curt Riffle, and Pete Siemens

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Chief Financial Officer Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Jennifer Woodworth, Public Affairs Manager Kori Skinner, Public Affairs Specialist II Leigh Ann Gessner, Senior Capital Project Manager Tanisha Werner

President Riffle announced this meeting is being held in accordance with Governor Newsom's Executive Order allowing Board members to participate remotely. The District has done its best to conduct a meeting where everyone has an opportunity to listen to the meeting and to provide comment. The public has the opportunity to comment on the agenda, and the opportunity to listen to this meeting through the internet or via telephone. This information can be found on the meeting agenda, which was physically posted at the District's Administrative Office, and on the District website. President Riffle described the process and protocols for the meeting.

1. Draft Design Schemes for the Administrative Office Interpretive Elements Project (R-21-37)

Public Affairs Specialist II Leigh Ann Gessner provided the staff report describing Board actions to date for the project and introduced the District's project consultants with EDX Exhibits, Sherry Smith, Julie Sayigh, and Charles Davis.

Sherry Smith reviewed the Board-approved interpretive themes and project goals.

Ms. Smith, Julie Sayigh, and Charles Davis described and displayed representative examples for the draft design schemes, including proposed interior and exterior elements.

Board members requested and received clarification regarding the proposed design schemes and suggested materials for use in the designs.

Director Kishimoto inquired regarding potential signage for building tenants.

Senior Capital Project Manager Tanisha Werner reported there is no exterior signage planned for building tenants.

Director Hassett spoke in support of including exterior signage for the building tenants, such as near the District's exterior signage.

Director Siemens stated the sign near the sidewalk should be double-sided, so pedestrians walking in both directions on the sidewalk will see the information.

President Riffle commented tenant signage is not necessary for the exterior of the building, and signage can be included inside the building. President Riffle inquired regarding the lifetime of the design elements.

Ms. Smith stated their exhibits typically last 15-20 years, and some exhibits could be more changeable, such as the interior niche exhibits.

Director Hassett suggested using the large monitor in the lobby to display wildlife videos from the District's wildlife cameras.

Director Siemens agreed with Director Hassett's comments regarding showing videos on the large lobby monitor and suggested the display could be interactive for visitors to select various videos to watch.

Ms. Smith displayed options for the large exterior banners, including possible designs and materials, and summarized the overall design schemes.

Public comment opened at 6:36 p.m.

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth read the submitted comments into the record.

Ken Nitz provided comments and suggestions regarding the draft design schemes.

Public comment closed at 6:38 p.m.

Director Kishimoto spoke in favor of the metal cutout designs for the exterior banners. Director Kishimoto expressed support for the backlit photos included in scheme 2 but not the colors displayed. Additionally, Director Kishimoto spoke in support of raising the walkway for pedestrians through the parking lot.

Director Siemens spoke in support of a larger monitor in the lobby area and the metal cutout designs. Director Siemens prefers design scheme 2, which would be more changeable as needed for updates. Additionally, Director Siemens spoke in favor of exterior panel design 2C to display various elements of the District (ocean, forest, grassland, and bayland).

Director Holman spoke in favor of exterior banner option 2A because they play off of the District’s logo. Director Holman spoke in favor of using natural materials. Director Holman expressed concern regarding the permeability of the parking lot materials and regarding possible safety issues related to overgrown foliage near the outdoor seating areas. Finally, Director Holman suggested using the long interior wall as a museum display area instead of as a video wall.

Director Kersteen-Tucker spoke in favor of design scheme 1 because it gives the feeling of the District’s preserves and in favor of displaying wildlife camera footage on the large lobby monitor. Director Kersteen-Tucker spoke in favor of using the retaining wall as a location for changing art, such as by local artists. Finally, Director Kersteen-Tucker spoke in favor of incorporating the District’s agricultural lands in the exterior banners.

Director Hassett spoke in favor of design scheme 1 and offered suggestions for videos on the lobby monitor, including wildlife camera footage, messages from the general manager, wildlife programs, streambed camera, and trail mapping videos.

Director Cyr spoke in favor of the metal cutout exterior panels and design scheme 1. Director Cyr also spoke in support of a continual loop of videos or photos on the lobby monitor.

President Riffle spoke in support of design scheme 1 because it better meets the project design goals and interpretive themes and in support of the metal cutouts exterior panels. President Riffle spoke in support of including agricultural as a fourth theme instead of the ocean. Finally, President Riffle spoke in support of focusing more of the budget on the interior elements of the design because there is not much exterior pedestrian traffic.

Directors Holman and Siemens commented that the Board may not be able to select a defined design scheme.

General Manager Ana Ruiz suggested the Board may want to vote separately on the preferred interior and exterior design scheme.

The Board members each stated their preference for the exterior and interior design schemes.

Exterior:

Scheme 1	Scheme 2
Hassett	Cyr
Holman	Siemens

Kersteen-Tucker	
Kishimoto	
Riffle	

Interior:

Scheme 1	Scheme 2
Cyr	Holman
Hassett	Kishimoto
Kersteen-Tucker	
Siemens	
Riffle	

Director Holman requested a sample of the ApplePly be provided to the Board, so they may view a physical sample.

Director Kersteen-Tucker requested staff return with additional information regarding use of the retaining wall.

ADJOURNMENT

President Riffle adjourned the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 7:08 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

President Riffle called the regular meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 7:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Larry Hassett, Karen Holman, Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, Yoriko Kishimoto, Curt Riffle, and Pete Siemens

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Chief Financial Officer Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Jennifer Woodworth, Planning Manager Jane Mark, Planner I Melissa Borgesi, Senior Planner Tina Hugg, Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington, Management Analyst I Sophie Christel, Engineering and Construction Manager Jay Lin, Senior Capital Project Manager Tanisha Werner

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comment. The public has the opportunity to comment on the agenda, and the opportunity to listen to this meeting through the internet or via telephone. This information can be found on the meeting agenda, which was physically posted at the District's Administrative Office, and on the District website. President Riffle described the process and protocols for the meeting.

CLOSED SESSION REPORT

General Counsel Hilary Stevenson reported on February 24 in closed session, the Board of Directors voted 7-0 to file an amicus brief in support of East Bay Regional Park District. The case in the California Court of Appeal, First Appellate District, is Save Lafayette Trees v. East Bay Regional Park District, case number A156150. At issue in the litigation is the authority conferred by state law to park and open space districts to make resource management decisions without pre-emption by local ordinances.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth announced no comments were submitted.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY

- Proclamations Recognizing Efforts of the La Honda Public Access Working Group Members

CONSENT CALENDAR

Public comment opened at 7:37 p.m.

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth reported no comments were submitted for the consent calendar.

Public comment closed at 7:37 p.m.

Motion: Director Cyr moved, and Director Siemens seconded the motion to approve the Consent Calendar.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

1. Approve the February 24, 2021 and February 25, 2021 Board meeting minutes
2. Claims Report

BOARD BUSINESS

3. Best Practices from the La Honda Public Access Working Group Pilot (R-21-36)

Senior Planner Tina Hugg described the La Honda Public Access Working Group (PAWG) formation and recruitment process and reviewed various lessons learned from the process, including cultivating public participation, balancing perspectives, utilizing an external facilitator, defining PAWG goals and ground rules, setting expectations for workload and time commitments, and incorporating Board participation.

Planner I Melissa Borgesi outlined four key takeaways from management of the PAWG, including more time to get to know each other, suggestions regarding group leadership roles, establishing a baseline background, and a facilitator to help manage difficult conversations. Ms. Borgesi described practices critical to managing the PAWG process, such as required meetings, project documentation, defined meeting schedule, properly allocating staff resources, and actively notifying and engaging the public.

Members of the Board thanked the PAWG members, District staff, and Board members for their work on the PAWG and project.

Director Kersteen-Tucker inquired regarding the balance of representation of varying perspectives on the PAWG.

Ms. Hugg stated some on the PAWG felt there was not enough local representation and others felt more regional representation was needed. This may have demonstrated the representation was fairly balanced.

Public comment opened at 8:08 p.m.

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth read the submitted comments into the record.

Liz Westbrook with the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council thanked the PAWG members and District staff for their work on the PAWG and supported public access and a trailhead to provide Ridge Trail connections in the area studied.

Public comment closed at 8:09 p.m.

No Board action required.

Director Holman suggested incorporating the PAWG voting process in future working groups.

4. Selection of an Additional Topic for the Science Advisory Panel (R-21-38)

Management Analyst I Sophie Christel provided the staff presentation describing the timeline for the research previously completed and planned for the Science Advisory Panel (SAP). Ms. Christel reported staff recommends the SAP study a topic related to the benefits and impacts of class-1 electric bikes on multi-use recreational trails in natural areas. Ms. Christel described the potential value to the District for the topic and proposed approach to the topic.

President Riffle suggested including reference to specific potential impacts, namely the impact on natural resources, impact on trails, impact on other users, and impact on staff in the research

question. President Riffle also suggested including research regarding potential future impacts of e-bikes based on potential future technology improvements. Finally, President Riffle asked that the SAP provide additional areas of future research, where applicable.

Ms. Christel stated that staff discussed including potential impacts to staff but excluded it because it was unlikely to be answered in the scientific literature and many be better determined by the District's own research. The suggested research question was left open-ended to help account for some of the various topics suggested and others that may not yet be identified.

Director Holman suggested the research question may be too narrow and could be broadened beyond multi-use recreational trails to the impact on other users, their safety, wildlife, etc.

Director Kersteen-Tucker commented on the potential impact on staff and visitors if e-bikes are not allowed because they will continue to be at District preserves, so this topic should be addressed soon to inform a future management action or policy.

Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington stated additional studies related to mountain bikes and impacts on natural resources exists and may be used to infer and inform the District on the potential impacts of e-bikes.

Public comment opened at 8:35 p.m.

Patrick Noo supported allowing e-bikes on District trails to promote access to more distant areas of District preserves, not just areas that are often overcrowded.

Manish Bhaskar spoke in support of allowing e-bikes allow those who are physically unable to use standard mountain bikes and enjoy exercise and the preserves. Also, e-bike technology is leading to lighter e-bikes with less assist for riders.

Allan Petersdorf supported allowing e-bikes on District trails because it allows older riders to continue to enjoy the trails.

Ray Anton commented that e-bikes should not be banned before the study is completed.

Andrew Fitzgerald supported allowing e-bikes on District trails to support cycling by all visitors of all fitness levels.

James Field supported allowing e-bikes on District trails to allow older adults to continue to access nature.

Anne Ferguson supported research to study whether cyclists should be limited to wider trails to promote safety of hikers along narrow multi-use trails.

Randall Vail stated his support for allowing e-bikes on District trails because it increases access for visitors who may not be able to physically ride as far on a standard mountain bike. Mr. Vail spoke in support of trails dedicated to cyclists.

Maziar Bozorginia stated the District should also consider the regulations regarding e-bikes enacted by surrounding jurisdictions, which have routes connecting to District trails. Allowing e-bikes on District trails will allow for additional regional trail connections.

Alan Muschott expressed support for allowing e-bikes on District trails in order to allow older riders to continue to exercise and enjoy the trails.

Lloyd Davies expressed support for allowing e-bikes on District trails where mountain bikes are allowed.

Sean McKenna inquired if the Board has considered the health benefits of allowing e-bikes in District preserves.

Mariah Smith opposed allowing e-bikes on District preserves.

Public comment closed at 8:52 p.m.

Motion: Director Siemens moved, and Director Kersteen-Tucker seconded the motion to authorize the General Manager to direct the Science Advisory Panel to prepare a literature review on the topic of electric bicycles, and more specifically to address the following question:

- What do the scientific literature and practitioner studies suggest about the benefits and impacts of class 1 electric bike access on multi-use recreational trails in natural areas?

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

5. Consideration of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Alternatives for the Administrative Office Project (R-21-39)

Senior Capital Project Manager Tanisha Werner provided the staff presentation describing four Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) alternatives the Board may consider and costs associated with the alternatives. Ms. Werner reviewed Bid Alternate 2 included in the construction contract.

Project manager Eric Skiba with Noll & Tam architects described the LEED credits estimated for the administrative office project and the term LEED-equivalent. Mr. Skiba further described four alternatives the Board may consider for levels of LEED certification or LEED-equivalent designs.

Director Siemens inquired regarding the materials to be used by the contractor.

Ms. Werner stated the contractor may use LEED-equivalent materials, but material substitutions must be approved by the District, which would prevent any non-LEED compliant materials.

Public comment opened at 9:26 p.m.

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth reported no comments were submitted for this item.

Public comment closed at 9:26 p.m.

Motion: Director Kishimoto moved, and Director Hassett seconded the motion to pursue a LEED Gold Level equivalent design for the administrative office project.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 6-0-0 (Director Holman absent)

INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDA

- Hawthorns Area Public Access Project - Planning Process Update

Director Hassett requested additional information regarding conversations with Town of Portola Valley staff regarding reuse of the Hawthorns mansion.

Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan provided additional information regarding this project and stated work on reuse of the Hawthorns mansion is currently delayed and consultation with Portola Valley currently relates to public access to the area.

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

A. Committee Reports

Director Cyr reported the Legislative, Funding and Public Affairs Committee met on March 9, 2021 to discuss various legislative bills staff recommends supporting, watching, etc.

Director Kishimoto reported the Lehigh Quarry ad hoc committee met on February 25, 2021.

B. Staff Reports

No staff reports.

C. Director Reports

Director Siemens reported he attended the Santa Clara County Special District's Association meeting on March 1, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT

President Riffle adjourned the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 9:44 p.m.

Jennifer Woodworth, MMC
District Clerk