



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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

Tuesday, June 15, 2021

DRAFT MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Director Kishimoto called the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee to order at 2:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Karen Holman and Yoriko Kishimoto

Members absent: Zoe Kersteen-Tucker

Staff present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Assistant General Brian Malone, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Jennifer Woodworth, Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington, Resource Management Specialist Karine Tokatlian, Planning Manager Jane Mark

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth announced this meeting is being held in accordance with Governor Newsom's Executive Order allowing Committee 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. Ms. Woodworth described the process and protocols for the meeting.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

ROLL CALL VOTE: 2-0-0 (Director Kersteen-Tucker absent)

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Woodworth reported no public comments had been submitted.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Approve the May 18, 2021 Planning and Natural Resources Committee Meeting Minutes.

Ms. Woodworth announced a typo had been made in the minutes and the bottom of page three should read “Director Kishimoto spoke in support of having easy access trails and ample bike parking for the area.”

Motion: Director Kishimoto moved, and Director Holman seconded the motion to approve the May 18, 2021 Planning and Natural Resources Committee amended meeting minutes.

Public comment opened at 2:03 p.m.

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth reported no public comments had been submitted.

Public comment closed at 2:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 2-0-0 (Director Kersteen-Tucker absent)

2. Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Study Area and Shoreline Resilience Planning (R-21-83)

Resource Management Specialist III Karine Tokatlian introduced Senior Environmental Scientist Jeremy Lowe from the San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI).

Mr. Lowe provided an overview of the history of the San Francisco Bay, including habitats, the impact of development on the landscape, and current salt pond habitats.

Ms. Tokatlian explained salt ponds provide habitats for various species of migratory waterbirds and shorebirds, including for breeding. Ms. Tokatlian reported the restoration of the San Francisco Bay includes restoration of salt ponds to tidal marsh which can offset sea level rise impacts, support carbon sequestration, and reconnect creeks and sloughs. Restoration goals must also be balanced with the impact of restoration on various species.

Mr. Lowe described the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project, including various completed and proposed restoration projects and highlighted a managed pond solution, which seeks to balance salt pond restoration with the impact on species in the habitat. Mr. Lowe provided an overview of the Sunnyvale Shoreline Resilience Vision and Levee Alignment Project.

Director Kishimoto inquired if there has been any interest among stakeholders for a single open space agency to manage the open space and tidal areas.

Ms. Tokatlian stated one of the District’s project goals is to receive feedback from the Board on management options for the parcel .

Director Kishimoto inquired if the property is a flood basin for Stevens Creek.

Mr. Lowe reported the property does not provide water detention for Stevens Creek but does for the nearby NASA property.

Ms. Tokatlian described the Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Study Area (SCSNSA), including its location, geographic features, and seasonal stormwater effects. Ms. Tokatlian explained the SCSNSA is hydrologically connected to neighboring stormwater retention basins. The United States Navy completed a remediation effort for the site in 2013 and began a superfund remediation of the basin in 2014 to allow for a future reuse as a tidal marsh habitat. Ms. Tokatlian reported on various protected and endangered species found in the SCSNSA, such as the western snowy plover. Ms. Tokatlian reviewed three management alternatives to address the SCSNSA and the benefits and limitations of each alternative. Ms. Tokatlian stated staff recommends Alternative 2, which would best meet regional restoration goals and objectives.

Director Kishimoto spoke in support of taking action sooner than later because problems would likely worsen over time.

Director Holman suggested this site may be a good site for potential offsite mitigation projects by other agencies.

Public comment opened at 3:52 p.m.

Eileen McLaughlin with the Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge provided comments in support of restoration of the area and in support of alternative 3.

Ben Pearl, Science Director with the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory, provided additional information regarding the western snowy plover and recovery efforts for the species.

Public comment closed at 4:08 p.m.

Director Kishimoto spoke in support of Alternative 3, which supports connecting the area to the Bay.

Director Holman inquired regarding how often the District's action could be modified in response to the changing nature of the area.

General Manager Ana Ruiz suggested forwarding both alternatives 2 and 3 to the Board of Directors for discussion to help keep options open as the District coordinates with other agencies and organizations.

Mr. Lowe stated a phased approach would be appropriate due to the various projects being led by other agencies, which would allow for near- and long-term options.

Director Kishimoto suggested bringing the item to the Board as a study session before requesting Board action on the topic.

Director Holman spoke in support of presenting Alternatives 2 and 3 to the Board of Directors.

Ms. Ruiz stated both alternatives can be presented to the Board and staff will determine if there is a phased approach which can also be presented to the Board.

Motion: Director Holman moved, and Director Kishimoto seconded the motion to forward options 2 and 3 to the full Board of Directors for discussion and include in the information any options for phasing either or both options. Additionally, staff should include in the staff report information regarding the Moffett Park Specific Plan and other potential funding options such as San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority and offsite mitigation potential.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 2-0-0 (Director Kersteen-Tucker absent)

ADJOURNMENT

Director Kishimoto adjourned the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee at 4:15 p.m.

Jennifer Woodworth, MMC
District Clerk