



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

REAL PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Historic Train Depot
110 Higgins Canyon Road
Half Moon Bay, CA

Tuesday, August 31, 2021

DRAFT MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Director Hassett called the meeting of the Real Property Committee to order at 4:32 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Larry Hassett, Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, and Pete Siemens

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Real Property Manager Mike Williams, Planner III Elish Ryan, Planning Manager Jane Mark, and District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Jennifer Woodworth

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion: Director Hassett moved, and Director Kersteen-Tucker seconded the motion to adopt the agenda.

VOTE: 3-0-0

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Jim Sullivan commented on the amount of land the District has preserved and the need to connect the open spaces through regional connections, such as at Tunitas Creek, Purisima Creek Redwoods, and Burleigh Murray State Park. Mr. Sullivan suggested the District negotiate easements to connect the various pockets of open space and provide trail connections to the public.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Selection of Committee Chair for Calendar Year 2021

Director Kersteen-Tucker nominated Director Hassett to serve as the Real Property Committee Chair for Calendar Year 2021, and Director Siemens seconded the nomination.

Director Hassett accepted the nomination.

VOTE: 3-0-0

2. Approval of Real Property Committee Minutes for April 30, 2019.

Motion: Director Siemens moved, and Director Kersteen-Tucker seconded a motion to approve the January 19, 2021 Real Property Committee meeting minutes.

VOTE: 3-0-0

3. Consideration of a new land purchase known as “Johnston Ranch” as an addition to the Miramontes Ridge Open Space Preserve in unincorporated San Mateo County (APN: 064-370-070, 064-370-110, 064-370-120, 065-210-090, 065-210-190, 065-210-210, 065-210-220, 065-210-230 and 065-210-240).

Real Property Manager Mike Williams provided the staff presentation describing the Johnston Ranch property, geographical features of the area, habitat and resource values of the property, and reasons for the proposed purchase. Mr. Williams described access routes to the property, including plans to improve access by the City of Half Moon Bay at a nearby pedestrian crossing, and regional connections. The proposed purchase is included in Measure AA portfolio 1 to support public access in the Coastal Annexation Area. Finally, Mr. Williams outlined the terms and conditions of the proposed purchase, including a management agreement with Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) and a proposed land division being pursued to support continued farming and grazing of the property.

Public comments opened at 4:46 p.m.

Charles Shafae expressed concerns regarding road safety, public access, and parking for the site. Mr. Shafae stated cars often park illegally on Higgins Canyon Road and additional parking is needed for visitors.

Bo Putnam inquired why a land division is needed stating the District should continue to co-own the flat portion of the property with POST. Mr. Putnam expressed concern that the property could be sold to a developer in the future.

Mr. Williams provided information regarding the District’s approach to intensive agriculture, such as row crops, and reported the proposed conservation easement on the property would preserve the agricultural uses and prevent the land from being developed.

Ben Wright, with POST, described POST’s approach to preserving agricultural uses and protecting open space, stating the farm may remain in private ownership but will be protected through a conservation easement.

Meg Delano asked about regional connections to the property and to connect to the Coastal Trail. Ms. Delano spoke in favor of having a director trail connection to the San Mateo Coast.

Public comments closed at 5:04 p.m.

John Doughty, Public Works Director for the City of Half Moon Bay, provided additional information regarding potential access to the property, including the Naomi Partridge Trail, the nearby pedestrian crossing and potential paving of the Smith Fields parking lot and Wavecrest Trail.

Director Kersteen-Tucker commented on the proposed acquisition and stated public access and regional connections is an example of partnerships among agencies to increase public access and preserve land on the San Mateo Coast.

Director Siemens stated one of the benefits of the proposed agreements and property acquisition is that it will preserve open space and agricultural lands on the Coast while keeping the farmland in private ownership. The District will continue to manage the uplands property through conservation grazing.

Motion: Director Siemens moved, and Director Kersteen-Tucker seconded a motion to recommend to the Board approval of the Johnston Ranch property purchase for the proposed price of \$4,800,000.

VOTE: 3-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

Director Hassett adjourned the meeting of the Real Property Committee at 5:19 p.m.

Jennifer Woodworth, MMC
District Clerk