



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Committee conducted this meeting in accordance with California Government Code section 54953(e) and Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Resolution 21-33. All Committee members and staff participated via teleconference.

Tuesday, March 1, 2022

DRAFT MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Director Siemens called the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee to order at 2:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Curt Riffle and Pete Siemens

Members absent: Yoriko Kishimoto

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, Planning Manager Jane Mark, Planner III Alex Casbara

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth announced this meeting is being held in accordance with California Government Code section 54953(e) and Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Resolution 21-33 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 Siemens moved, and Director Riffle seconded the motion to adopt the agenda.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 2-0-0 (Director Kishimoto absent)

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Woodworth read the submitted comments into the record.

Tom Angsten provided comments supporting allowing e-bikes in the Skeggs area of El Corte de Madera Open Space Preserve.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Select Committee Chair for Calendar Year 2022

Motion: Director Siemens nominated Director Riffle for the Planning and Natural Resources Committee Chair for Calendar Year 2022, and Director Riffle seconded the nomination.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 2-0-0 (Director Kishimoto absent)

Director Kishimoto joined the meeting at 2:06 p.m.

2. Approve the November 16, 2021 Planning and Natural Resources Committee Meeting Minutes.

Motion: Director Kishimoto moved, and Director Siemens seconded the motion to approve the November 16, 2021 Planning and Natural Resources Committee amended meeting minutes.

Public comment opened at 2:06 p.m.

No public comments were submitted for this item.

Public comment closed at 2:06 p.m.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0

3. Hawthorns Area Plan - Revised Vision and Goals and Draft Working Group Strategy (R-21-156)

General Manager Ana Ruiz provided introductory comments describing the Committee's previous discussion and direction on the project and explained that the item before the Committee today is to lay out the proposed planning process for the Hawthorns Area Plan and describe the various public engagement opportunities that will be part of each phase of the project.

Planner III Alex Casbara described the Hawthorns area of the Windy Hill Open Space Preserve, including the existing conditions of the site, such as the conservation easement governing the site, geographic boundaries, existing trails, etc. Mr. Casbara reviewed the phases of and timeline for the Hawthorns Area Plan, including approval of the project vision and goals, site planning, environmental review, and implementation. Each of the District's phases include opportunities for public comment and public engagement.

Director Kishimoto requested clarification regarding the purpose of the working group and the process for Board approval of policy direction for the property.

Mr. Casbara explained the working group will focus on public access, and the Board of Directors is scheduled to adopt the area plan in 2025 but will have many opportunities for input on the draft area plan throughout the process.

Director Riffle inquired whether the historic buildings on the property will be addressed as part of this project.

Ms. Ruiz explained that this area of the property is being addressed separately and that assessments are being completed on the individual buildings to determine the opportunities for future use and management of the buildings. Although the effort is separate from the Hawthorns Area Plan, pertinent information will be incorporated into the Hawthorns Area Plan planning process as appropriate.

Public comment opened at 2:52 p.m.

Jeremy Dennis Town Manager for the Town of Portola Valley thanked District staff for their ongoing communication with the Town of Portola Valley regarding the project. Mr. Dennis spoke in support of opportunities for public and community engagement regarding Alpine Road Trail, public access, and site planning.

Ms. Woodworth read the submitted comments into the record.

Jerry Wittenauer representing the Equestrian Trail Riders Action Committee (ETRAC) supported opening the Hawthorns Area to equestrian use and requested a member of ETRAC be included in the future working group to be able to speak for equestrian users in the area.

Public comment closed at 2:55 p.m.

Director Kishimoto requested additional information regarding the Town of Portola Valley's approval process.

Mr. Casbara explained that any changes to the Hawthorns Area requires a conditional use permit from the Town of Portola Valley, which can be approved by Portola Valley's Planning Commission.

Director Kishimoto stressed the importance of keeping the working group focused on public access and should be labeled as such. Additionally, Director Kishimoto suggested environmental and education advocacy groups should have representation on the public access working group.

Director Kishimoto requested and received additional information regarding the olive grove on the Hawthorns Area site and potential public access for the olive grove.

Director Siemens commented the public access working group should focus on public access and staff can provide any necessary information regarding protecting environmental and natural resources, similar to how the La Honda Public Access Working Group operated and only

focused on public access. Director Siemens spoke in support of providing ADA and easy-access trails on the site.

Director Riffle spoke in support of the recommended phased process for the project, including focusing the working group on public access. Director Riffle commented on the potential for keeping the project moving forward and on schedule by using the Committee to provide input and work through more complex project issues.

Director Kishimoto spoke in support of including environmental education voices in the public access working group to be able to provide input throughout the process.

ADJOURNMENT

Director Riffle adjourned the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee at 3:16 p.m.

Jennifer Woodworth, MMC
District Clerk