



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, October 11, 2022

DRAFT MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Director Riffle called the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee to order at 1:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Yoriko Kishimoto, Curt Riffle, and Pete Siemens

Members absent: None

Staff present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Assistant General Brian Malone, Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Jennifer Woodworth, Planning Manager Jane Mark, Senior Planner Gretchen Laustsen, Planner II Tyler Smith, Senior Resources Management Specialist Coty Sifuentes-Winter, Capital Projects Field Manager Bryan Apple

Director Riffle 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. Director Riffle described the process and protocols for the meeting.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

District Clerk Jennifer Woodworth reported no comments were submitted.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Approve the August 2, 2022 Planning and Natural Resources Committee Meeting Minutes.

Motion: Director Kishimoto moved, and Director Siemens seconded the motion to approve the August 2, 2022 Planning and Natural Resources Committee meeting minutes.

Public comment opened at 1:03 p.m.

No public comments were submitted for this item.

Public comment closed at 1:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0

2. Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail and Parking Area Feasibility Study – Trail Alignment Options and Parking Area Conceptual Design Alternatives (R-22-111)

Senior Planner Gretchen Laustsen provided the staff presentation giving an overview of the project and related projects in the Purisima Open Space Preserve, such as Purisima Uplands site cleanup and soil remediation, marbled murrelet recovery planning, and the preserve-wide Purisima multimodal access study. The Purisima-to-the-Sea Trail is planned to be a regional trail connecting Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve to the San Mateo County coast and would provide connections for the Bay Area Ridge and Bay to the Sea Trails.

Capital Projects Field Manager Bryan Apple described the trail planning process, including field review and analysis, trail scouting, biological and cultural resources assessment, and site feasibility study. Mr. Apple highlighted the various trail alignment alternatives and planning and construction opportunities and constraints for each of the options.

Director Kishimoto suggested including visuals of the potential trail alignments with views from the trail and a view of the trail from the road for the options.

Chair Riffle inquired regarding potential dog access for the trail alignment.

Ms. Laustsen stated the trail is planned for a multi-use trail with hiking, biking, and equestrian access. The existing trails in Purisima do not allow dog access, so dogs are not planning to be allowed to maintain consistency throughout the preserve.

Chair Riffle requested additional information regarding potential seasonal closures.

Mr. Apple provided additional information regarding potential seasonal closures for the various trail alignments.

Chair Riffle suggested creating a shorter loop trail utilizing trail alignment option 2.

Director Kishimoto suggested building trail alignment options 1 and 3 if the funding allows.

Ms. Laustsen stated there are restrictions in the District's conservation easement for the South Cowell property that regulate the number of trails that are allowed to cross the property.

Chair Riffle commented that additional visual aids can also help the Board of Directors and members of the public better understand the gradient of the trail options.

Mark Brandi, with SWCA Environmental Consultants, reviewed the parking area planning and site analysis process, which included riparian setback analysis, topographic survey, culvert drainage study, and traffic and multimodal access studies. An opportunities and constraints analysis was completed for the project to better understand key considerations for the site, such as protection of scenic resources along the Highway 1 corridor, adjacent farmland and grazing operations, sensitive habitats and riparian setbacks, and public safety. Mr. Brandi displayed the three design alternatives for the parking and trailhead areas and summarized the key similarities and differences between each.

Director Kishimoto commented regarding this high demand for parking at the site and suggested alternative B would help break up the visual of a large parking lot.

Chair Riffle requested additional information regarding the amenities located on both sides of Verde Road in Alternative B and whether these amenities are available in the other alternatives.

Mr. Brandi suggested the amenities located on the east side of Verde Road in Alternative B could also potentially educational opportunities. These amenities are located on the western side of Verde Road in Alternative C. Even minimal improvements on the east side of Verde Road would impact the grazing tenant located there.

Chair Riffle commented the District does not have other parking areas located on this area of the San Mateo Coast, so the proposed Purisima parking area would help alleviate the parking needs there.

Director Siemens suggested providing wiring to all of the parking areas to allow for electric vehicle charging to prepare for additional electric vehicle needs in the future. Additionally, a permeable surface should be used to help prevent drainage issues.

Planner II Tyler Smith described the District's public engagement efforts for the project and feedback received. Feedback included support for public access with interest in maximizing the number of parking and equestrian parking capacity, neighbor concerns related to potential traffic congestion and trespassing on neighboring properties, support mid-trail facilities for the general public and equestrians, and support for equity with interest in a shuttle program, and support for English and Spanish signage, mapping, and online information.

Public comment opened at 2:21 p.m.

No public comments submitted.

Public comment closed at 2:21 p.m.

Director Kishimoto requested field visits to the site for the Board of Directors prior to Board consideration.

Director Siemens spoke regarding the high visitor demand for parking in the area and in support of providing shuttle service for visitors. Director Siemens spoke in support of moving quickly on the project and designing the parking lot in parallel with the environmental review.

Chair Riffle requested additional information on how the Measure AA portfolios will be handled when proposed projects exceed the amount in the portfolio budget.

Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak reported staff is drafting a policy to address this topic which would first be considered by the Measure AA Bond Oversight Committee before the Board deliberates on it. Additionally, funding options also include grant funding, interest on the bond funds, and the District's general fund.

Chair Riffle suggested the District learn from past projects regarding increasing public access and parking for a preserve including extensive outreach to the

Motion: Director Kishimoto moved, and Director Siemens seconded the motion to accept the General Manager's recommended Trail Alignment 1 and Connectors A and B, and the Conceptual Parking Area Design Alternative C and forward the recommendation to the Board of Directors for consideration as the project scope that would serve as the proposed project description to initiate environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 3-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Riffle adjourned the meeting of the Planning and Natural Resources Committee at 2:42 p.m.

Jennifer Woodworth, MMC
District Clerk