



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

Meeting 12-31

SPECIAL MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

[Arrillaga Family Community Center](#)

[700 Alma Street](#)

[Menlo Park, CA 94025](#)

September 19, 2012

AMENDED MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING – CLOSED SESSION

I. ROLL CALL

President Riffle called the Special Meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Board of Directors to order at 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Yoriko Kishimoto, Pete Siemens, Larry Hassett, and Curt Riffle

Members Absent: Nonette Hanko and Cecily Harris

Staff Present: General Manager Steve Abbors, General Counsel Sheryl Schaffner, Planning Manager Ana Ruiz, and Senior Planner Meredith Manning.

The Board entered into Closed Session.

SPECIAL MEETING – REGULAR SESSION

II. ROLL CALL

President Riffle called the Special Meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Board of Directors to order at 7:05 p.m.

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Yoriko Kishimoto, Pete Siemens, Larry Hassett, and Curt Riffle

Members Absent: Nonette Hanko and Cecily Harris

Staff Present: General Manager Steve Abbors, General Counsel Sheryl Schaffner, Planning Manager Ana Ruiz, Operations Manager David Sanguinetti, Public Affairs Manager Rudy Jurgensen, Administrative Services Manager Kate Drayson, Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington, Real Property Manager Mike Williams, Senior Planner Meredith Manning, Mount Umunhum Project Manager Gina Coony, Planner III Tina Hugg, Planner II Gretchen Laustsen, Planner III Lisa Bankosh, Foothill Superintendent Michael Newburn, Volunteer Program Manager Paul McKowan, Public Affairs Specialist Peggy Koenig, Website Administrator Vicky Gou, Real Property Specialist Allen Ishibashi, GIS Technician Alex Roa, Interim Media Communications Specialist LaNor Maune, IT Administrator Benny Hsieh, IT Technician Owen Sterzl, and District Clerk Michelle Radcliffe

I. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

There were none.

II. BOARD BUSINESS

1. **Agenda Item #1** – Approval of a Portion of the Mount Umunhum Environmental Restoration and Public Access Project (Not Including the Radar Tower and Summit Area Amenities) as an Amendment to the Use and Management Plan for Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve (R-12-91)

Senior Planner Meredith Manning provided an overview of the Mount Umunhum Environmental Restoration and Public Access Project and explained that it was developed to identify public access opportunities for the former Almaden Air Force Station atop Mount Umunhum. She stated that at its June 12th meeting, the Board certified the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the site and approved the demolition of existing structures (except the radar tower) as part of the first phase of public access. Ms. Manning explained that the purpose of this meeting is to approve a portion of the remaining elements of the project, excluding the radar tower and summit area amenities, to further progress to the goal of opening the site to the public.

Ms. Manning gave an overview of the phased public access project atop Mount Umunhum and stated that the project elements under Board consideration include: a vehicle staging area at Bald Mountain, multi-use trail to the summit from the Bald Mountain staging area, safety upgrades and improvements to Mount Umunhum Road, parking area adjacent to the summit, a visitor center, vault toilet(s), dedicated 9-1-1 call box, hang gliding/paragliding launch site, water tanks, horse trough(s), environmental restoration, a new trail connection from Mount Thayer to Ralph's Mountain in the Lexington Basin area, and nesting structures for avian Species of Special concern. She explained that at a future public meeting, the Board will

consider the remaining project elements, which include the selection of a tower option and other summit amenities.

Next, Ms. Manning stated that the Sierra Azul/Bear Creek Redwoods Ad Hoc Committee concurred with staff's recommendation to drop consideration of a backpack camp from the project. She explained that although the environmental impact and wildland fire risk of a backpack camp was evaluated in the EIR and was found to be less-than-significant, members of the public have expressed concerns about the potential for wildland fire and trespassing onto neighboring private land. She stated that a backpack camp at a different location could be considered as part of the Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve Master Plan.

Then, Ms. Manning provided a summary of the public participation and feedback received at the July 18th Radar Tower Open House and Board Workshop. She stated that at the July 18th meeting, staff provided the Board with a preliminary list of Factors to Consider to help guide the radar tower decision-making process. She stated that since the July 18th meeting, staff has revised the factors and included new ones. Lastly, Ms. Manning provided an overview of the financial implications of the different phases of the public access as well as the cost to open the site to the public with a full build-out of amenities. The Board asked questions regarding various elements of the public access project.

Lastly, Ms. Manning explained that the Board approved the project EIR at its June 12th meeting and that the EIR analyzed all of the potential environmental impacts and mitigation measures associated with potential public access improvements and radar tower options. She stated that the Board will need to consider adoption of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Findings of Fact and adoption of the Mitigated Monitoring Plan.

Public Comment: The following speakers stated their views on the public access project: Thomas Higgins of San Jose; David Leeson of unincorporated Santa Clara County; Bern Smith; Tom Taber of San Mateo; Ken Nitz of Redwood City; Sam Drake of San Jose; Chuck Berls of San Jose; Basim Jaber of San Jose; Jordan Makower of Sunnyvale; Scott Marshall of Menlo Park; George Clifford of Los Altos Hills; Josh Moore of Woodside; Taylor Wing; Carissa Zenorini Hobbs of San Jose; and Kevin Manilin of San Jose.

The Board held discussion on the backpack camp and agreed to consider having a backpack camp in the Sierra Azul/Bear Creek Redwoods Master Plan Project. Director Kishimoto stated that the Board will need to have a policy discussion on whether the District has the infrastructure and capacity to provide a backpack camp. The Board asked that the staff recommendation be amended to include the backpack camp as part of the Sierra Azul/Bear Creek Redwoods Master Plan Project. Discussion ensued.

Motion: Upon motion by Director Cyr, seconded by Director Kishimoto, the Board adopted the California Environmental Quality Act Findings of Fact, approved the Mitigation Monitoring Plan, approved the remaining project elements except for the radar tower and summit area amenities for the Mount Umunhum Environmental

Restoration and Public Access Project, adopted the resolution, directed staff to initiate the design for the trail to the summit and parking area at Bald Mountain, and removed consideration of the backpack camp from the Mount Umunhum Environmental Restoration and Public Access Project, and instead, included consideration of the backpack camp as part of the larger Sierra Azul/Bear Creek Redwoods Master Plan Project. (Vote: 5-0-0; Absent: Hanko and Harris)

III. ADJOURNMENT

President Riffle adjourned the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 8:42 p.m.

Michelle Radcliffe, CMC
District Clerk