

**COMMITTEE ON OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY  
MEETING MINUTES**

March 25, 2015

THE AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY CONVENED IN A REGULAR MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2015 AT 2PM IN THE BOARDS & COMMISSIONS ROOM, FIRST FLOOR, ROOM 1101, CITY HALL 301 W. 2<sup>ND</sup> STREET.

Council Member Leslie Pool called the meeting to order at 2:07 PM. In attendance were Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo, Council Member Delia Garza, and Council Member Don Zimmerman, Water Wastewater Commissioner Dale Gray, Environmental Board Chair Mary Gay Maxwell, and Parks & Recreation Board Chair Jane Rivera.

**Agenda Item #1:** General Citizen Communications

There were 10 speakers:

- Melissa Morrow spoke on the WAYA request for an amendment extension.
- George Cofer spoke in support of the Urban Trails Master Plan. Cofer also expressed his interest in seeing a 2017 bond election to acquire additional parkland and open space in the city.
- Michael Fossum spoke on his concerns with the preservation of trees in the development of urban trails in environmentally sensitive areas.
- Zoila Vega spoke on the short term plan of the restoration efforts of Zilker trees since the CycloCross event. Zoila also spoke about concerns of tree removal associated with the implementation of the Urban Trails Master Plan.
- Dorsey Twidwell spoke on the Walnut Creek Phase II trail project.
- Bunnie Twidwell spoke about her concerns about the construction of more impervious cover and the potential for increased flooding associated with the Walnut Creek Phase II trail project.
- Bill Bunch spoke on the proposed MoPac South Project (i.e., addition of four tolled express lanes) and its potential impacts to city parks and restoration areas.
- Roy Waley spoke in support of the Urban Trails Master Plan and concerns of potential impacts of SH45 to city-owned open space.
- Scott Johnson spoke on air quality in Central Texas and how it's affected by construction of new roads and traffic congestion. Johnson also spoke on the Green Events Ordinance in relation to the Special Events Ordinance.
- Allan Roddy spoke on alternative uses for the Decker Lake Park in lieu of development of the proposed golf course(s).

**Agenda Item #2:** Approval of minutes.

No minutes to approve.

**Agenda Item #3:** Presentation of the City's organizational chart in relation to the Watershed Protection Department. (Victoria Li, Director, Watershed Protection Department)

**Victoria Li spoke about the department's direct partnerships with various City departments and joint efforts to protect the City's many watersheds. Li also introduced the Watershed Protection Department's leadership team and committee clerk.**

**Agenda Item #4:** Status report on Urban Trails Master Plan. (Nadia Barrera, Project Manager, Public Works Department, Chard Crager, Division Manager, Public Works Department)

**There were three member of the public that spoke on this item: David King, Roy Waley, and Zoila Vega.**

**Nadia Barrera provided an overview of the City's Urban Trails Master Plan. Barrera will be seeking action from Council for federal funding for the Upper Boggy Creek Trail at an upcoming Council Meeting. CM Pool suggested that the Committee visit the Mopac Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridge to better visualize the constriction of that facility. The Urban Trails Master Plan is available on the City's Public Works website found via this link:**  
[http://www.mediafire.com/view/qusnf4qg3h4v4z7/UTMP\\_online.pdf](http://www.mediafire.com/view/qusnf4qg3h4v4z7/UTMP_online.pdf).

**Agenda Item #5:** Status report on Walnut Creek Trail Construction. (Marty Stump, Project Management Supervisor, Parks & Recreation Department; Richard Duane, Project Coordinator, Public Works Department; and Keri Juarez, Assistant Director, Public Works Department)

**Five members of the public signed up to speak on this item: Kate Hamilton, Erik Harris, Kernan Hornburg, Charles Riou, Meg Davis and Mark Fisher. Mark Fisher donated his time to Erik Harris.**

**Marty Stump spoke on the current status of the construction of the Walnut Creek Trail while noting the status of each phase of the trail system. The Northern Walnut Creek Trail Phase I will be 3.2 miles, the Northern Walnut Creek Trail Phase II will be 1.7 miles, and the Southern Walnut Creek Trail is complete and is 7.3 miles. The overall Walnut Creek Trail is a 10 foot wide paved trail connecting North Austin with the Lady Bird Lake hub and Spoke Trail System.**

**Agenda Item #6:** Public Hearings and Possible Action

**None**

**Agenda Item #7:** 10 Minutes of Education: Impacts of special events on City parkland. (Jason Maurer, Sales & Events Manager, Parks & Recreation Department; and Cora Wright, Assistant Director, Parks & Recreation Department)

**Jason Maurer spoke on the City's special event metrics, policies & practices, and permitting process for special events in city parks. Annually, the City hosts over 150 special events in City parks, including recurring events specifically at Auditorium Shores, Festival Beach, and Zilker Park. Combined, these events bring 1.2 million visitors to these parks with approximately \$1.6 million in fees directed to the City's general fund. CM Pool spoke about the possibility of identifying other City parks that could begin to host events. Cora Wright spoke on efforts to develop a more balanced approach in assigning events to different parks considering attendance,**

**size, and neighborhood input.**

**Agenda Item #8:** 10 Minutes of Education: CycloCross impact on Zilker trees. (Lara Schuman, Acting Urban Forestry Program Manager, Parks & Recreation Department; Regina Ramos, Forester, Parks & Recreation Department; Jason Maurer, Sales & Events Manager, Parks & Recreation Department, and Michael Embesi, Arborist, Planning & Development Review Department)

**There were two members of the public that spoke on this item: David King and Zoila Vega**

**Lara Schuman spoke on the overall impact of the CycloCross event on trees in Zilker Park. The aftermath of the event has created concerns about the long-term health of the impacted trees. Overall there were 57 trees that were impacted, 23 were heritage trees. Michael Embesi spoke on the involvement of the arborist to ensure that tree preservation is considered in the permitting process. USA Cycling will be covering the costs of the proposed remediation plan. Ex-officio member Mary Gay Maxwell spoke on the timeliness of the completion of the remediation plan.**

**Agenda Item:** Consider agenda items for next meeting.

**The next meeting will be held on April 29 2 – 4 p.m. in the Boards & Commissions Room at City Hall.**

**Council Member Leslie Pool adjourned the meeting at 5:08 PM.**

**The minutes were approved on this the 29th day of April, 2015 on CM Garza's motion, and on CM Zimmerman's second. Vote 4-0-0-0.**

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