



Parks and Recreation Department
Tuesday, October 28, 2008

Meeting

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Parks and Recreation Board was held on Tuesday, September 23, 2008 at the Boards and Commissions Conference Room, 301 West 2nd St. Room 1101.

Board Members Present: Board Chair Linda Guerrero, Board Vice-Chair Danette Chimenti, Mark Vane, Jeff Francell, Sara Marler, Marilyn Bostick and Jane Rivera.

Board Members Absent: None

Staff Members Present: Stuart Strong, Cora Wright, Ricardo Soliz, Randy Scott and Tino Garcia.

A. Meeting called to order

Board Chair Guerrero called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

B. Approval of Minutes

Board Member Francell moved to approve the September 23, 2008 minutes, amending page two, paragraph two - last sentence inserting the word estimated and deleting the word associated, seconded by Board Member Marler. Motion carried 5-0-2 with Board Members Rivera and Vane abstaining.

C. Citizen Communication –

David Tiger, resident of Waterfront Condos, requested the Board consider having the construction of the Lady Bird Trail Boardwalk to be on land as much as possible and to add to the current proposal a solution to correct the bottleneck at Longhorn Dam.

Jeff Taylor, President Waterfront Condos, also requested that the Board consider the following: 1) input from local residents in the Boardwalk planning process and; 2) allow changes in plans to accommodate the affected communities. The Boardwalk in front of the condos would affect the kayakers that live in the condos.

D. Briefs

Update on Dittmar Recreation Center.

1. Darrell Farr, Friends of Dittmar Recreation Center, announced that the center had just celebrated its 20th year anniversary. One of the Board's main objectives is to give scholarships to kids to allow them to participate in the center's activities such as basketball, football, cheerleading as well as summer camps and to serve as a conduit to the community, gathering input to provide the requested activities. An ongoing goal was to enclose the outdoor gym at the center which will be accomplished beginning January 2009. The Board has been in existence since before the center was opened.

2. Brief on Water and Wastewater projects impacting parkland in the foreseeable future.

Gopal Guthikonda, Austin Water Utility, updated the Board on the upcoming Water and Wastewater projects. He indicated that some of them have already been approved by the Board but others will be coming in the future. A list of the major projects impacting parkland in the future are as follows:

- ? Pickfair Lift Station Wastewater Improvement (In design state, construction starts in Jan. 09).
- ? Airport @ Chesterfield Wastewater Improvement
- ? SE Wastewater Improvement Project for Mueller Redevelopment
- ? Shoal Creek CIP Wastewater Improvement Project
- ? Waller Creek Improvement Project
- ? Onion Creek Wastewater Improvement Project
- ? Zilker park Archeological Investigation Project.

Several questions/concerns were raised regarding why the use of parkland is always the first option for these projects and the way these projects are compensated. Another concern is the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between both departments. Board Member Vane requested that all options be considered before the MOU is agreed upon and sent to Council. Acting Director Strong indicated that staff would share with the Board the methodology used along with the formula used in determining the mitigation amount. The brief will outline the procedures and the logic behind the formula that is being used. Also, Board Member Francell indicated that of the two options (the Board's and the departments) the Board recommendation should carry more weight.

3. Brief on the Downtown Wastewater Tunnel project.

Steve Schrader, Austin Water Utility, provided a brief on the tunnel project. The project will convey sewage from just west of downtown to the Krieg fields area to the east. The project is needed because both the North Austin Interceptor (NAI) as well as the South Austin Interceptor (SAI) are operating at or near capacity. The tunnel will also convey sewage due to the continued expansion in downtown Austin.

The tunneling will require a large diameter pipe to cross the highly developed downtown area from Lamar Blvd. to Pleasant Valley Road. It will not produce noise, vibrations or noticeable settlement at the surface. The length of the tunnel is approximately 3.5 miles long and the depth of the tunnel will be 50 to 80 feet below the ground (30 feet below lake bottom). Five shafts will be needed to construct the project. The shafts will be located at: 1) Lamar Drive; 2) Toomey Road; 3) Riverside Drive; 4) Comal and 5) Krief field. The overall project duration is 30 months (2 1/2 years) from fall 2009 to early 2012.

Mitigation costs will be calculated using the formula developed for other Austin Water Utility projects and continued discussions with PARD are ongoing to develop the requirement/limitations for each shaft. The proposed mitigation package will be presented to the Land and Facilities Committee in December 08 or January 09.

Board Member Vane requested that at the next Land and Facilities meeting the Utility should be prepared to discuss why the sites were selected, the length of each project and why the construction sites use so much parkland. Board Chair Guerrero requested timelines for each of the projects. Lora Teed, Project Manger, Public Works, announced that they have been meeting with stakeholder groups and have compiled a list of concerns regarding each of the sites.

E. New Business and Action Items

4. Make a recommendation to the Director concerning a license agreement to traverse parkland at Emma Long to access lake water.

Devan Desai, City Law Department, reported that the property owner has requested a license agreement from the City to replace pipes that had been previously removed and to allow him to pump water out of the lake. Mr. Desai indicated that he had received a draft of the agreement but did not have time to fully review the agreement. Mr. Desai did indicate that upon a brief review of the draft there were some concerns. The include: 1) how the \$2,500 amount was determined; 2) the draft has too many restrictions and looks more like a lease and; 3) that the contract could only be revoked by City Council when city procedure allows the City Manager the authority.

Acting Director Strong announced that the Department was not in support of this agreement due to the fact that there is not an exceptional need for the use of city parkland. Board Member Francell indicated that he would be more comfortable in voting for this issue but would like to see a legal license agreement with the all terms fully detailed. Board Members Guerrero and Francell added that the agreement should include property value, camouflaging/masking of the pipes and ongoing monitoring. Since further discussion is still pending, no action was taken.

5. Make a recommendation to the Director regarding 2700 Rivercrest Boat Dock.

Bruce Aupperle, representing the property owners, informed the Board that the owners want to demolish a deteriorating boat dock and build two boat slips, each 12 ft wide. Board Member Francell explained the variances that they are requesting which are: 1) exceeding 20% of the shoreline frontage and; 2) building two boat docks on a single lot.

After further discussion, Board Member Francell moved to approve the recommendation to the Director regarding the boat dock at 2700 Rivercrest as being a property that is not a standard cluster of boat docks; includes a variance to the Code that exceeds 20% of the shoreline (to 22%) and a second variance that exceeds the number of docks allowed on a single lot. The motion also includes the presentation of design material on a single slip and includes a restrictive covenant that prohibits the current owner or future owners from building any more slips along the lakeshore, seconded by Board Member Chimenti. Motion carried 7-0.

6. Make a recommendation to the Director regarding 3337 Far View Boat Dock and Tram.

Board Member Francell informed the Board that this item was being sent to the full Board without a recommendation from the Navigation Committee due to concerns regarding the construction of a tram impacting critical and environmental issues.

Carol Lee, 3506 Far View Dr, requested that the Board deny the request for the boat dock and tram and cited a River Point plat note and a Lake Austin Watershed Ordinance that prohibits building on slopes greater than 35%. Additionally, she added, that lake access for River Pointe lots are not envisioned or guaranteed.

Michael Runee, a neighbor of the applicant, is of the opinion that the tram does not negatively impact the environment and that the applicant may be within legal rights to build the tram. He would also like for the applicant to finish the project.

Ray Hofferd, 3307 Far View Drive, wants the applicant's project to move on.

Bruce Aupperle informed that Board that a tram does not require a building permit because it is not a building. He indicated that this issue has already been resolved in consultation with Watershed Protection and Development Review. Board Member Francell and Chimenti suggested that this issue be addressed at the Environmental Board before the Parks Board takes action. Board Member Vane suggested that construction of trams be looked into as a permitting issue and that the construction of any tram must go through the site plan process. Board Member Francell wants to see a design of the tram.

Board Member Chimenti moved to not recommend the tram at 3337 Far View because it disturbs the natural character of the land, seconded by Board Member Rivera. Motion carried 5-1.

F. Director's Report

Acting Director Strong reported on the following:

- ? Council has approved a contract to improve the 46 acres in Zilker Park. He indicated that all work will begin after the Trail of Lights is over. The plan calls for: 1) smoothing the land; 2) installing the irrigation system; 3) rolling the sod and let the grass establish. That area of the park will be closed to the public. The park will reopen around July 2009. Austin City Limits (ACL) will repay the dollar amount for the improvement.
- ? Council will act on the naming of Veterans Park at the November meeting and will also announce the funding for phases III and IV for Town Lake Park.
- ? Dittmar Recreation Center has celebrated its 20th year anniversary.
- ? Veterans Day tree planting will be held at Rosewood Park on November 8, 2008.
- ? A slide presentation was shown of the events at ACL, the Barton Springs Pool (leak), the Turner-Roberts Grand Opening ceremony and the DinoLand Exhibit at Zilker Botanical Gardens.

G. Items from Board Members

Board Member Vane will work on a resolution requiring a building permit process for the construction of trams. The resolution will be presented at the November 18th meeting. He also suggested that a boat ride be scheduled to allow Board Members a lake view perspective of the area for the proposed boardwalk. He said there are a lot of issues that need discussion. Board Chair Guerrero reported attending her first Downtown Commission meeting. She indicated that a hotel will be built at 3rd and Colorado but does not factor into the Parkland Dedication Ordinance because it is a commercial venture.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.