

CITY OF PETALUMA
RECREATION, MUSIC AND PARKS COMMISSION
MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, November 19, 2003

*Petaluma Community Center
320 North McDowell Blvd.
Petaluma, CA 94954*

7:00 p.m.

*Commissioners Present: Hagen, Kinsella, McCoy, Moynihan, Nau, Tarr**

Commissioners Absent: Ramirez

Staff Present: City Manager Mike Bierman, Carr, Anchordoguy,

*Chair**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 15, 2003

Bruce Hagen – (Sunnyslope Project Review) – Page 2, Line 25 – **Correct:** Bicycle Advisory Committee should be: ***Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee***

Ken McCoy moved that the minutes be approved as amended, seconded by Bruce Hagen

Approved on a 5-1 vote, with Moynihan abstaining (absent at the October meeting).

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Hall Warren of the Petaluma Senior Center Advisory Committee inquired about the status of the Petaluma Senior Center Expansion Project. Carr reported that plans and specifications have been submitted to the Community Development Department in preparation for issuance of a building permit. Once the plans are approved, the project can be put out to bid.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

City Manager Mike Bierman thanked the members of the Recreation, Music and Parks Commission for their efforts. He sees no problems with how the Commission is operating, but he did want to check with all commissions and committees from time to time. He will be back to discuss issues with the commission as they occur.

Mr. Moynihan mentioned the state of the budget and asked that the topic of operating funds for new parks be placed on the December Commission agenda.

OLD BUSINESS

1) PUBLIC MEETING – Disc Golf Proposal Presentation – Jerry Vance (United Flyers of Sonoma County)

Resident Jerry Vance of United Flyers of Sonoma County gave an overview of a proposal to place a Disc Golf course in the Urban Separator between Sonoma Mountain Elementary School and the Junior High site. The proposed course would be a recreation (versus a competitive / tournament) course for

1 families and children. Mr. Vance introduced Ruth Steele, a school teacher and world-class disc golfer,
2 who also spoke in favor of the project. The proposed course would be located opposite Gatti Park and
3 golfers could, therefore, use the park and Junior college parking. The urban separator would be mowed
4 three times per year, with permanent baskets installed, and ultimately, cement tee's used to minimize
5 any erosion. All costs would be born by United Flyers of Sonoma Co.

6 The public would be able to use the course at no cost. With the expected casual use of the course,
7 undesirable elements that hang out in the area would move away. Expected parking on weekends
8 would be about 6 cars. Usually about 30 people at any given time could be on the course.

9 Mr. Moynihan asked about tournaments. Mr. Vance mentioned that the local course could support
10 casual local tournaments.

11 Mr. Hagen inquired if valley or native oaks were planted in the area, would this be good or bad? Mr.
12 Vance indicated that this would be preferable. Mr. Hagen suggested that neighbors and disc golfers
13 work together.

14 During the following public discussion, the following neighbors spoke **against** the proposal: Jeff
15 Mendelson, Dan Leetz, Connie Kroyer, Debbie Buck, Larry Kane, Rebecca Loften, Doug Hackley,
16 Sheri Dito, Joe Chatterton, Roxane Sherif, Sue Kane, Lorie Chatterton, Bill Buxton.

17
18 **Concerns raised include the following:** Junior College parking closed on weekends; bathrooms
19 (Gatti park site) too far away; people unlikely to park at Gatti and walk to the course; send the public
20 notice about the meeting to a wider audience of local residents so they can participate in the decision;
21 negative traffic impacts to the neighborhoods; too much growth in the neighborhood (cumulative effect
22 with the shopping center, new park, Junior High, Junior College and Gatti subdivision; per the web
23 sites regarding disc golf, none are located alongside residential subdivisions; concern about cars
24 parking on Tulare Street and other streets along the Urban Separator; litter and vandalism; fire hazard
25 with the tall grasses; believe "green belt" does not include development; site too narrow; question
26 regarding noise and maintenance; responsible party for insurance; question regarding protection of the
27 riparian area and location of fences if any; illegal use after hours (night time); monitoring of
28 maintenance; concern regarding mowing of the Urban Separator; want to preserve the Urban
29 Separator; concern with amateurs throwing Frisbees; concern with future foot and vehicular traffic
30 once the Junior High opens up; question regarding ownership of the land; the aesthetic look of the disc
31 basket is objectionable; zoning concerns with the proposed disc course; concern regarding outsiders
32 coming into neighborhoods; would the course be used by a large population of Petaluma residents? A
33 number of residents speaking against the project suggested that the proposed site was inappropriate;
34 that another site should be identified.

35
36 **Two petitions were submitted against the project signed by neighbors who live adjacent to the**
37 **proposed site. One petition contained 66 signatures, the other 46 signatures.**

38
39 Speakers **in favor** of the proposal: Jerry Vance; Ruth Steele; Paul Phillips; Bob Diamond; John Sax.

40
41 **Comments in favor of the proposal:** Disc golf is for all ages, including youth; disc golfers are
42 courteous; suggest nine hole course as an alternative; come to consensus with neighbors; due to the
43 natural terrain for the disc golf, unaware of the location of the course until a target basket is seen;
44 traffic impacts are minimal; children can come out to the course and learn to play; limited hours is fine
45 since night golf does not work-cannot find discs.

46 **One petition supporting the proposal was submitted with 12 signatures.**

47
48 In response to questions about the Urban Separator, Carr clarified that the City of Petaluma owns the
49 land. The Junior College owns the land directly behind it, to the east. Regarding zoning and use of the

1 land, the current General Plan (Section 7.2 Objectives, Policies and Programs, Policy 6 [page 58]) calls
2 for the city to “locate recreation uses (e.g., golf courses, trails, athletic fields, picnic areas, etc) in the
3 urban separator on both the East and West sides, taking into account terrain, accessibility, links to
4 other parts of the city and related factors in determining whether or not a particular use is appropriate.”
5 Carr mentioned that as a result of this clause, Corona Creek and Sonoma Mountain Elementary
6 Schools had their play fields constructed in the City’s urban separator. The Junior High School will
7 also have the same arrangement with the City.
8 Carr also indicated the any parking along the urban separator is on public streets, and therefore is
9 available to anyone, not just residents who live in the area. The example given was Wiseman Park,
10 another project built on the urban separator.

11

12 **Commissioner’s discussion:**

13 **Moynihan** - Is a smaller course a possibility? - With a smaller course, impacts are fewer; the positive
14 use may help eliminate negative activities in the area.

15

16 **Hagen** - Heavy mowing of the Urban Separator of concern. Safety and security of the neighborhood is
17 important. The pedestrian path will continue along the Urban Separator. Suggested a nine-hole course
18 behind the Gatti subdivision and the Junior College and use of posts versus chain link target. Proposal
19 could provide for more activities for the youth; Open Space District negotiating for a new park to the
20 south. This might provide a site for disc golf. Suggested the public to encourage the County to spend
21 more money in the South County.

22

23 **Nau** - Suggested alternate site or reduce the proposal to nine holes. Sympathizes with neighbors;
24 positive uses will push negative activities out of the neighborhoods.

25

26 **McCoy** - With the Park Master Plan, the Commission tries to address the needs of the entire
27 community. Suggested nine hole course behind the Gatti subdivision with bare minimum of
28 improvements, including signs identifying hours of use; no tournaments allowed, trash containers
29 provided; no concrete tee’s; do trial run for a specific time period. Review after 6 months or a year. Put
30 together a committee of disc golfers, neighbors and commissioners, and set up a trial run.

31

32 **Tarr** - Regarding long-term maintenance, the City and United Flyers of Sonoma Co. work together.

33

34 Following Commission discussion, Commissioner Hagen made a motion that staff put together a sub-
35 committee of two commissioners (Hagen, Kinsella), one staff (Carr), four disc golfers and four
36 neighbors. The sub-committee is to meet to see if they can come up with a compromise version of the
37 proposal that can be tried on a trial basis. The sub-committee is also to look at possible alternative
38 sites. All members of the sub-committee are to be residents. The motion was seconded by
39 Commissioner Kinsella, and unanimously passed.

40 The item is to come back to the Commission at the January 21, 2004 meeting. A larger mailing of
41 public notices is to be sent out announcing the meeting and the topic.

42

43 **2) Swim Advisory Committee Discussion - Carr**

44

45 Carr mentioned that the Aquatic Advisory Committee had submitted a proposal for aquatic fee
46 adjustments prior to the commission packet going out. Staff has not had an opportunity to evaluate the
47 proposals and make a recommendation to the commission. Staff will do so prior to the December
48 meeting.

49

1 Art Poster, Andy and Carol Eber from the Aquatic Advisory Committee discussed the committee's
2 proposal and the various recommendations. Andy Eber mentioned that patronage has picked up from
3 prior years, and the water quality was great this year. The Swim Center pulled people from throughout
4 the bay area. Local swimmers had raised enough funds to provide 66 swim scholarships this year.
5 The aquatic committee would like to build on the experience of this year and try for an eight-month
6 schedule next year.

7
8 Among the recommendations are a variety of monthly and season swim passes. The thought is that this
9 would be a customer friendly approach with swim passes left at the pool. Committee members stressed
10 that it is important that all swimmers pay; some lap swimmers did not pay last year.
11 Advertising needs to increase, with a message board in the lobby of the swim center, and a sign/banner
12 suspended across the street. Increased programming also to take place; a local scuba shop has
13 expressed interest in expanding classes, and water polo and kayak groups have expressed interest.
14 Another suggestion is to move all water aerobics to the Cavanagh Pool and expand swim lessons. Also,
15 to re-institute noon lap swim during the fall months.

16
17 The committee encouraged the Commission to go to the City Council now to get a date for an early
18 spring opening. Carr will speak with the City Manager about a date to go to the City Council. Carr will
19 also work with the Aquatic Committee members regarding the swim rates and swim pass proposals.
20 Commissioners asked that the aquatic item be revisited at the December 17th meeting. They also
21 requested 2002 revenue and expense figures in order to compare them to the 2003 figures. Staff was
22 also asked to provide the swim rate / swim pass proposal in Excel format for ease of comparison.

23 COMMISSIONERS REPORTS

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25
26 **Kinsella** - Suggested one oak tree at Oak Hill Park needs to be pruned to increase visibility.

27 **Nau** - Museum has busy holiday season schedule including Victorian Tea scheduled for December 7,
28 2003.

29 **McCoy** - Lights at the Lucchesi multi-use field still need to be replaced. Asked when fields would be
30 closed and posted for the winter months. Anchordoguy indicated that rain received to date has not been
31 sufficient to close fields. With upcoming rains, field closer will be imminent.

32 **Hagen** - Has received CD of City's GIS system information; Very helpful.

33 **Tarr** - All her parks look good. McNear playground area always loaded with children.

34 Carr asked to check the Gatti Subdivision plans regarding the Urban Separator parking; Is it
35 perpendicular like Wiseman Park?

36 DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

37
38 *Turnbridge Subdivision is progressing. The neighborhood park is also under construction by the
39 developer. The Soundwalls facing McDowell Blvd. were hit by graffiti in their entirety (six foot high
40 letters on every panel).

41 *The Petaluma Senior Center plans and specifications are being reviewed by the building division.
42 Once any plan corrections are made, the project can be put out to bid.

43 *The City Council has approved the conceptual design of the Gatti park site 7-acre park. Plans and
44 specifications are now being prepared.

45 *The City Council approved the conceptual plan for the McNear Peninsula Phase I park project.

46 *The RESA softball complex has started construction of the facility.

47 *The Rotary Club of Petaluma has agreed to work with the City regarding Walnut Park. The Club will
48 replace the playground, paint park benches and the gazebo, and do general cleanup of the park. The
49 project is part of the bicentennial project of Rotary International.

- 1 *The Polly Hannah Klaas fund raising project is continuing. A non-profit organization has been
2 established comprised of members of the Leadership Petaluma Class. Called the Polly Hannah Klaas
3 Performing Arts Theatre Company, the non-profit can go after grant monies not available to public
4 agencies. The goal is to raise approximately \$1.2 million.
- 5 *The Shollenberger Park project is closer to completion. The CCC has installed the last bridge, and
6 will work on the boardwalk, signage and general clean-up of the area.
- 7 *The Petaluma Marina dredging project will be bid over the winter months, with work to start in June
8 (opening of the fish window).
- 9
- 10 **ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting adjourned at 10:35 PM.
- 11