

CITY OF PETALUMA
RECREATION, MUSIC, AND PARKS COMMISSION
MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, August 18, 2004

Petaluma Community Center
320 North McDowell Blvd.
Conference Room No. 2

7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Kinsella, Nau, Noriel, Moynihan, Ramirez, Tarr*

Commissioners Absent: Hagen

Staff Present: Carr, Anchordoguy, Stewart

Chair*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

It was the general consensus of the Commission to approve the minutes as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENT: NONE

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS: NONE

COMMISSIONERS OFFICERS AND REORGANIZATION

NEW BUSINESS

1) Adobe Creek Improvements – Carr/Mark Ferguson

Mark Ferguson, 112 Rancho Bonito Circle – Informed the Commission that Adobe Creek has been a revitalization project of the Casa Grande Anglers since 1982. Under the direction of Tom Furrer, the Anglers have been clearing the creek of garbage and debris for all these years with the intent of revitalizing the creek for steelhead trout. Their efforts have been successful with the return of the fish that were hatched at their fish hatchery at Casa Grande High School and placed in the creek.

In November of 2003 the Sonoma County Water Agency hired a crew to clear the Adobe Creek channel between Sartori and Ely Blvd. South. The crew was overly aggressive in clearing the area resulting in a Grand Jury Report, a lot of bad press, and great disappointment on the part of the United Anglers, who had worked so hard in restoring this section of Adobe Creek.

Neighbors of the area started meeting to address the issue of the creek as well as other problems that have surfaced during the years. Among the complaints received by the City has been access into the Adobe Creek area behind Fairway Meadows by residents of the Lakeville Apartments, especially students on the way to Casa Grande High School; vandalism along Adobe Creek between Ely Blvd. South and Sartori Drive; illegal activities such as drug and alcohol use by minors in Adobe Creek (out

1 of site, out of mind); illegal vehicle access into the Adobe Creek area and along the maintenance road
2 adjacent to Sartori.

3
4 The area of revitalization that concerns the neighbors is the area of the creek between the Sartori
5 Bridge and Spyglass Road. This area has a locked gate at the Sartori Bridge end, but has public access
6 at the Spyglass Road end. Mr. Ferguson indicated that he and some of the neighbors of the area would
7 like to see this area opened up for easier access for the community to use as a pedestrian path to get to
8 Del Oro Park, for children to get to school, and for some neighbors to get to the local markets at Casa
9 Grande Road and McDowell Blvd. The proposed revitalization project will also link the neighborhood
10 to the pedestrian path system that runs throughout Petaluma.

11
12 At one of the neighborhood meetings, it was determined by the majority of participants that the best
13 course of action would be to revitalize the area by opening up the creek with a pedestrian pathway.
14 Since more people will be utilizing the path, the presence of neighbors will hopefully deter the
15 undesirable illegal activities in the area. There were a few neighbors who would like to see the area
16 kept closed.

17
18 Mr. Ferguson said that he made a presentation to the Bicycle Advisory Committee who is in support of
19 the idea of opening up the area discussed in order to connect the trail to the Petaluma trail system. He
20 also met with the management of the Lakeville Apartments and the Petaluma Ecumenical Properties
21 and after some discussion, they understood the project and expressed willingness to participate with
22 some funding.

23
24 Mr. Ferguson outlined his proposal regarding the revitalization of the area and indicated that his next
25 step would be to find funding.

26
27 Carr discussed existing concerns about the area and spoke in favor of opening up the area. He believes
28 that what Mr. Ferguson and the neighbors have suggested is something that the Commission should
29 seriously consider. As far as funding, he feels confident that through grants or other funding sources,
30 the City could participate with the neighborhood to make this proposal a viable project.

31
32 Mr. Ferguson indicated that the item being presented is informational only.

33
34 Commissioners expressed appreciation for Mr. Ferguson's efforts and spoke in favor of his proposal as
35 a way to pull the neighborhood together and turn the troubled area around.

36
37 Marja Tarr opened up the floor for public comment.

38
39 1) Kraton Thung – 1543 Cerro Sonoma Circle – Has lived there for 14 years. His backyard goes up to
40 the creek area. He has not really noticed the amount of crime that people keep talking about. He
41 believes that part of the crime comes from the apartments. He thinks that by increasing the traffic in
42 the creek area, additional problems will result. He opposes opening up the area. He thinks that
43 building a path which is either paved or from quarry fines is really going to increase the traffic behind
44 his house and he has a complete objection to that because this may cause the property to lose market
45 value. He thinks that people should not have access to the creek.

46
47 2) Tim Sullivan – 123 Del Sol – Has lived there for 20 years. He agrees with Kraten. He thinks that
48 opening up the creek will create more problems. People at this meeting do not represent the
49 neighborhood. Commented on the need to replace the playground equipment.

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3) Marc Ashton – 1683 Del Oro Circle – Through the coordination of Mark Ferguson the creek will ultimately get this creek restored for fish. His only comment would be that the tennis courts have to stay because we have too few tennis courts in town. This tennis court is used on regular basis. The play structure is worthless, and it has been worthless for about 10 years.

Paula Cook – PEP Housing Project – Spoke in favor of the project. By developing an access to the creek there will be a benefit for the residents of the Pep Project. They think this is a really good idea. She thanked Mark for his efforts.

Bryant Moynihan – He does not know how long the Water Agency is going to provide creek maintenance, and said that the City does not have the funds for it. He recommended identifying some funding sources.

Pam Torliatt – She has attended all of the meetings that Mark has put on, and he has done a great job. He applauds what Mark is doing, he is trying to do something with his neighborhood. Mark has been working with the police department. She wants the people that live in the area of Adobe Creek to have access to the creek. There has been talk about developing a community garden in the area along the creek and she thinks that will a great amenity when full development happens along Adobe Creek. Architect Paul Harris indicated that he is donating his services and that the conceptual plans on display are his third draft. He is looking forward to incorporate neighbors’ ideas.

Karen Nau – Believes that we should approach children and teach them about the importance of nature, so hopefully they will educate other people and become future Anglers.

Carr asked Messrs. Fung, Sullivan, and Ashton the following question: If the gate at the Sartori Bridge was left in place and the proposed path was located on the north side of the creek, coming directly onto del Oro Park, to open up the entire area, do they see a problem. The area behind homes on the south side would remain as is.

Mr. Funk responded that personally, he will have to end up compromising on this issue. For him, this is a fairly good compromise as long as they don’t have the traffic behind his house. It is still his point of view that more people in the creek disrupt the fish habitat.

Mr. Ashton – He is split on this. Would like to have more information how we handle the creek within the community. What is the activity level. He indicated that there was to be a compromise among the community in order to decide what is the best for everybody.

Mr. Sullivan – Neighbors having to come to terms with the biggest thing: “Change.” The psychological part of it, is not knowing exactly what is going to happen down the road. He agrees with Mr. Ashton; Times have changed.

Elaine Ramirez – Right now someone is using the creek and is not someone in your immediate neighborhood. She is excited about the improvements proposed for the creek that would make it more attractive and open to the public, especially neighbors of the area. People from the neighborhoods are going to want to walk that path and that is a great thing, because you get to know your neighbors and the kids won’t hang out there because they know you are going to come with your dog at certain times in the evening and that is what happened to Oak Hill Park. Neighbors started to use it and the riff raff left. Right now the riff raff is using the creek area and is going to stay there until it is uncomfortable

1 Carr indicated that the firm through their expertise, resources and experience will be able to provide
2 pool design, realistic operational and program projections and market data to assist the Commission
3 and the City Council in their decisions. In addition, they will assist in finding a possible pool location,
4 which is a critical component in the decision process.
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6 At a prior meeting, when discussing the sale of the Kenilworth Site, the Commission had asked about
7 the Fairgrounds location as a possible site for park amenities. Carr spoke to Fairgrounds Manager
8 Tawny Tesconi who indicated that the City Council will be meeting with the Fair board on September
9 8th, and that she would prefer not be meeting with City staff until after that meeting occurred.
10

11 Mr. Troy Sanderson from National Little League presented concerns about the City not having enough
12 funds to relocate the facilities located at the Kenilworth site including the baseball fields for National
13 Little League.
14

15 Carr indicated that City Council priorities are the relocation of the swim center, skate park, and the
16 fields for National Little League. He does not see one getting lost over the other.
17

18 **Bryant Moynihan** – Talked about the Capital Improvement Project. He indicated that this
19 Commission needs to make sure that a balance is maintained from every perspective, whether it would
20 be soccer fields, swimming, baseball, etc. Staff needs to ensure that they don't overspend in an
21 aquatics facility to the point that other projects in the community suffer.
22

23 COMMISSIONERS REPORTS

24

25 1) Karen Nau

26 a. **La Crosse Team** – Asked if the La Crosse team was going to be using synthetic field at Lucchesi
27 for their games.

28 **Carr** – La Crosse has approached staff to start an introductory program in Petaluma with the long-
29 term goal of establishing a league. They wanted to use the synthetic field at Lucchesi Park for their
30 games, but the field is booked out. Don Phoenix gave them McDowell Park for their games. Staff will
31 be working with them.
32

33 b. **Wiseman Park** – Some neighbors that live across the street from the park have complained that
34 players constantly ask them if they could use their bathrooms. She asked about the possibility of
35 installing a bathroom at the park.

36 **Carr** – A program to place portable bathrooms at the park for games is currently being explored.
37

38 c. **Quilt Show** – Took place at Walnut Park on August 14 and 15 and it was very successful.
39

40 d. **Petaluma Museum** – Announced a series of events that will be taking place at the Museum in
41 August and September.
42

43 2) John Kinsella -

44 a) **Cavanagh Community Garden** – Looks very attractive.

45 b) **Oak Hill Park** – Looks very attractive - Thanked staff for pruning the oak trees.

46 c) **Sunset Park** – No report
47

48 3) Bryant Moynihan

- 1 a) **Rocky Dog Park** – The park looks good. People seem to be enjoying the park. It seems that there
2 is a broken water line right near the gate.
3 Carr – Indicated that a new faucet for the dogs has been installed on the left hand side of the gate.
4 b) **Thompson Creek** – There is graffiti on the fence. Weed abatement is working well.
5 c) **Grant Park** – Looks good.
6
7 4) **Joe Noriel** -
8 a) **West Nile Virus** – Commented that people are concerned about the West Nile virus.
9 **Ed Anchordoguy** – There is a hot line (West Nile virus 800 number) where people can call if they
10 have any concerns.
11 Carr – Distributed a flyer with information about the West Nile virus.
12
13 5) **Elaine Ramirez** -
14
15 b) **Wickersham Park** – There is a woman who prunes the roses every morning at Wickersham and is
16 doing a great job. The lady indicated that she has obtained permission from the Parks and Recreation
17 Department to prune the roses.
18 c) **Marina** – Commented that the river is a wonderful resource and is being used a great deal. Next
19 Saturday, a kayaking company will be making available for testing different types of kayaks.
20
21 6) **Marja Tarr** -
22 a. **Polly Hannah Klaas Performing Arts Center** – The building remains in bad condition.
23 b. **Senior Citizens Center** – The garden in the back of the center looks very attractive.
24 c. **Casa del Oro Park**– The play structure is in bad condition and needs to be removed.
25 · The fence looks reasonably good - most of the slabs are in.
26 · There are some brown spots in the lawn.
27 · A tree in Casa del Oro Circle has dead branches that need to be trimmed.
28 d. **Bond Park** – Looks great - A great amount of young families are constantly using it.
29 e. **Wiseman Park** – The South goal at the North field has two posts that are sticking out from the
30 grass. They are about 4” in diameter; are made out of iron and are rusty - She presented liability
31 concerns.
32 f. **Lucchesi Park** – Looks great. The trees which were planted to replace the ones that were cut down
33 have started to grow and look attractive.
34 g. **Prince Park** – Looks wonderful.
35 h. **La Tercera Park** – Is being heavily used.

36
37 **DIRECTOR’S REPORT** – *Jim Carr, Director of Parks and Recreation*
38

- 39 a) **Marina Dredging** – The project will be starting in September.
40
41 b) **Gatti Park** – The project is proceeding - North Bay Construction has started the grading. Bart Ito
42 from Gretchen McCann’s office has been meeting with the soils engineer at North Bay and reviewing
43 the submittals for the playground equipment and tennis courts.
44
45 c) **Senior Center** – On August 16, the City Council awarded the Senior Center contract. Carr will be
46 working with the contractor - The project will be starting in September.
47
48 c) **The East Washington Creek Linear Path** – The project has been awarded. The existing pathway
49 starts at the Chevron station on East Washington Street and continues to Ely. Most of the path has

1 been closed, and Bruce Hagen has been working with the Bicycle Advisory Committee to open it up.
2 Quarry fines will be used on the pathway from East Washington Street to Wiseman Park, which is
3 ADA accessible and works well on the east side of town. TDA funds will be used for the project.
4

5 **d) McNear Peninsula** – The first phase of the project will be going out to bid in the next two weeks.
6

7 **e) September Commission Meeting** – Carr reminded the Commission that the next month’s meeting
8 will be starting at 6 p.m. since the Tolay Lake public hearing will be starting at 7 p.m. at the PCC.
9 Staff will provide refreshments.
10

11 **f) Movies in the Park** – Continue to be very successful – Many families attend the shows.
12

13 **g) Walnut Park** – The City Council will be awarding the project. The Rotary Club will be paying for
14 the replacement of the playground equipment at the park. In September, they will be painting the
15 benches and gazebo as a public service project. Carr will be ordering the play equipment which will
16 be installed in October.
17

18 **ADJOURNMENT** –
19

20 Karen Nau moved that the meeting be adjourned at 9:45 p.m.