

Open Space and Habitat Commission Minutes
Monday, March 2, 2015
Community Chambers Conference Room 6:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Rachel Aptekar, Jason Bone, Helena Chung, Marc Hoshovsky,
Greg House, Patrick Huber, Colleen Rossier

Commissioners Absent: Roberta Millstein

Commission Liaisons: Rec and Park, Planning

Assigned Staff: Tracie Reynolds (with Mitch Sears in transitional role)

Council Liaison: Lucas Frerichs

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved but the order of agenda items was changed to discuss Agenda Item #6 (City-owned 25-acre Agricultural Parcel near Mace Blvd Curve) after Agenda Item #4 (Public Open Space Forum). Also, Tracie Reynolds, the City's new Property Management Coordinator, was introduced as the new staff person assigned to the Commission.

2. Approval of Minutes

November, 3, 2014 minutes were approved.

February, 2, 2015 minutes were not approved. The Commission unanimously voted to delay approval of the minutes until the next Commission meeting so that clarifying language on the following items could be added:

- a. Item #2 **Minutes**. The section discussing the November 3, 2014 minutes was amended to read:

“November 3, 2014 minutes were discussed and Commissioners requested clarification related to Agenda Item 4: **Project Proposals – Consideration of guiding principles for community evaluation of proposed innovation centers**. The Commission unanimously amended the November 3, 2014 minutes to add the following and delay approval of the minutes until the March meeting:

- The inherent values of land as open space should be considered as an important factor in evaluating innovation center proposals. These values include Urban Fringe, Community Separator, Agriculture, Biological and Natural Resources, and Scenic Resources as identified in the City Open Space Acquisition and Management Plan (Adopted 2002).

Commissioner Rossier also requested that the City Council include the site selection guidance factors included in the 2002 City of Davis Acquisition and Management Plan as important factors in evaluating innovation center proposals. These factors are attached to the February 2 minutes as Attachment A.

Note: this clarification of the Commission's discussion should be included under Guiding Principle 2 (Sustainability), Agricultural Land Conservation/Open Space section.”

- b. Item #5 **Update on City Owned 25-Acre Agricultural Parcel Near Mace Boulevard Curve**. This section was amended to read:

“The Commission discussed the potential uses of the 25-acre parcel and, at the request of staff, authorized their Chair to attend the City Council meeting and participate in a Council discussion on the 25 acre parcel.

Following discussion, on a motion by Commissioner Aptekar, seconded by Commissioner Millstein, the Commission provided the following guidance for its Chair and requested that the City Council first

consider developing a community farm (existing OSHC recommendation) on the 25-acre parcel, but if that was not possible, the City Council should investigate other options, such as:

- Open space but not community farm (City retains parcel)
- Swap parcel for another equivalent or superior parcel for community farm (City owns new parcel)
- City sells property and retains conservation easement (similar to remainder of Leland Ranch)

Motion passed 7-0.”

3. Public Communications

Taryn Cadena, Conservation Associate for the Yolo Land Trust, informed the Commission that the Yolo Land Trust started monitoring all 60 of its conservation easements on March 2, 2015 for compliance with the easement covenants. She said the monitoring had to be completed by June 30, 2015.

Lucas Frerichs informed the Commission that he had asked Dave Ceppos to help facilitate the Commission’s Public Open Space Forum that is scheduled to take place later this year. He also informed the Commission that the City Council appointed a Community Choice Energy Advisory Committee and that that Committee welcomed the Commission’s feedback.

4. Public Open Space Forum

Commissioners Hoshovsky, Bone and Huber reaffirmed their intent to be on the working group for the Commission’s Public Open Space Forum. The Commission discussed the possibility of applying for a grant through the State of California’s Department of Conservation, which administers the “California Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program” on behalf of the Strategic Growth Council. Commissioner Hoshovsky said these grant funds could be used to pay for expenses associated with the public forum. The Commission directed the working group to develop a scope and budget for the grant application, coordinate with staff to get a resolution from the City Council, and apply for the grant before the application deadline at the end of March 2015. The Commission acknowledged that the State’s timeline for awarding these grants likely pushed the Public Open Space Forum into the fall of 2015.

The Commission also discussed the framework for the Public Open Space Forum. Commissioner Hoshovsky prepared a draft framework and he requested that it be emailed to the rest of the Commission to solicit their feedback. The Commission agreed that the two primary goals of the Public Open Space Forum were to: (1) update the community’s goals for the Open Space Program, and (2) show the community how much open space has been preserved over the last 15 years, how the City’s Measure O funds have been spent, and what the impact to the City will be in the future.

5. City-owned 25-Acre Agricultural Parcel Near Mace Boulevard Curve – Community Farm

The Commission reviewed the staff report that was prepared for a discussion of this topic at the City Council’s meeting of March 3, 2015. The Commission discussed the potential uses of the 25-acre parcel and authorized its Chair to attend the City Council meeting the following night and participate in a City Council discussion on the 25-acre parcel.

Following discussion, on a motion by Commissioner Aptekar, seconded by Commissioner Huber, the Commission authorized its Chair to recommend to the City Council that the 25-acre parcel be reserved for the following land uses, in the following order of priority:

- i. A community farm on the 25-acre parcel; or
- ii. If not (i), then open space on the 25-acre parcel (either fee or easement) and a community farm on another parcel elsewhere in the City of equivalent or superior value; or

- iii. If not (ii), then in exchange for losing the 25-acre parcel at Mace Boulevard to development, the City must secure another parcel elsewhere in the City of equivalent or superior value that is currently not protected as open space to be used as a community farm.

Motion passed 7-0.

6. Commission 2015/16 Goals

The Commission discussed their goals for the 2015-16 year and beyond and made several changes and refinements to the Commission's work plan. The Commission agreed to review and adopt the revised work plan reflecting the Commission's goals for the year at its next meeting. Commissioner Chung requested that the Commission discuss its goals earlier on the agenda at future Commission meetings.

7. Project/Program Updates

- North Davis Riparian Greenbelt – Staff provided a brief update on the planting in the channel and interpretive work. Staff reported that despite the lack of rain, the plantings were in good shape.
- Yolo Natural Heritage Program – Staff reported that the Second Administrative draft will be released soon, and that the Commission will provide a recommendation to the City Council in April 2015. The Commission agreed to discuss the draft at its next meeting.

8. Staff/Commission Communications

- Commission Liaison reports – No reports were given.
- Easement acquisition updates – No updates to report.
- Development project updates – The Commission again requested that the Cannery developer return to the Commission to report on how the Commission's recommendations have been incorporated into the project.
- Next meeting: April 6, 2015.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:15 p.m.