

**Open Space and Habitat Commission Minutes**  
**Monday, November 2, 2015**  
**Community Chambers Conference Room, 23 Russell Boulevard, 6:30 p.m.**

Commissioners Present: Greg House, Patrick Huber, Helena Chung, Roberta Millstein, Jason Bone (Alternate), Marc Hoshovsky, Colleen Rossier

Commissioners Absent: Rachel Aptekar

Commission Liaisons: Recreation and Parks (TBD), Planning (Rob Hofmann)

Assigned Staff: Tracie Reynolds

Council Liaison: Lucas Frerichs

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**1. Approval of Agenda**

On a motion by Commissioner Millstein, seconded by Commissioner Huber, the Commission voted 6-0 to approve the agenda (Commissioner House arrived after this vote was taken).

**2. Approval of Minutes**

*October 5, 2015 minutes.* On a motion by Commissioner Huber, seconded by Commissioner Millstein, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the October 5, 2015 minutes, with Commissioners Hoshovsky and Rossier abstaining.

*October 19, 2015 minutes.* On a motion by Commissioner Chung, seconded by Commissioner House, the Commission voted 5-0 to approve the October 19, 2015 minutes, with Commissioners Bone and Rossier abstaining.

**3. Public Communications**

Jean Jackman, a member of the community, read a letter addressed to the Commission from a group of community members expressing their concern over the Measure O budget, expenditures to date from the Measure O fund, acquisitions to date, the timeline for finalizing grant guidelines for restoration projects, and the upcoming public forum on Measure O (See Attachment 1). Another member of the public representing “In the Key of Davis,” which places pianos in public spaces around the City, asked the Commission if pianos could be placed in open spaces. The Commission referred her to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

**4. Discussion and Action -- Consolidated Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (“EIR”) for the Proposed Mace Ranch Innovation Center**

The Commission reviewed for the third time its consolidated comments to date on the draft EIR for the proposed Mace Ranch Innovation Center (“MRIC”). Each revised comment was summarized by the commenter and reviewed and edited for clarity. On a motion by Commissioner House, seconded by Commissioner Rossier, the Commission voted 7-0 to approve the consolidated comments on the MRIC draft EIR, as amended during the November 2, 2015 Commission meeting.

**5. Presentation and Action – Proposed Nishi Gateway Project**

Katherine Hess, the City’s Community Development Administrator, gave the Commission a presentation on the open space and habitat elements of the proposed Nishi Gateway Project (the “Project”) and the Project’s consistency with the Guiding Principles for Davis Innovation Center(s) approved by City Council on December 16, 2014. The Commission discussed the “Ag Land Conservation/Open Space” section of Guiding Principle #2 (Sustainability). Among the topics discussed were whether the Project included (1) storm water treatment and flow control through bio swales that allow conjunctive uses (habitat, wetland and water quality), (2) green roofs, (3) usable open space/habitat opportunities that overlap with the drainage systems, including pathways systems throughout with public access and interpretive exhibits, (4) the use of native species and drought tolerant landscaping that creates wildlife habitat value, such as native pollinators, (5) maximum interconnectedness of

open spaces and minimum open space with fragmented and linear edge effects, and (6) an integrated robust urban forest for its habitat value. The Commission also discussed the City's agriculture mitigation requirement, as it relates to the Project, and the design and maintenance of the Project's open spaces.

As a result of this discussion, the Commission determined that the Project's location, configuration, and amenities are generally consistent with the City Council-approved Guiding Principles for Innovation Center(s) in the category of Ag Land Conservation/Open Space, assuming the Project incorporates the Commission's 14 comments submitted to the City as part of the Commission's review of the Project's draft EIR. In addition, the Commission made the following recommendations to the Planning Commission and City Council:

- (1) The agriculture mitigation land, required pursuant to Davis Municipal Code Section 40A.03, should have comparable or better soil quality and comparable or better irrigation water supply as compared to the agriculture land being developed, as discussed in Comment #9 in the Commission's comments on the DEIR.
- (2) At least a majority of tree and plant species on the Project site should be native species.
- (3) The existing connectivity between the Arboretum (to the west of the Project site) and open space (to the east of the Project site) should be maintained, preserved and enhanced for its value as a wildlife corridor.
- (4) Green roofs should be maximized.
- (5) Passive recreation should be allowed in habitat areas, including the drainage basin, and the use of fences that restrict access should be minimized.

Finally, the Commission requested more information about the trees (i.e., the number and placement of trees) in order to determine whether a "robust urban forest" will be created on the Project site. Also, during the design phase, the Commission requested that it be allowed to review and critique the pre-approved list of trees and vegetation proposed to be planted on the Project site before it is approved.

On a motion by Commissioner Millstein, seconded by Commissioner Huber, the Commission voted 7-0 to approve the above determination of consistency with the City Council-approved Guiding Principles for Innovation Center(s) and recommendations to the Planning Commission and City Council, as listed above. In a separate vote (on a motion by Commissioner Rossier and seconded by Commissioner Bone), the Commission voted 7-0 to approve the above recommendations to the Planning Commission and City Council as the Commission's determination of the merits of the open space and habitat elements of the Project.

**6. Discussion – Draft Resolution – Partnership between City and Yolo Habitat Conservancy -- Yolo Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan ("HCP/NCCP")**

The Commission reviewed and discussed a draft resolution prepared by staff which authorizes the formation of a non-binding partnership between the City of Davis and the Yolo Habitat Conservancy related to the implementation of the Yolo HCP/NCCP within the Davis Planning Area, consistent with local policies, and authorizes staff to work with the YHC to implement this partnership. The Commission recommended some additions and changes to the language proposed in the draft resolution. Staff said it would bring a revised final draft to the Commission for its review and approval at the Commission's December 7, 2015 meeting. Staff intends to bring the resolution to the City Council for its review and approval on December 15, 2015.

**7. Working Group Updates**

- *Evaluation Criteria for Restoration Projects.* Commissioner Hoshovsky, head of the working group on this subject, said the working group has developed a draft of the evaluation criteria for restoration projects, based

on the City's evaluation criteria for teen services. He said the working group will be meeting to review the draft later this month and will be ready to share it with the Commission at the December meeting.

- *Community Farms.* Commissioner House, head of the working group on this subject, said there was nothing to report.
- *Native Pollinators.* Commissioner Huber, head of the working group on this subject, said there was nothing to report.
- *Public Forum.* Marc Hoshovsky, chair of the working group on this subject, said the working group had a kickoff meeting with the selected consultant, the U.C. Davis Extension Collaboration Center (the "Collaboration Center"). As a result of that meeting, the Collaboration Center is working on (1) a detailed list of tasks/milestone dates, (2) survey questions for the web survey and a survey "page/graphic" on the City's website, (3) ideas for public outreach and marketing materials, and (4) ideas for facilitating the workshop and focus groups. Commissioner Hoshovsky also mentioned that he had attended a recent presentation by U.C. Davis on the university's long-range development plan, which includes significant open space. He asked that a representative from U.C. Davis come to a future Commission meeting to discuss opportunities for this open space. He also said that the university should be included in the upcoming planning for the public forum on open space.
- *Open Space Website.* Tracie Reynolds, assigned staff to the Commission, updated the Commission on efforts to improve and correct the interactive open space map on the City's website. Commissioner Bone said he would organize a working group to review the open space pages and suggest edits and corrections.
- *Open Space Signage.* Tracie Reynolds, assigned staff to the Commission, said there was nothing to report.

#### **8. Staff/Commission Communications**

- *Commission Liaison Reports*
  - Recreation & Parks/Planning. No reports were given.
  - City Council. No reports were given.
- *Staff Report.* Staff gave a brief report on (1) the upcoming election needed to elect one member of the Commission to serve on the City's Sports Complex Task Force, (2) the upcoming election needed to elect a new chair and vice chair of the Commission, and (3) the upcoming City Council workshop on Measure O on December 1, 2015.
- *Next Meeting.* December 7, 2015.

#### **9. Adjournment**

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

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Letter dated November 2, 2015 from Jean Jackman to the Commission