

Open Space and Habitat Commission Minutes

Monday, November 7, 2016

Community Chambers Conference Room, 23 Russell Boulevard, 6:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present:	Patrick Huber (Chair), Greg House (Vice Chair), Roberta Millstein, Rachel Aptekar, Marc Hoshovsky, Jason Bone
Vacant Positions:	Two (One Regular, One Alternate)
Commissioners Absent:	None
Commission Liaisons:	Liaison to the Recreation and Park Commission (Vacant)
Assigned Staff:	Tracie Reynolds
Council Liaison:	Lucas Frerichs

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Commissioner Huber opened the meeting. Commissioner Bone arrived at the start of the second regular agenda item, as he recused himself from discussion about the first regular agenda item.

2. Approval of Agenda

On a motion by Commissioner Aptekar, seconded by Commissioner House, the Commission voted 5-0-1-0 to approve the agenda (Ayes -- Huber, Aptekar, Millstein, Hoshovsky, House; Noes – None; Absent – Bone; Abstentions – None).

3. Brief Announcements from Staff, Commissioners, and City Council Liaisons

There were no brief announcements.

4. Public Comment

Three members of the public asked the Commission to weigh in on the possible development of the A Street and Russell Boulevard playfields by the Regents of the University of California, which owns the land. The Commission said it would consider the request during its discussion of Item 6D on the agenda.

5. Consent Calendar

The only item on the consent calendar was to approve the Commission's October 3, 2016 minutes. Commissioner Aptekar requested an edit to the minutes. On a motion by Commissioner House, seconded by Commissioner Hoshovsky, the Commission voted 5-0-1-0 to approve the October 3, 2016 minutes, as amended (Ayes -- Huber, Millstein, Aptekar, Hoshovsky, House; Noes – None; Absent – Bone; Abstentions – None).

6. Regular Items

Discussion and Action – Proposed lease language covering future use of organic and non-organic pesticides at the Cannery Farm

The City and the Center for Land-Based Learning (“CLBL”) are currently negotiating a lease for the farm property at the Cannery. The Cannery developer will dedicate the farm property to the City in 2017 and the City will be leasing the farm property to CLBL who will in turn sublicense it to graduates of its California Farm Academy. One of the key sections of the lease is CLBL's use of pesticides to control invasive weeds on the farm property. At its October meeting, the Commission asked staff to come back to the Commission in November with two versions of the organics section in the draft lease: (1) one version that would allow non-organic pesticides to be used under very limited circumstances at the Cannery farm (Version 1), and (2) the other version that would not allow non-organic pesticides to be used under any circumstances at the Cannery farm (Version 2). Staff prepared the two versions of the organics section for the Commission's review. There was a lengthy discussion of this topic. At the end of the discussion, Commissioner Millstein made a motion to recommend that the Version 2 language be included in the draft lease between the City and CLBL for the Cannery farm property. The motion was seconded by Commissioner House, who asked for a friendly amendment to Commissioner Millstein's motion to also require that the Cannery farm be a certified organic operation.

Commissioner Millstein accepted Commissioner House's friendly amendment. The Commission voted 5-0-1-0 to approve the above motion, as amended (Ayes -- Huber, Aptekar, Millstein, Hoshovsky, House; Noes – None; Absent – Bone; Abstentions – None).

Discussion and Action – Proposed acquisition of about 9.5 acres of open space west of South Fork Preserve about a half-mile south of the city limits on County Road 104

Tracie Reynolds, staff to the Commission, updated the Commission on the status of negotiations with the seller of a 9.5-acre property just west of South Fork Preserve. The Commission's acquisitions subcommittee (Commissioners Aptekar and House) said they reviewed a preliminary acquisition report prepared by staff and conducted a site visit. They recommended that the City acquire this property. On a motion by Commissioner Aptekar, seconded by Commissioner Millstein, the Commission voted 6-0-0-0 to recommend to the City Council that the City acquire this property (Ayes -- Huber, Millstein, Aptekar, Hoshovsky, House, Bone; Noes – None; Absent – None; Abstentions – None). City Council Member Lucas Frerichs said acquiring this property would be consistent with the feedback the City received during the public forum on open space in March.

Discussion – Update on the Commission's recommendation to the City Council to establish a 2x2x2 with the Natural Resources Commission and the Recreation and Park Commission to investigate the feasibility of banning insecticides containing neonicotinoids and the herbicide glyphosate on City property

Recently, City staff embarked on a comprehensive review and update of the City's Integrated Pest Management Policy, instead of asking the City Council to establish a 2x2x2 task force to discuss the City's use of neonicotinoids and glyphosate, as was recommended by three City commissions. Commissioners Millstein and House said they have been attending subcommittee meetings of the Natural Resources Commission ("NRC") as advisors on this topic. Commissioner House mentioned that the NRC subcommittee was hosting a public forum on this topic on December 7 at the Davis Senior Center.

Discussion – Update on possible collaborative open space projects between the City of Davis and the University of California at Davis

As part of this discussion, the Commission considered the community members' request, made during public comment, to weigh in on the possible development of the A Street and Russell Boulevard playfields by the Regents of the University of California, which owns the land. The Commission decided that the possible development of this land is not within its purview. The Commission agreed that its mission was not to advise the City Council about the possible redevelopment of playfields used for active recreation. City Council Member Lucas Frerichs said the appropriate body to address this issue was the City Council subcommittee on the University's Long-Range Development Plan.

Commissioner Huber then summarized the results of a recent bike tour of possible collaborative open space projects between the City and the University of California at Davis (the "University"). Commissioners Huber, Hoshovsky and Millstein went on the bike tour, along with a University representative. Of the seven possible collaborative projects, the working group was most interested in pursuing a bike path between Old Davis Road and Brooks Road. The working group said it would develop an implementation plan for this project. Other possible projects of interest were a bike path between Old Davis Road to Mace Boulevard, and improvements to West Arboretum.

7. Commission and Staff Communications

Commission Work Plan

There was nothing to report. The Commission has decided to defer updating its work plan until early next year, when new Commissioners have been appointed.

Upcoming Meeting Date, Time, Items

The next meeting is December 5, 2016. Possible agenda items include a discussion of possible burrowing owl protection and conservation measures and a discussion of possible long-term uses for the wetlands, overland flow area, and reclaimed water associated with the City of Davis's former wastewater treatment plant.

Upcoming Events

The City of Davis and the Davis Natural Resources Commission-Hazardous Materials Subcommittee are hosting a forum on pesticide use in Davis on December 7 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Davis Senior Center. The forum will discuss current herbicide and insecticide use by the City in public parks, greenbelts, City-owned open spaces and farm lands, City facilities, streets, and sidewalks as well as providing information on why pesticides are used and alternatives to reduce or eliminate continued pesticide use.

Working Groups

- *Grant Guidelines – Restoration Projects.* There was nothing to report.
- *Community Farms.* Commissioner House discussed a possible collaboration with the Farmer Veteran Coalition, a national organization with an office in Davis. The organization seeks to cultivate a new generation of farmers and food leaders through the collaboration of the farming and military communities.
- *Native Pollinators.* There was nothing to report.
- *Public Forum.* There was nothing to report.
- *Open Space Website.* There was nothing to report. Commissioner Millstein inquired about the definition of open space that appears on the City's website.
- *Open Space Signage.* Tracie Reynolds, staff to the Commission, said she would set up a meeting with the working group to discuss some ideas that came up during a recent brainstorming session.

Commission Liaison Reports

- *Recreation and Parks.* Currently, the Commission does not have a liaison to this commission.
- *Finance and Budget.* Currently, the Commission does not have a liaison to this commission.
- *Sports Complex Task Force.* Commissioner Bone, the Commission's liaison to this task force, said the task force has completed its work. He said the two key next steps in this process include: (1) forming a non-profit organization comprised of stakeholders who would focus on developing a vision for the sports complex, and (2) issuing a Request for Interest to landowners to see if anyone is interested in donating or selling land for the development of the sports complex. He said the Commission will have a role in this discussion when the land has been identified. Commissioner Hoshovsky asked if the task force evaluated sites. Commissioner Bone said the task force did not evaluate specific sites. He said the task force was focused solely on recommending a possible process for moving forward with the development of a sport complex.

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:35 p.m.