

**Open Space and Habitat Commission Minutes**  
**Monday, January 7, 2019**  
**Community Chambers Conference Room, 23 Russell Boulevard, 6:30 p.m.**

Commissioners Present: Erin Gooch, Stephanie Holstege, Patrick Huber (Chair), Joy Klineberg, Roberta Millstein, Carrie Shaw, Marc Vayssieres, Garrett Allen (Alternate)

Vacant Positions: None

Commissioners Absent: None

Assigned Staff: Tracie Reynolds, Manager, Open Space Program

Council Liaison: Will Arnold (Regular), Lucas Frerichs (Alternate)

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**1. Call to Order & Roll Call**

Commissioner Huber opened the meeting after a quorum was achieved.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

There was a request to discuss Item D after Item A. On a motion by Commissioner Millstein, seconded by Commissioner Gooch, the Commission voted 7-0-0-0 to approve the January 2019 agenda as amended. (Ayes – Gooch, Holstege, Huber, Klineberg, Millstein, Shaw, Vayssieres; Noes – None; Absent – None; Abstentions – None).

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

Tracie Reynolds, staff to the Commission, thanked all the new Commissioners for turning in their financial disclosure forms in on time. She said the new Commissioners wouldn't have to turn in their forms again until April 2020. The three Commissioners who aren't new will need to turn in their financial disclosure forms in April 2019, she said. She also updated the Commission on a possible tour of the City's newest open space, 10 acres west of South Fork Preserve, by Marc Hoshovsky, a former Commissioner and docent with the Putah Creek Council.

**4. Public Comment**

Rachel Aptekar, a former Commissioner, said she was available to answer any questions new Commissioners may have.

**5. Consent Calendar**

There was only one item on the consent calendar: approval of the December 3, 2018 regular meeting minutes. Commissioner Millstein requested an edit to the minutes. On a motion by Commissioner Millstein, seconded by Commissioner Klineberg, the Commission voted 3-0-0-4 to accept the December 2018 meeting minutes as amended (Ayes – Huber, Klineberg, Millstein; Noes – None; Absent – None; Abstentions – Gooch, Holstege, Shaw, Vayssieres).

**6. Regular Items**

**Discussion Item – Introduction of new Commission members**

Each Commissioner took a few minutes to introduce him/herself and describe his/her professional background and reasons for joining the Commission. Commissioner Huber and Ms. Reynolds thanked all the Commissioners for their willingness to share their time and expertise with the citizens of Davis.

**Action Item – Motion summarizing the Commission's preferences for 25 acres of City-owned agricultural land off Mace Boulevard**

The Commission discussed a draft motion summarizing the Commission's preferences for 25 acres of City-owned open space off Mace Boulevard. After much discussion, the Commission settled on several edits to the draft motion. On a motion by Commissioner Millstein, seconded by Commissioner Shaw, the Commission voted 7-0-0-0 to approve the draft motion, as amended (See Attachment 1). (Ayes – Gooch, Holstege, Huber, Klineberg, Millstein, Shaw, Vayssieres; Noes – None; Absent – None; Abstentions – None).

**Discussion Item -- Review of City's Open Space Program and annual work plan**

The Commission heard an overview presentation by Ms. Reynolds about the City's Open Space Program and the Commission's annual work plan.

**Action Item – Election of Commission Chair and Vice Chair for 2019**

Commissioner Millstein nominated Commissioner Huber to serve as Chair and Commissioner Shaw to serve as Vice Chair for 2019. On a motion by Commissioner Millstein, seconded by Commissioner Vayssieres, the Commission voted 7-0-0 to approve Commissioner Huber as Chair and Commissioner Shaw as Vice Chair for 2019. (Ayes – Gooch, Holstege, Huber, Klineberg, Millstein, Shaw, Vayssieres; Noes – None; Absent – None; Abstentions – None).

**Discussion Item -- Land for sale along South Fork of Putah Creek**

Ms. Reynolds briefed the Commission on agricultural land that is for sale along the South Fork of Putah Creek. The Commission expressed its interest in possibly purchasing this land and asked staff to keep it apprised of developments.

**7. Commission and Staff Communications**

**Commission Work Plan**

The work plan was discussed during Regular Items.

**Upcoming Meeting Date, Time, Items**

The next meeting is February 4. Possible agenda items discussed include (1) draft designs for the habitat restoration project at F Street and Anderson Road, (2) possible hedgerow installation on City-owned agricultural land, and (3) establishment of Commission working groups.

**Upcoming Events**

Commissioner Klineberg announced an upcoming tour of the City Wetlands organized by the Yolo Basin Foundation.

**Working Groups**

Ms. Reynolds gave the following working group updates:

- ***Habitat Restoration and Enhancement.***
  - **Draft Grant Guidelines.** Ms. Reynolds mentioned that a meeting to discuss the draft grant guidelines for habitat restoration projects using Measure O funds with the City's Parks and Recreation and Public Works Departments was scheduled for January 10. Staff hopes to bring the draft grant guidelines to the City Council for approval shortly thereafter. The Commission voted to recommend the draft grant guidelines to the City Council for approval in September 2018.
  - **F and Anderson Site.** Ms. Reynolds said that the tentative timeline for completing a habitat restoration project on three acres of City-owned land at the corner of F Street and Anderson Road was as follows: (1) Commission approves draft designs in February and final designs in March, (2) site grading occurs in the spring, (3) solarization (i.e., a non-toxic and effective way to kill invasive weeds) occurs in the summer, and (4) planting of native grasses/shrubs/trees occurs in winter 2019/2020.
- ***Public Access and Recreation.*** Ms. Reynolds mentioned that the City's encroachment permit application to the Central Valley Flood Protection Board ("Flood Board") was moving along. She said the Flood Board had requested additional information and that staff had sent them that additional information. The permit is needed to complete about \$500,000 in public accessibility improvements at South Fork Preserve. The project is being funded with Measure O parcel taxes, open space development impact fees, and a state grant from the California Department of Parks and Recreation.

**8. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.

## Attachment 1

### Commission Motion 25 Acres of City-Owned Open Space East of Mace Boulevard January 7, 2019

WHEREAS, in 2008, the City Council directed the Open Space and Habitat Commission (the “Commission”) to investigate the implementation of a community farm or farms in the City; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, in response to the City Council’s directive, the Commission developed detailed research information summarized in the *Community Farms White Paper*; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, the City Council again directed the Commission to investigate the implementation of a community farm or farms in the City. In response, the Commission began a multi-year effort to investigate numerous City-owned sites for possible locations of community farms; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, the City acquired 391 acres east of Mace Boulevard, known as Leland Ranch, as part of its efforts to conserve open space. The acquisition was funded with the City’s special open space protection parcel tax, or Measure O. The City intended to resell the property with a permanent agricultural conservation easement; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, the Commission developed a plan for a potential community farm on 25 acres of Leland Ranch; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, the City resold approximately 365 acres of the 391-acre Leland Ranch to a farming interest. The City retained a permanent agricultural conservation easement on the 365 acres; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, the City retained ownership of approximately 25 acres of Leland Ranch (the “Mace 25 Open Space Site”) with the intention of providing an even greater open space benefit to the City’s residents on that portion of Leland Ranch than was achieved by the permanent agricultural conservation easement on the rest of Leland Ranch; and

WHEREAS, half the cost of the permanent agricultural conservation easement on the 365 acres was funded with Measure O open space parcel taxes. The other half was funded with a federal Natural Resources Conservation grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program). The City declined the federal matching grant funds for the Mace 25 Open Space Site in order to keep the property in City ownership to use for open space values, such as a community farm, above and beyond the open space benefit derived from reselling it with a permanent agricultural conservation easement; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, the Mace 25 Open Space Site was included in a 229-acre proposal from Ramco Enterprises, a West Sacramento land developer, to build a commercial/residential project known as the Mace Ranch Innovation Center (“MRIC”). MRIC is currently on hold; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the Commission expressed its preferences for the Mace 25 Open Space Site to the City Council. The Commission’s preferences at that time were as follows: (1) the City retains the Mace 25 Open Space Site and develops it into a community farm, (2) the City retains the Mace 25 Open Space Site as open space, (3) the City swaps the Mace 25 Open Space Site for an equivalent or superior parcel for a community farm, and (4) the City sells the Mace 25 Open Space Site but retains a permanent agricultural conservation easement; and

## Attachment 1

WHEREAS, in 2015, the City Council directed staff and the Commission to continue exploring the concept of creating one or more community farms throughout the City. The City Council declined to remove the Mace 25 Open Space Site from the proposed MRIC project. However, the City Council also deemed the Mace 25 Open Space Site suitable as a potential location for a community farm; and

WHEREAS, the Commission continues to believe the Mace 25 Open Space Site is suitable for open space uses, including those greater than would have been achieved if the site had been included in the permanent agricultural conservation easement placed on the remainder of Leland Ranch; and

WHEREAS, beneficial open space uses for the Mace 25 Open Space Site include a community farm, or wildlife habitat (i.e., for burrowing owls and Swainson's hawks), or open space public access/recreation, or a combination of these uses.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Open Space and Habitat Commission does hereby recommend to the City Council the following:

1. The Mace 25 Open Space Site should be used for a community farm, or wildlife habitat (i.e., for burrowing owls and Swainson's hawks), or open space public access/recreation, or a combination of these uses; and
2. If the Mace 25 Open Space Site is sold for urban development in exchange for land, the City should ensure that:
  - a. The loss of burrowing owl habitat on the Mace 25 Open Space Site is properly mitigated; and
  - b. The Mace 25 Open Space Site is exchanged for land that is even more suitable for a community farm, or wildlife habitat, or public access/recreation, or a combination of these uses; and
  - c. The Mace 25 Open Space Site is exchanged for land that is of equal or greater monetary value at the time of sale; and
3. If the Mace 25 Open Space Site is sold for urban development in exchange for money, the City should ensure that:
  - a. The loss of burrowing owl habitat on the Mace 25 Open Space Site is properly mitigated; and
  - b. The full Fair Market Value (or greater) of the Mace 25 Open Space Site at the time of sale is deposited into the Measure O fund; and
  - c. This transaction does not set a precedent for using the Measure O fund as a "piggy bank" ~~slush fund~~ for the City for non-open-space purposes; and
4. If a future MRIC proposal does not include the Mace 25 Open Space Site, then ~~staff and the Commission~~ requests that the City Council designate it as open space so that it can be developed into one of the uses in #1 ~~can explore other open space uses for the Mace 25 Open Space Site.~~

End of Motion

On a motion by Commissioner Millstein, seconded by Commissioner Shaw, the Commission voted 7-0-0 to approve the above motion, as amended. (Ayes – Gooch, Holstege, Huber, Klineberg, Millstein, Shaw, Vayssieres; Noes – None; Absent – None; Abstentions – None).