

Open Space and Habitat Commission Special Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 29, 2020
Remote Audio and Video Meeting Participation, 6:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Garrett Allen, Patrick Huber (Vice Chair), Joy Klineberg, Roberta Millstein (Chair), Carrie Shaw, Marc Vayssieres

Vacant Positions: Two (Regular and Alternate)

Commissioners Absent: None

Assigned Staff: Tracie Reynolds, Manager, Open Space Program (Present)

Council Liaison: Brett Lee (Regular) (Present), Lucas Frerichs (Alternate)

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Commissioner Millstein opened the meeting after a quorum was achieved and called roll call.

2. Approval of Agenda

On a motion by Commissioner Huber, seconded by Commissioner Klineberg, the Commission voted 6-0-0-0 to approve the June 2020 special meeting agenda (Ayes – Allen, Huber, Klineberg, Millstein, Shaw, Vayssieres; Noes – None; Absent – None; Abstentions – None).

3. Regular Items

Action Item – Receive brief presentations from staff and the project applicant and make recommendations about the open space and habitat features of the Bretton Woods development

The Commission received a brief presentation from Tracie Reynolds, staff to the Commission, about the proposed open space and habitat features of the Bretton Woods development. Ms. Reynolds summarized the detailed material in the staff report. She focused on the developer’s proposals for the agricultural buffer, the two offsite detention basins, the hedgerow, the Covell Boulevard drainage channel, and the overall project planting plan. The Commission also heard a brief statement from the developer.

Commissioner Millstein then took public comment on this item. Colin Walsh said he agreed with staff’s recommendations in the staff report, especially not allowing oak trees to be planted in the bottom of the drainage channel, requiring more diversity of plants in the hedgerow, and not allowing fruit trees on public land. He also noted that the project’s “baseline project features” required a foundation to take care of the project’s oak forest.

Commissioner Millstein then closed public comment and the Commission discussed this item. Topics discussed include the appropriateness of fruit trees on public land, the survivability of oak trees in a drainage channel, the diversity of plantings in the hedgerow, the number of California natives in the overall project plant palette, wildlife connectivity issues, and expanding public access. Commissioners expressed strong support for staff’s recommendations.

After much discussion, and on a motion by Commissioner Huber that was seconded by Commissioner Klineberg, the Commission voted 6-0-0-0 to approve the following motion (Ayes – Allen, Huber, Klineberg, Millstein, Shaw, Vayssieres; Noes – None; Absent – None; Abstentions – None):

“The Open Space and Habitat Commission accepts staff’s recommendations to recommend that the Planning Commission and the City Council at a minimum:

1. Reject the following open space and habitat features proposed by the development team:

a. Agricultural Buffer

- The planting of 424 dwarf fruit orchard trees*
- The planting of oak trees in the bottom of the drainage channel*
- The planting of oak trees on the lower two-thirds of the drainage channel side slopes*

b. Offsite Detention Basins

- The landscaping plan for the western basin (i.e., hydroseeding only)*

- *The landscaping plan for the eastern basin (i.e., no landscaping at all)*
 - *No walking paths are planned around either basin*
 - c. *Hedgerow*
 - *The landscaping plan (i.e., a single species that is not beneficial to wildlife)*
 - d. *Covell Boulevard Drainage Channel*
 - *Box culverts don't have ledges for wildlife crossings when channel is full of water*
 - e. *Overall Project Landscaping*
 - *73% of proposed plant species are not California natives*
2. Approve the following open space and habitat features recommended by staff:
- a. *Agricultural Buffer*
 - *Remove dwarf fruit orchard trees and replace them with oak trees*
 - *Hydroseed entire ag buffer with native grasses/forbs*
 - *For the drainage channel, limit oak trees to the top bank and the upper one-third of the side slopes*
 - *Ensure homeowners' association follows the City's Integrated Pest Management Policy in the 50-foot portion of the ag buffer, which will be owned by the City*
 - b. *Offsite Detention Basins*
 - *Continue hedgerow planting plan recommended below around the western basin and ensure maintenance of this basin, including hedgerow*
 - *Continue ag buffer planting plan as recommended above into the eastern basin and continue perimeter trail to and around this basin*
 - c. *Hedgerow*
 - *Plant a mix of habitat-friendly California native plants recommended by the Yolo Resource Conservation District and/or U.C. Cooperative Extension*
 - d. *Covell Boulevard Drainage Channel*
 - *Plant only California natives along the channel since it feeds into the North Davis Channel*
 - *Construct ledges in box culverts so wildlife can cross when channel is full of water*
 - e. *Overall Project Landscaping*
 - *Include at least a majority (55%) of California native plant species in the overall project plant palette*

Furthermore, the Open Space and Habitat Commission additionally recommends that the Planning Commission and the City Council require that:

1. *Milkweed be added to the project plant palette;*
2. *Valley Oaks comprise 75% of the planted oak species and Blue Oaks and Live Oaks comprise the remaining 25% (12.5% each) (No Black Oaks);*
3. *75% of the plant species in the overall project plant palette be California natives;*
4. *The pedestrian bridge across the Covell Boulevard channel be arched and not straight;*
5. *The bottom of the culverts on Covell Boulevard be natural and not concrete;*
6. *Willows and cottonwoods be added to the project plant palette;*
7. *The Tree Commission provide recommendations about the oak forest and street trees; and*
8. *In line with the Baseline Project Features, a foundation or equivalent entity needs to provide oversight of the initial planting and ongoing maintenance of the oak forest and this entity needs to be involved in the initial stages of the planning process for the oak forest."*

Action Item – Receive brief presentations from staff and the project applicant and make recommendations about the agricultural mitigation plan for the Bretton Woods development

The Commission received a brief presentation from Ms. Reynolds about the proposed agricultural mitigation plan for the Bretton Woods development. Ms. Reynolds summarized the detailed material in the staff report, which built upon the staff report given to the Commission on June 1. She focused on the four possible scenarios proposed by the developer for meeting the project's agricultural mitigation requirements. The four possible scenarios involve various combinations of the following three properties: (1) the Schuler Land, which is about 159 acres west of Davis, of which about 135 acres are available and eligible to be used for ag mitigation, (2) the Martin Land, which is about 120 acres south of Davis, of which about 93 acres are available and eligible to be used for ag mitigation, and (3) the Binning Land, which is about 76 acres of land north of Davis, of which about 60 acres are available and eligible to be used for ag mitigation. The Commission also heard a brief statement from the developer.

Commissioner Millstein then took public comment on this item. There was no public comment. Commissioner Millstein then closed public comment and the Commission discussed this item. Topics discussed include the conditions of approval, the relative conservation value of the different properties, and the ag mitigation requirements. Commissioners expressed strong support for staff's recommendations and the conditions of approval.

After much discussion, and on a motion by Commissioner Allen that was seconded by Commissioner Vayssieres, the Commission voted 6-0-0-0 to approve the following motion (Ayes – Allen, Huber, Klineberg, Millstein, Shaw, Vayssieres; Noes – None; Absent – None; Abstentions – None):

“The Open Space and Habitat Commission accepts staff’s recommendations as-is which recommend that the City Council:

1. *Accept all four of the developer’s proposed scenarios as options for the ag mitigation for Bretton Woods, but only with the following general conditions:*
 - a. *All of the ag mitigation land must be land that is currently actively farmed, and cannot include any buildings or developed areas of any kind whatsoever;*
 - b. *The property owners must be willing to accept conservation easements on only portions of their properties;*
 - c. *Either the Yolo Land Trust or another approved qualifying entity must be co-owner of these easements, and be the party responsible for monitoring and enforcing them; and*
 - d. *Any title issues need to be resolved.*
2. *Accept all four of the developer’s proposed scenarios as options for the ag mitigation for Bretton Woods, but only with the following specific additional conditions:*
 - a. *For Scenario 1:*
 1. *For the City’s ag mitigation, the Binning Land must include at least 80% Class 1&2 soils to be “similar” and “comparable” to the farmland being developed;*
 2. *None of the ag mitigation land can include any land subject to the Willow Slough Bypass right-of-way/easement; and*
 3. *For Yolo County’s ag mitigation, the developer must consider alternative ag mitigation land and/or in-lieu fees.*
 - b. *For Scenario 2: no specific additional conditions.*
 - c. *For Scenario 3: no specific additional conditions.*
 - d. *For Scenario 4:*
 1. *For the City’s ag mitigation, the Binning Land must include at least 80% Class 1&2 soils to be “similar” and “comparable” to the farmland being developed; and*
 2. *None of the ag mitigation land can include any land subject to the Willow Slough Bypass right-of-way/easement.”*

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:45 p.m.