

Approved Meeting Minutes
PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
9-28-09

ATTENDING: Bank, Beyaert, Cant, Coffey, Coomber, Guarienti, Harryman, Kaplan, Kirby, Madsen, Mercurio, Southworth, Vann, Walters, Williams, Peters
NOT ATTENDING: Hooper, Hudson, Shalaby
STAFF ATTENDING: Anderson, Barial, Gartland, James, Kenny, Pfuehler
GUESTS: Ted Radke, Doug Siden, John Sutter
PUBLIC: Norm Kidder, Dallas Harryman, Ellie Sutter, Jan Simulson

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

1. **Approval of Minutes:** The July 27, 2009 meeting minutes were approved with edits. PAC member Kirby moved and approval was seconded by PAC member Vann with a minor edit. Abstained: Bank, Beyaert, Coffey, Harryman, Mercurio, Madsen, Shalaby.

2. **Introductions:** Chair Guarienti asked PAC Members and District staff to introduce themselves as well as members of the public. Director Siden introduced new PAC member Jeremy Madsen who is also the Executive Director of the Greenbelt Alliance.

Jeremy Madsen extended his thanks to Director Siden and expressed his enthusiasm in becoming a new member of the Park Advisory Committee. PAC member Madsen gave a brief professional history about himself and his accomplishments which led him to become the Executive Director of the Greenbelt Alliance.

3. **Board Member Comments:** Board member Radke commented the State is taking money from the District as part of the budget compromise, but all in all the District seems to of weathered the storm this time around. He added the District will issue its first Measure WW bonds soon. He is emceeing a District-sponsored event at Carquinez Strait this weekend. He added he has been inspired by the Ken Burns series on National Parks currently airing on PBS.

PAC member Siden also commented about the Ken Burns series, as did Chair Guarienti who attended a preview of the series in Martinez which focused on John Muir.

4. **Public Comments:**
None.

5. **Presentations:**
a. **Proposal to Name Ridge Memorial Site at Morgan Territory Regional Preserve for Roger Epperson – Everett James, Park Planner, Planning/Stewardship/GIS**
Everett James, Park Planner, began with a brief explanation of the proposal to name a ridge site at Morgan Territory Regional Preserve for Roger Epperson, naming it Rogers Ridge. PAC member Coomber commented Roger Epperson was his biggest mentor. As District staff, Roger facilitated the placement of the wheelchair accessible gate at the main parking lot. He was a stickler about stewardship. Chair Guarienti commented Roger Epperson was a great guy and a great park ranger.

PAC member Coomber moved to support the staff recommendation and PAC member Beyaert seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

b. **Master Plan – Mike Anderson, AGM Planning/Stewardship & Development**
Mike Anderson, AGM Planning/Stewardship & Development passed around the cover from the original 1973 Master Plan. His presentation is intended to be a preview of the master plan process. The original master plan was reviewed by a citizens task force with 83 members. The District conducts a review of the plan approximately every ten years. AGM Anderson discussed the historical context which led to the creation of the District. The regional park concept began in 1866 with F. Olmsted. In 1934, the East Bay Regional Park District was established by an overwhelming majority of voters who agreed to tax themselves in the middle of the Depression to create the District.

Anderson displayed a map which is the basis for the planning process. In 1973, there were a number of dots on the map which are now developed parks. He also reminded the group the District did not extend fully throughout both Alameda and Contra Costa Counties in 1973.

As the District nears 100,000 acres, a new look at the master plan is likely for 2010. Anderson emphasized this would be

an update and NOT a re-write.

District staff have proposed the theme of “Environmental Equity” for the 2010 Master Plan update process. Throughout the process, there will be significant public outreach. Everything from focus groups to discussions with other conservation groups like Save Mt. Diablo, Urban Creeks Council, etc. Over the years, the District has conducted “park user surveys” and has worked with Strategy Research Institute to conduct more scientific based surveys. The District will also be doing outreach via new media, i.e. Twitter, MediaMonkey, etc. This outreach will help the District understand what policy issues need to be addressed. The District will also learn if its users have shifted throughout the two-county area. After compiling the information from the public outreach, the District will share a clear report with local governments. The District will need to work with city planners to ensure sufficient land is set aside for parks which are close to where people live.

District staff will also be looking for input from the PAC, particularly with regard to stewardship of cultural resources, planning and budgeting for capital development and maintenance (project pipeline process), and interacting with other agencies that have a common interest. This will be an 18th month process. Staff will make a presentation to the Board’s Executive Committee on October 22nd and will issue an RFP for a consultant facilitator.

PAC member Beyaert asked how “Environmental Equity” was being defined. Anderson explained this was an effort to confront the notion put forward by Golden Gate University Associate Professor Paul Kibel that District parks disproportionately benefit those who live in the farther out suburbs. The District has a large number of facilities in urban areas and should highlight them in a positive manner.

PAC member Walters suggested “Park Equity” might be a better theme. When he hears the word “environmental” he thinks of “pollution.”

Anderson added environmental justice is an effort address the concerns of those who live in areas underserved by positive environmental amenities and are most impacted by environmental degradation near their neighborhoods. The District would like to emphasize facilities and programs that work to support healthier environments for all East Bay communities.

Walters added he understands the intellectual point, but does not think “Environmental Equity” communicates it effectively. Anderson noted a good point was being raised.

PAC member Beyaert commented this was clearly a thoughtful proposal. He added the word equity is good, but environmental is a lot broader than parks and open space – it can cover everything.

PAC member Kirby added the District’s public outreach efforts will, hopefully, unearth the different wants, needs and desires for services by East Bay residents that may not have yet been articulated. He believes outreach should be broad and beyond conservation groups. He also cautioned the District should reach out to staff at local governments because they do a lot of land use planning.

PAC member Mercurio added local agencies should feel like they are partners with the District and the facilities should be accessible to all.

PAC member Kaplan suggested the theme of “Accessibility Equity.”

Chair Guarienti also wondered about access for multiple user groups.

PAC member Coffey agreed with the notion of access. It is not a question of equity and the District should not base the theme of their master plan around a disconnected associate professor in San Francisco. There is no need for the District to be on the defensive.

PAC member Kirby commented the District can and should use a forward looking, positive, community connected theme and not be on the defensive.

PAC member Madsen asked about the process and specifically how progress would be measured. What will be the benchmarks and what opportunity will the PAC have to weigh in, not just on a theme, but actually measuring the planning process against a set of goals. Anderson responded this was a good point and there will be an elaborate schedule. It has not been laid out yet. The PAC, however, will be an integral part of the schedule. The ideas from the PAC tonight and in the future will help staff clarify the process, goals and outcomes when presenting it to the Board.

Chair Guarienti asked the committee if they all have a copy of the current master plan. He encouraged members to read it

in order to provide constructive input. Anderson added PAC members can help the District with focus groups and public outreach.

PAC member Southworth added she does not believe the Kibel criticism of the District is on the minds of those who live in the East Bay. She wondered how long the updated master plan would be relevant. Anderson responded 10 years. Southworth continued the master plan should be balanced so the District does not lose sight of the need to protect wildlife when providing increased access.

Norm Kidder, public, suggested access should not be measured by use. Not everyone who currently has access to the parks uses them. The District should determine the difference between how many people in the community are using the parks vs. how many people want to use the parks. Some people it may not be interested in them at all.

PAC member Beyaert commented the word access is primarily location and secondarily transportation. He used the North Richmond Shoreline Festival as an example. There are hundreds of people who attend and they mirror the communities which surround the parks.

PAC member Kirby noted access is a challenging notion. There is a benefit to observing the protected open space of the hills even if someone is not interested in actually going into the parks.

PAC member Mercurio asked if more regional trails will be added to the master plan. Anderson added most were added to the updated master plan map as part of the Measure WW effort. Anderson continued the master plan map was a way to implement the Measure WW strategy. PAC member Southworth said she helped work on the updated map.

PAC member Beyaert asked if the District would be hiring an outside consultant. Anderson responded yes for at least the facilitation.

PAC member Williams added it is important to keep the park relevant to all residents. In his organization, they brought in a marketing consultant. It was helpful to have a fresh set of eyes look at his agency's relationship to the people they serve.

6. PAC Member Comments:

PAC member Kaplan announced Bay Nature's recent magazine includes an article about the District's 75th Anniversary. He also has written an article on shorebirds.

PAC member Williams announced the new library in Castro Valley will be open on October 31st.

PAC member Beyaert handed out the new Ferry Point Loop Trail Guide to the San Francisco Bay Trail in Richmond. EBRPD funded printing of the guide after its design was co-funded by the National Park Service, Richmond Convention and Visitors Bureau and Point Richmond Business Association

PAC member Mercurio announced the dedication of a bridge across Galindo Creek which filled a gap along the California Hiking and Riding Trail. A number of elected officials, including U.S. Representative George Miller, attended.

PAC member Southworth went to Pt. Reyes. She commented on a colorful mural painted on a car and thought it was a great marketing tool.

PAC member Kaplan commented about the rock at Coyote Hills.

7. Report from the Chair

PAC Chair Guarienti spoke about the sadness of the passing of Mike Shimansky. He attended Fresh Tracks at Garin, the August and September Executive Committee meetings, as well as the October Operations meeting.

8. Board Committee Reports

PAC member Peters handed out a written report about the Ecology Committee meeting she attended and proceeded to discuss the report thoroughly.

PAC member Walters attended the Finance committee meeting on PAC member Hooper's behalf. He went over some of the highlights of the meeting.

Chair Guarienti added Shimansky was a member of the Finance subcommittee. In November, PAC members will need to elect new officers.

PAC member Bank attended the Natural Cultural and Resources Committee and she thoroughly discussed her written report.

9. Status of Recommendations

No comments.

10. Old Business

None.

11. New Business

Chair Guarienti asked folks to take a look at the work plan, goals for next year and think about the election of officers.

12. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m. in honor of Mike Shimansky. There was a moment of silence.

Summary of Actions:

1. The July 27, 2009 meeting minutes were unanimously approved with minor edits.
2. The naming of a ridge in Morgan Territory was approved. In honor of Roger Epperson it will be named: "Rogers Ridge".
3. Think about goals for next year. Possibly move some October work plan items over to November.