

Approved Meeting Minutes
PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE
July 22, 2019

ATTENDING: Andrade, Best, Bueren, Brubaker, Corkin, Deschambault, Dieter, Godfrey, Gregory, Lacy, Nason, Rickard, Robinson, Skaredoff, Tsutsui, Williams, Yee

ABSENT: Burke, Ho, Obringer, Sanwong

STAFF: Pfuehler, Rasmussen, Barton, Bordtmann, Castile, Brede, Love, Kelchner, Cuero, Clay

BOARD: Dennis Waespi, Dee Rosario, Colin Coffey

PUBLIC: Mila Coffey, Kelly Abreu, Jeff Peters (Questa Engineering), Jana Sokale (Friends of Coyote Hills), Richard Bangert (Sierra Club), Carin High (Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge/Ohlone Audubon), Kwablah Attiogbe (Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District)

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

1. **Approval of the May 20, 2019 Minutes:** The May minutes were approved at the July 22, 2019 meeting. Motion made by PAC member Corkin. Seconded by PAC member Skaredoff. Passed unanimously.

Approval of the June 24, 2019 Minutes: The June minutes were approved with edits. Motion made by PAC member Williams. Seconded by PAC member Tsutsui. PAC members Bueren and Lacy abstained due to being absent.

2. **Introductions:** PAC Chair Bueren asked PAC members, staff and the public to introduce themselves.
3. **Board Member Comments:** Board Member Dennis Waespi reported he toured the parks on the 4th of July with Public Safety. He noted there were many people enjoying the parks. On July 13, the Park District held an event at the Concord Naval Weapons Station to celebrate the Navy's conveyance of 2,500 acres of land to the Park District. Waespi reported that at the July 16 Board meeting, the Board of Directors unanimously voted to discontinue the use of glyphosate at all picnic areas throughout the District and eliminate the use of glyphosate in developed park areas by the end of 2020.
4. **Foundation Update:** Erich Pfuehler, Government Affairs Manager gave the Foundation update. Pfuehler stated the 50th Anniversary Foundation Gala has sold out. Pfuehler said the Park District Survey in the field will be extended until after Labor Day. Of the 4,000 completed forms, 700 have submitted their e-mails to become members of the Regional Parks Foundation.
5. **Public Comments:**
Kelly Abreu passed a handout to the members regarding cleaning up sidewalks for Mission

Peak visitors on Antelope Drive in Fremont. He commented it took two years for the city to clear the sidewalk of grass and dirt for citizens to use.

6. Presentations:

(R) Coyote Hills Land Use Plan Amendment – Chris Barton, Environmental Programs Manager

Chris Barton, Environmental Programs Manager presented a PowerPoint about the Coyote Hills Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA). Barton explained Coyote Hills Regional Park is 1,200 acres. It is located in southern Alameda County in the City of Fremont along the San Francisco Bay Shoreline, and has been a park for about 50 years. In 2014, the Park District, through the Regional Parks Foundation, received its largest ever land donation, 296 acres, at Patterson Ranch protecting Coyote Hills Regional Park from the threat of urban development. This addition of land will expand the park by approximately 25 percent. The donation, valued at more than \$10 million, was the result of more than 25 years of negotiations between General Manager Robert E. Doyle and the Patterson family. Barton commented one of the main requirements of this donation from the Patterson family, which has a long ranching history, is for the agricultural heritage to be maintained for the future.

Barton thanked The Friends of Coyote Hills, Citizens' Committee to Complete the Refuge, and other local stakeholders actively involved in opposing multiple residential development proposals at Patterson Ranch. Barton stated recent projections show there will be a 30% population increase in the next 20 years. The boundary along the park is seeing more housing and commercial properties.

Barton explained proposed habitat restoration and enhancement types will include willow thicket, mixed riparian forest, oak savannah, seasonal wetlands and enhanced grasslands. Current existing site conditions include: 188.1 acres of ruderal grasslands, 0.96 acres of oak woodland, 11.6 acres of mixed willow riparian forest and 37.1 acres of freshwater seasonal wetlands.

Barton stated a flood management and habitat enhancement project covering about 100 acres in the southern part of the plan area will be constructed by Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. The restored creek zone is a flood control area. Currently, the area being farmed is close to the Paseo Padre frontage area.

Barton gave a brief overview of the Coyote Hills LUPA which begins with the Master Plan and is a blueprint for how the park can be developed in the future. The current LUPA is still valid, but staff are working to amend the plan for the new 300-acre area. The other part of the project is the Park Development Plan, which is a companion piece to the LUPA. The Park Development Plan includes new facilities such as: a new entry kiosk, parking area, restroom and picnic facilities, entry area native landscaping, signage, over four miles of new hiking and multi-use trails, and wildlife observation platforms. It also includes approximately 150 acres of habitat protection, restoration and enhancement. Trail connections would be provided to the San Francisco Bay Trail, as well as a connection to the City's proposed Dumbarton Bridge to Quarry Lakes and other regional trails.

Bueren asked if the Board of Directors will make CEQA findings at the point when it comes before them for consideration. Barton replied they will consider certifying the EIR

and approving the project, as well as adopting CEQA findings, mitigation, monitoring and reporting programs.

PAC member Andrade asked for clarification about the south wetlands area. Andrade asked if Alameda County Flood Control's work is part of the project. Barton replied the LUPA allows Alameda County Flood Control to do their work as planned and use the area for wetland expansion. The area currently floods. Flood Control plans to make the depressions deeper for more flood control holding capacity. When overflows occur, the water will spill out into the channel then go into the larger marsh complex and eventually out to Alameda Creek.

Corkin asked if the LUPA calls for replacing the existing waste station, and if the replacement will be funded with Measure WW funds. Barton replied this LUPA includes a blueprint for coverage of any utility and sewage type lines which need to be installed along the main frontage near the Visitor Center. The waste station will be a different project. It may possibly become part of a Visitor Center study that is still in the feasibility stage.

Tsutsui inquired about the section in the LUPA, called Planning for Climate Change. It anticipates changes to shallow zone ground water levels and ground water salinity, as well as expected changes to rainfall and temperature. Tsutsui wondered about the ecological response to those changes and if the oak savannahs would convert to wetlands or will there be a need for future mapping of those regions. Barton replied the depth of ground water will fluctuate based on sea level rise. The District doesn't control recharge from the upper watershed. Staff has studied the topography and knows where the higher sitting lands are, which happens to be where the Oak Savannah is located. They are planned in areas that are higher, dryer and less susceptible to sea level rise. Barton continued the plant palette in the lower areas will include salt tolerant plants.

PAC member Yee asked about the new park entrance and how the decision was made to build a 20-car parking lot. Barton replied the smaller parking lot is to serve a farm stand. Staff anticipate most park users will want to park in the new main staging area where there is a larger parking lot with more amenities and the nearby Tuibun Trail. Yee said many visitors park outside of the park to avoid parking fees. Barton replied the LUPA doesn't speak to parking lot charges. It is a conceptual layout for the parking lot, but it allows operational staff and the Board of Directors to decide if parking fees will be charged.

PAC member Deschambault asked if there are any chemical hotspots on the property. Barton replied there are some residual agricultural chemical traces. They were reviewed through the EIR process and a course of action has been identified. It is primarily an ecological health risk. Mitigation measures are identified to make sure those levels are not going to be a problem for ecological receptors.

Williams asked about the agricultural operation. He wondered what will be grown there and if it would be a concessionaire to the District. Barton replied there is an existing lease with an agricultural operator. It is certified sustainable organic farming. It is spelled out in the LUPA and will not be the typical industrial farming operation.

PAC member Nason asked if anyone has expressed concern about the contractor's house. Barton replied it is within the City of Fremont's jurisdiction and falls under their historic ordinance. Once the project is ready to proceed forward, District staff will need to go before the city to seek approval from their historic resources commission.

Skaredoff asked if there will be restrictions on where park users can go based upon some of the cultural resource areas. Barton replied the trails have been laid out to avoid the sensitive areas.

PAC member Brubaker asked if there is a strategy for off leash dogs. Barton replied under the current LUP and operation at Coyote Hills, dogs are allowed on leash in the areas specified. The rest of the park, since it is mostly sensitive habitat, are fully protected areas and not open to humans or dogs.

Public Comments

Kelly Abreu, Mission Peak Conservancy commented about parking. He suggested the District should charge to park at Mission Peak, but not at Coyote Hills.

Carin High, Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge and Ohlone Audubon Society commented these organizations have fought to protect the lands at Patterson Ranch for two important reasons: (1) to protect the existing parklands and wildlife from aversive tracts of adjacent development, and (2) to protect the incredible opportunity to expand and restore the historic Willow groves that extend from within the park to Patterson Slough all the way to Ardenwood Farm. This is a significant area in terms of nesting, songbirds, resident birds, other animals and neotropical migrating songbirds. The major concern is the negative impacts of human disturbance to wildlife species and wildlife community composition. Their recommendation is the parking be moved to the south of Patterson Ranch Road to serve as a buffer.

Richard Bangert, Sierra Club suggested carbon sequestering crops should be farmed rather than planting and harvesting row crops. Crops that are deep rooted and aren't completely harvested or fruit trees would be better for sequestering carbon.

Jana Sokale, Friends of Coyote Hills and Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge stated she would like to see the special protection features designation over the entire restored area, not just Patterson slough as it exists. She suggested the Patterson Slough Lookout Trail and Observation Platform be eliminated from the LUPA.

Recommendation: Motion made by PAC member Dieter to recommend the Coyote Hills Regional Park Land Use Plan Amendment as presented by staff move forward to the Board Executive Committee. Seconded by PAC member Rickard. The recommendation was approved unanimously.

(I) b. Measure CC – Jeff Rasmussen, Assistant Finance Officer

Erich Pfuehler, Government Affairs Manager provided background information on Measure CC. He stated a decision was made by the Board of Directors to include all 83 projects in the ballot measure as voted on by the public. Those 83 projects are very specific, and can

only be changed by a vote of the Board of Directors. Measure CC is in its last year of funds, \$3.2 million per year, much of it has already been spent, so there is very limited flexibility with the remaining funds that will be spent this year and a little bit into next year.

Jeff Rasmussen, Assistant Finance Officer offered to answer any questions about specific projects. PAC member Yee recommended staff include the remaining balance of unspent funds in the document.

Williams asked about a comment from the last PAC meeting about monies being distributed to serve low-income areas. Rasmussen replied this list was approved by the voters in 2004 and focuses on the parks in the most urbanized part of the Park District. Pfuehler added there was funding added in Measure FF for naturalists and recreation services to be based at Martin Luther King, Jr. Shoreline and Point Pinole, to purposely serve the disadvantaged communities.

Nason stated the intent was not to affect the Measure CC spending plan, but to remind the Board that this is an ongoing concern.

Recommendation: This was an informational item only.

7. PAC Member Comments

PAC member Rickard attended the Concord Hills Conveyance event. It was the largest, most exciting event he'd been to in a long time at the Park District.

Deschambault attended the Board of Directors meeting. She was impressed with how effective the Board is in handling and acting on issues.

PAC member Tsutsui attended the Concord Hills Conveyance event. He commented about wildfire smoke and staffs' exposure to it. He said there was confusion about whether there is a policy to protect worker's health and safety. Corkin replied it has been raised at a Board meeting. She believes it is being addressed by both the Board and staff. Board Member Waespi replied he shared in the PAC member's concerns and stated staff and Board members are working on this issue.

PAC member Best said it was great to attend the Concord Hills Conveyance event. She is pleased to see the project moving forward.

Board Member Rosario said he was impressed with the PAC members and the questions they've asked at this meeting.

PAC member Robinson attended the Concord Hills Conveyance event. She also attended the Board Field trip to Bay Point Regional Shoreline and learned about the restoration efforts there.

PAC member Skaredoff stated he is a commissioner on Contra Costa County LAFCo and they approved an out of service extension for water to install flush toilets at Bay Point Regional Shoreline. He also attended the Concord Hills Conveyance event and commented it was a great event.

Board Member Coffey thanked the PAC members for inviting the Board members to the meeting and barbecue.

PAC member Nason commented she attended the Concord Hills Conveyance event. She is pleased about the partnership with the people who work to educate the public about what happened at Port Chicago and the historic significance.

PAC member Williams mentioned he bought his granddaughter a bike and has been riding the Iron Horse Trail. He commented during the weekend it is extremely crowded at the Alamo/Danville portion of the Iron Horse Trail. He suggested it would be good to put extra signage out on the weekends.

8. **Report from Chair** – Bueren said during her vacation she visited parks in other countries.
9. **Board Committee Reports** – none.
10. **Old Business** – none.
11. **New Business** – none.
12. **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Summary of Actions:

1. The PAC approved the May 20, 2019 minutes.
2. The PAC approved the June 24, 2019 minutes with edits.
3. The PAC recommended the Coyote Hills Regional Park Land Use Plan Amendment as presented by staff move forward to the Board Executive Committee.