



REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
PROPOSED MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, October 25, 2017  
7:00 pm

**El Cerrito City Hall  
Council Chambers  
10890 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Recreation Department at 510-559-7000. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (28 CFT 35.102-35.104 ADA Title II).

**1. Roll Call**

Present: Chair – Glen Lubcke, Commissioners- Ben Chuaqui, Norman La Force, Tara McIntire, and Robin Mitchell

Absent: Commissioners Manish Doshi and David Zuckermann

**2. Commission / Staff Communications / Announcements** (*Informal reports on matters of general interest which are announced by the Park and Recreation Commissioners and City Staff*)

None

**3. Oral Communications From The Public**

None

**4. Council/Staff Liaison Announcements and Reports**

Mayor Pro Tem Quinto reported on matters of general interest to the Park and Recreation Commission, Council policies, priorities and significant actions taken by the City Council.

The regularly scheduled City Council meeting scheduled for October 17, 2017 was cancelled. Mayor Pro Tem Quinto announced that the City of El Cerrito has openings on every Board and Commission for 2018. Also, the City Council reorganization will happen on December 19, 2017.

**5. Approval of Minutes:** Exhibit 1: Meeting Minutes from September 27, 2017  
Approval of the September 27, 2017 Regular Meeting of the Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes.

Action: Moved, Seconded (La Force / Chuaqui) and carried unanimously.

**6. Presentation and Discussion of Bike Park and Trails Concepts:**

Presenter: Gary Hill, El Cerrito Mountain Bike and Cycling Coalition

Hill gave a presentation of a conceptual bike park and bike trails in El Cerrito as conceived by Mr. Hill and other local mountain bike advocates.

Hill presented the concept of creating multi and single use loop trails and a bike park in the El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area. This concept started to develop in 2012. The Hillside Natural Area's location provides an ideal connection point between El Cerrito and Wildcat Canyon, Tilden and other biking trails and roads. Hill presented the history of the development of the bike park and trail development concept. Hill presented a conceptual El Cerrito Hillside 4.5 mile multi-use cross country trail plan. He addressed the history of the acquisition by the City, with the help of Community Groups and Trust for Public Land of the Madera Open Space. Hill presented information about the Annual Hillside Festival and the inclusion of pop-up bike parts as a part of the event. Hill also spoke about the City of El Cerrito's Urban Greening Plan and the connection to the concept of developing the bike park and trails project. The major motivating factor for this plan is the interest of the youth.

Hill is promoting the idea and asking the City to consider singletrack loop trail that is more conducive to mountain biking than the current trails in the Hillside Natural Area. Hill provided information about mountain biking including fitness, nature, close to home access, what mountain bikers want, and reasoning for narrow singletrack trails. The involvement of youth could create a new generation of stewards for the Hillside Natural Area. Types of mountain biking trails were described and explained. Estimated costs were shared with the Commission. Hill's presentation put an emphasis on volunteer efforts and public support.

In addition to a loop trail, Hill presented the idea for the development of a bike park at the former EBMUD water tank site off of Snowden Ave.

There was a question from the Commission regarding City's liability and insurance needs for such a plan. The response was that bicycle use is not currently covered under the City's liability and insurance plans. If there are competing interests for the same area there would be further public process. If development of a bike park is a priority for El Cerrito residents, it will come out in the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan process. Hill believes an impact can be made without spending a lot of resources and he hopes this plan continues to have momentum.

Speakers:

Quincy Hill: lives in El Cerrito and is on the El Cerrito High School Mountain Bike Team. Bike parks provide a great way for youth and the Mountain Biking Team to exercise and socialize. Mountain biking is a big part of Quincy's life and he supports the idea of creating a bike park in El Cerrito.

Tobi Mankita: lives in El Cerrito, freshman at El Cerrito High School, Mountain Bike teammate of Quincy Hill, and a volunteer Junior Lifeguard at the El Cerrito pool. Enjoys biking in the mountains and enjoys being outdoors and be able to appreciate being away from the streets and cars. It's beautiful, there is wildlife and it is great exercise. The Hillside is easily accessible and increases activity for all ages. Tobi Mankita is able to travel to the Hillside without driving. If there was a new extended multi-use trail it would increase the usefulness of El Cerrito open space to many different user groups. He believes that there would be volunteer support to help maintain the trails.

Max Mankita: as an avid biker, supports the idea of having a bike park and extended trails in El Cerrito.

Isaac Mankita: lives in El Cerrito, is a bike commuter, and is a parent volunteer in the Junior Mountain Biking community. It would be great to not have to drive to locations to ride on trails.

Rebecca Millekin: lives in El Cerrito, parent of Tobi and Max Mankita. Having local access is a tremendous asset to our community where you don't need an adult and you do not need a car. Rebecca is an avid biker. Rebecca spoke specifically on accessibility and safety. The temporary bike park was a safe place. Riding on El Cerrito streets is not.

Violet Reed: member of the El Cerrito Junior Mountain Bike Team, bikes to school every day, is in favor of mountain biking and natural areas over street biking, especially considering safety and natural outdoor experiences.

Bruce Marvin: has lived in El Cerrito since the mid-90s believes this is a unique proposal- a trail system and safe haven. These trail systems increase value of life and wellness in El Cerrito. Developing a bike park is an excellent example of what youth in this audience tonight wants and needs.

Adele Ho: unincorporated Richmond resident, coach for the El Cerrito High School Mountain Bike Team, civil engineer, and hiker. Mountain biking has emerged as a popular sport and has a positive impact including value and respect for the environment and mixed use trails.

David Weinstein: President of El Cerrito Trailtrekkers. Weinstein acknowledged the years and dedication Hill has given to this plan and the acquisition of the Madera Open Space. Trailtrekkers unanimously supports the idea of a bike park. The committee has not reached consensus on sharing trail space with bikes. Weinstein is personally in support of the idea that trails and bikes can share trails, but not necessarily all of the trails as identified in the presented plan.

Jun Sunsur: believes it is critical to encourage and teach children and other youth to use open space recreational activities. The creation of a bike park will promote environmental stewardship. Volunteer support would be strong for this project.

Doug Streblov: resident of West Contra Costa County, unincorporated San Pablo/ Richmond area, composite team coach, environmental education background, and cycling coach. Streblov believes that the jewel of hillside area is underused and there is certainly interconnectivity potential.

Tom Gehling: lifelong El Cerrito resident and member of El Cerrito Trailtrekkers. Hill's presentation was a tremendous job well done. The El Cerrito Natural Hillside is unique- parts are wild and should remain wild to continue to provide home for many plant and animal species. Gehling would like to see work on existing trails - not just new trails. He believes it is called the natural area for a reason- and not all of it needs to be accessible.

John Garrison: head coach for El Cerrito High School Mountain Bike Team, resident of Kensington, his children attend El Cerrito High School. Garrison is asking for the community to stand in support of this plan. He expressed the constraint of having a limited time to get the team to places to ride. Practice is from 3-5pm. Where should the team practice? They currently use Wildcat Canyon and Tilden Park which are at least six miles away. Single track trails in this area do not allow bicycles- they are only able to ride on fire roads.

Drew McGaraghan: El Cerrito resident, very much in support of Hill's plan. Would love an in-town option and not have to commute to mountain bike. The temporary bike park helped his two children build confidence and skills. McGaraghan would really like to see a bike park come back to El Cerrito. There is a tremendous amount of enthusiasm and volunteerism that can be tapped into to maintain trails. The introduction of trails allows open space to be better natural areas. Right now the Hillside is full of invasive species, too much dead wood, inaccessible, and could be improved.

John Roberts: resides in Piedmont, assistant coach in the El Cerrito Middle School Team, and his son is a part of the team. As a parent, Roberts believes in promoting healthy minds and healthy bodies. It is very important for kids to get exercise as a part of their development. What is fabulous

about a bike park and trails near your home, it is accessible and is a win-win situation. This leads to better focus and better school work. Biking is an unsung hero of our energy crisis.

**7. Park and Recreation Commission 2017-18 Goal Setting and Work Plan Formulation**

This agenda item was tabled for the November 29, 2017 Special Park and Recreation Commission Meeting.

**8. Consideration to form a Sub Committee to Develop Recommendations for Hillside Natural Area Signs Verbiage**

Consider appointing two Park and Recreation Commissioners to work with City Staff and representatives from the El Cerrito Trail Trekkers to develop a recommendation to the full Commission on verbiage for the Hillside Natural Area Wayfinding and Rotary Trail Signs.

The City is ready to put the Hillside Natural Area Wayfinding and Rotary Trail Signs project out to bid. The City would like a couple commissioners to join staff and Trailtrekkers to develop a recommendation to bring back to the Park and Recreation Commission. Commissioner McIntire volunteered to join the subcommittee. Commissioner Zuckermann, although absent at tonight's meeting, contacted Chris Jones and agreed to volunteer on the subcommittee.

Motion to move to appoint Commissioner McIntire and Commissioner Zuckermann to the subcommittee to develop recommendations for Hillside Natural Area signs verbiage.

Action: Moved, Seconded (Lubke / La Force) and carried unanimously.

**9. Recreation Department Update**

Presenter- Sarah DiBenedetto, Recreation Management Analyst:

October 25<sup>th</sup> Unity Day:

Unity Day is celebrated nationally throughout schools as an opportunity to educate youth about being inclusive and preventing bullying. Teachers, child care staff and children dress in orange that day. Today, we passed out Unity Day bracelets to children from the City of El Cerrito at all of our child care sites and other youth programs. Special programming around preventing bullying was offered at each site in unique programming styles. Casa Cerrito preschool tie-dyed orange shirts with the children that they wore, and read "Spookly the Square Pumkin." Madera Afterschool program had the police department as a guest visitor and worked with the children on activities that unify their group.

October 25<sup>th</sup> West Contra Costa Study Workshop:

There was a West Contra Costa Transportation Study Workshop today, October 25<sup>th</sup> at the El Cerrito Open House Senior Center. The City of El Cerrito is part of the West County Accessible Transportation Study being conducted by consulting firm Nelson Nygaard and WCCTAC.

October 28<sup>th</sup> Halloween Carnival & Dance:

Saturday is our annual Halloween event at the Community Center, and a large crowd is expected. This year the High School's Interact Club is volunteering and assisting with building the Haunted House. The event will run from 1-4pm for younger children with a "lights on" time for the Haunted

House and a carnival. From 4:30-8pm the Haunted House will be geared to older youth and most of the carnival games will be pulled out for a dance.

November 1<sup>st</sup> Fun Day:

Our first Fun Day of the school year was October 9<sup>th</sup>. We had 50 children enrolled to participate at Harding and they had a fun-filled day. Fun Days provide an opportunity for children from different schools to come together and meet up with friends they don't get to see every day. Our next one is Wednesday November 1<sup>st</sup>.

This month, the Community Center has hosted a number of community events including the El Cerrito Art Association's Art Show, Contra Costa County's Fair Chance Employment Summit, and the Art and Culture Commission's Art Day Celebration.

Fall Specialty Classes continue, with this season's most popular youth programs being Karate, Beginning Gymnastics, and Intermediate Gymnastics. The most popular adult classes so far this fall are Zumba, Hatha Yoga, and Beginner Polynesian Dance. Winter/Spring program planning is complete, and we are excited to offer new classes including Rikudim (Israeli Folk Dance) and Gymnastics Gold beginning in January.

Presenter- Chris Jones, Recreation Department Director

November 18<sup>th</sup> Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan Public Meeting #1:

The first public meeting will be held on Saturday, November 18, 2017 9:30-11:30am at the El Cerrito Community Center. Public input is very important to the process and the City is hoping for a large turnout. The public can also take the online survey and there will also be an online forum for comments on specific parks and facilities.

There was a pre-bid meeting for the Swim Center renovations on Tuesday, October 24, 2017 at which seven contractors attended. Bids are due November 12, 2017 and the selected bid is scheduled to go to City Council for approval on November 21, 2017.

## 10. **Items For Future Agendas**

- a. Park and Recreation Commission 2017-18 Goal Setting and Work Plan Formulation (November)
- b. Ohlone Greenway Master Plan Overview (TBD)
- c. Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan (TBD)

## 11. **Meeting Adjournment**