



Meeting Minutes of
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, February 22, 2012
7:00p.m.

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

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1. Roll Call

Meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Lipson at 7:04 pm.

Commissioners Present: Leslie Goldstein, Seth Kaplan, Acting Chair Steve Lipson, Robin Mitchell, Margo Takemiya.

Commissioner Excused: Chair Doshi

Staff Present: Jerry Bradshaw, Public Works Director; Christopher Jones, Acting Recreation Director; Lori Teachout, Management Assistant

Councilmember Present: Rebecca Benassini

Vice Chair Lipson announced a change in the agenda to move agenda Item 6 to accommodate Jerry Bradshaw's schedule

6. Public Works Update/WW Projects: Jerry Bradshaw, Public Works Director

Bradshaw distributed copies of his presentation. He began with an overview of the East Bay Regional Parks WW Bond measure, which was passed by voters in 2008. Of the \$5 million bond measure, \$125 million was allocated to local agencies. El Cerrito was to receive \$1.065 million. Agencies can submit projects for approval each year. The deadline is March 31.

Because the City of El Cerrito does not have a parks master plan, the Park and Recreation Commission made some recommendations for WW projects, and Staff developed a City-wide informal survey. A tally of about three hundred responses identified land acquisition, Cerrito Vista Playground rehabilitation and Creekside lighting as priorities.

Land acquisition did not get much discussion at the Park and Recreation Commission, or at the City Council meeting, likely due to the limited amount of land available and the limited WW funds, even though rated high by people polled.

Commissioner Mitchell stated that small parcel acquisition should be considered and would like to see a list of available parcels. WW funding would not be the soul source for acquiring those, and recommended land trust a possibility for urban parkland acquisition.

Bradshaw said that land trust has been considered in the past. With lower land prices, he agreed land trust worth pursuing again, adding that Measure WW does not require land improvement. Commissioner Mitchell has been working on a proposal and is willing to share her work.

Bradshaw stated that of the 300 surveys returned, landscaping, lighting, and public gardens received the most votes.

In 2009 the Council priorities were:

1. Replacement of the Cerrito Vista play structure
2. El Cerrito's contribution to the JPA for the Gilman Field project
3. Further study for four projects: Creekside Park, Central Park, Huber Park, and a cursory study of land acquisition issue

Of the \$1,065,840 available originally, there is remaining \$551,576.

Additional project suggestions for the fund balance are:

1. Cerrito Vista field rehabilitation
2. Quick Start Tennis Court
3. Batting cage (This project is near completion with alternate funding)
4. Development of the Casa Cerrito land for a small play field
5. Acquisition of the Portola Gymnasium (It has recently been determined that it would not be available).
6. New fields at Portola site (after demolition of the building some flat areas can be created by grading).
7. Rehabilitation of other existing fields
8. Installation of artificial turf somewhere

In a discussion of the feasibility of securing Portola Middle School, Bradshaw explained the Measure WW requires a 25 year tenure of a site. He did not foresee the school district entering into a 25 year agreement with the City, although the City does have first rights to the purchase of the property when it becomes available.

Bradshaw explained that artificial turf at Cerrito Vista may be problematic because there would be no way to control access to the fields, such as dogs, barbecue pits, and vehicles. In regards to Cerrito Vista field improvement there is a question as to whether the high school varsity will be using the high school field. Vice Chair Lipson stated that the high school coach prefers Cerrito Vista.

Discussion followed about Quick Start tennis Courts at the Cerrito Vista Tennis Courts. It was explained that the proposed site was not big enough. Staff and the El Cerrito Tennis Club are entertaining suggestions for other sites.

Discussion followed about Huber Park:

Bradshaw referred to the long list of ideas City Engineer Tony Gokoffski, Associate Engineer, was working on. He explained that the costs were estimates only. He recommended that the planning process be re-visited and developing a timeline. He also explained that Measure WW would not fund a Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Councilmember Benassini added that:

1. Melanie Mintz, Environmental Services Manager, had submitted a grant proposal for an Urban Greening Grant.
2. There is a map that shows different vacant parcels in the City of El Cerrito

M. Selph, 7451 Stockton Avenue, spoke suggesting that Fairmont Park be used as bocce ball courts. She noted that only three people in the survey suggested bocce ball courts.

2. Commission / Staff Communications / Announcements: None

3. Oral Communications From The Public: None

4. Council Liaison Report: Councilmember Rebecca Benassini

Councilmember Benassini reported that on February 6, the City Council discussed the long-standing law allowing the slaughter of animals in backyards. The Council decided to table this item. The Housing Element was adopted.

At the February 21, 2012 Council Meeting there was a mid year budget review. Revenue from property taxes did not go up as had hoped. The Redevelopment Agency was dissolved February 1, 2012. A seven member board will review the agency's debt obligations.

5. Approval of Minutes: (Action: Approve) Exhibit 1

Meeting Minutes from January 25, 2012

Commissioner Mitchell corrected the section 10 of the minutes about land trusts to read "help the City purchase land for parks" instead of "to provide money to landowners."

Commissioner Takemiya moved that the minutes be accepted as amended. Commissioner Goldstein seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

7. Discussion of prospective West Contra Costa United School District topics for March 28, 2012 Park and Recreation Commission meeting

Jones reported that the WCCUSD Engineering Officer was not able to attend tonight, but would like to meet with Staff about the usage of the El Cerrito High School Tennis Courts and about access to the newer locked campuses. Vice Chair Lipson asked how reciprocity works now that the gym is closed. Jones explained the reciprocity agreement does not name specific facilities. The exceptions are in extreme cases, where there is a cost of the other organization, e.g., the high school usage of swim center. In that example we bear larger part of the agreement and charge hourly rates for pool. Vice Chair Lipson requested a list of usage agreements.

8. Staff Update: Christopher Jones, Acting Director

1. The Summer Camp Guide has been delivered to residents' homes in El Cerrito and neighboring areas.
2. Presidents Week Camp is at Harding and has reached capacity at 60 students
3. On March 20, 2012 the City Council and WCCUSD School Board will have a joint meeting,

Commissioner Kaplan asked about the effect Albany's pool opening has had on El Cerrito's. Jones responded that a significant effect has not had a dramatic effect so far.

9. Items For Next Agenda

- a. WCCUSD -Engineering Officer
- b. Stephen Pree, Environmental Quality Programs Manager to give a program over view

10. Meeting Adjournment 8:06 pm.

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