

**PARKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
JOINT STUDY SESSION WITH PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, FEBURARY 25, 2009**

PRCS COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson White, Vice Chairperson Wright, Commissioners Lynch, Slusser, Swope (arrived 7:35pm), and Truscelli

PRCS COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Joseph-Hover

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Radcliffe, Vice Chairperson Gee, Commissioners Borgens, Cronin, Holt, and Seybert

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Smith

GUESTS PRESENT: Joan Chaplick of MIG, Inc., Cherlene Wright, Lilia Ledezma

STAFF PRESENT: Director Corinne Centeno, Superintendents Gary Hover and Chris Beth, Administrative Assistant Denise Monroe, Planning Manager Jill Ekas, Principal Planner Tom Passanisi, City Attorney Stan Yamamoto

Chairperson Shawn White called the special meeting of the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission and the Planning Commission to order at 7:03pm in Room 1 of the Community Activities Building, 1400 Roosevelt Avenue, Redwood City, California.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January meeting of the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission were approved as mailed.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None

CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence was received.

ITEM 1 – NEW GENERAL PLAN – JOINT STUDY SESSION WITH PARKS, RECREATION & COMMUNITY SERVICES AND PLANNING COMMISSION

PRCS Chairperson White welcomed the Planning Commission (PC) to the special joint meeting. He explained the purpose of the meeting was to provide an update on the General Plan process for the PRCS Commission and the opportunity for both groups to review and discuss the Parks and Facilities Needs Assessment and how to incorporate its recommendations into the new General Plan. Chairperson White asked that all Commissioners and City staff introduce themselves and turned the meeting over for a brief background presentation.

Project Manager Tom Passanisi gave an overview of the process for developing the new General Plan speaking to the seven mandated topics of land use, transportation, housing, conservation, open space, noise and safety as well as the economic development, historic resources, cultural and human services elements contained in the current General Plan. He highlighted the General Plan guiding principles, the various community outreach efforts and previously prepared draft elements. To date, much of the work has concentrated on corridor areas anticipated for the most change as well as the bay front and higher density neighborhoods. Between February and April the General Plan consultant will be writing draft elements and work will begin on the Environmental Impact

Report. He noted that the City Council has determined that the General Plan should be available for their review in September or October of 2009.

Director Centeno introduced Joan Chaplick of MIG, Inc. who completed the Park and Facilities Needs Assessment that collects and analyzes data on existing conditions, emerging trends, service level comparisons with other cities, and the results of community input efforts. Ms. Chaplick noted that she looked at existing conditions from both a citywide and smaller planning area basis to analyze whether certain parts of the City had a greater need.

The City as a whole meets its three acres of active community parkland/1,000 resident standard however, several of the planning areas fall below this standard when considered separately including Downtown, South Redwood City, South East Redwood City, and East of 101. Also of note is the fact that 57% or 12 sport fields are School-owned property versus 43% or 9 fields that are City owned. Ms. Chaplick reported on key findings and variances with other benchmark cities with respect to various park and/or facility amenities. Outreach to community included: a web-based questionnaire; a bilingual (Spanish/English) survey; focus groups as well as interviews with key partners, staff and City Council members. Key themes from these activities included: land acquisition; community park/multi-use sports complex; linear parks and pathways; consistent facilities/parks amenities; fundraising and strategic partnerships.

Staff responded to clarifying questions from Commissioners on the Parks and Facilities Needs Assessment.

Public Comment

Chairperson White asked for any public comment at this time. Lilia Ledezma spoke in support of the idea of more dog parks in west Redwood City.

Review and Discuss Recommendations

Staff facilitated a discussion on the recommendations contained in the Park and Facilities Needs Assessment, the Draft Parks and Open Space General Plan Element, and items that have surfaced as part of the General Plan outreach process explaining that the recommendations had been pulled together in a worksheet document for purpose of the discussion. Planning staff indicated they will bring back the draft portions of the General Plan document to the PRCS Commission prior to its presentation to the Planning Commission and City Council.

There was general agreement among the Commissioners that the Needs Assessment, draft Park and Open Space Element, and issues raised in the General Plan outreach provided an adequate background for the work of the General Plan consultant, and that the resulting documents should be specific enough to guide staff work. Commissioners also agreed that the document should: express an openness to creating non-traditional recreation and community spaces; take advantage, where ever possible, of Redwood City's existing natural and built environment; provide for improved access to the City's bay front; and underscore that success will depend on strong public and private partnerships as well as exploration of grant funding.

In addition, Commissioner Gee recommended mention of privately-owned recreational spaces such as the ball fields at Pacific Shores and the Police Activities Building in the General Plan. Staff clarified that the Assessment provides various numbers of acres needed based on current and future populations as well as by planning area in response to a question by Commissioner Cronin. Commissioner Gee cautioned that it was important to use the same terminology consistently from one City document to another. He specifically noted that the Needs Assessment's Downtown area is larger than the area used in the Downtown Precise Plan. Commissioner Slusser noted that the Commission felt it was important to consider the sphere of influence of Redwood City including

North Fair Oaks and Emerald Lake Hills. Commissioner Swope commented on the method used to determine planning areas including major boundaries and census tracts. Commissioner Borgens asked that more rounded acreage figures be used in the General Plan. Commissioner Seybert supported recommendations regarding the potential use of Hetch-Hetchy Right-of-Way and would like to see more specifics on useful tools to secure additional park space, as well as the economic development benefits of creating a large multi-field sports stadium. Commissioner Wright indicated that more specific implementation items can be included as action items in the draft element.

Several Commissioners spoke of support for a teen center with ideas ranging from supporting creation through another group, using currently vacant space in the Downtown, and the need to involve young people in its development. Commissioner Gee and others commented on the differences between what the Planning Commission has heard about the East of 101 area and input from the needs assessment with respect to park development. Chairpersons White and Radcliffe both wanted to see a strong statement on public access to the bay with Ms. Radcliffe suggesting that the Port be involved rather than the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

-Chairperson White invited everyone to attend the KABOOM-sponsored playground renovation on Saturday, March 7 at 8:30am to 3:00pm at Mezes Park. Over 150 volunteers are needed to help with the installation of new play equipment.

The joint meeting of the Park, Recreation and Community Services and Planning Commissions adjourned at 9:27pm. The Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission will reconvene at 7:30pm on Wednesday, March 25, 2009 at the Community Activities Building, 1400 Roosevelt Avenue, Redwood City, California.