

**THE CITY OF COSTA MESA  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
FAIRVIEW PARK CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**August 19, 2013**

***These meetings minutes represent an “action minute” format. A copy of the meeting audio tape can be obtained at the Public Services Department front counter located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Costa Mesa City Hall.***

The Fairview Park Citizens Advisory Committee of the City of Costa Mesa, California met in regular session at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, August 19, 2013, in the Emergency Operations Center at 99 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, California.

**1. Call to Order: Chairman Mehren**

**2. Roll Call**

Voting Members Present:      Chairman Richard Mehren  
   Vice Chairman Steve Smith  
   Member Terry Cummings  
   Member Brett Eckles  
   Member Dennis Popp  
   Member Lee Ramos  
   Member David Stiller

Officials Present:                      Mayor Pro Tem Stephen Mensinger, City Council  
   Liaison  
   Council Member Sandra Genis, Alternate City  
   Council Liaison  
   Commissioner Robert Graham, Parks and  
   Recreation Commission Liaison  
   Mr. Ernesto Munoz, Public Services Director  
   Ms. Fariba Fazeli, Interim City Engineer  
   Mr. Bart Mejia, Parks Project Manager  
   Mr. Robert Staples, Contract Administrator  
   Ms. Alfa Lopez, Management Analyst  
   Ms. Denise Cedillos, Administrative Secretary

**3. Presentations**

## Harbor Soaring Society

John Rittenhouse, a Harbor Soaring Society (HSS) Member, presented this report. The HSS has been in existence for 50 years and is governed by the Academy of Model Aeronautics. The 85 HSS members are covered by \$2.5 million liability insurance; approximately 180 non-members also use the flight runway. All flyers obtain a \$25 City permit generating \$6,600 in City revenue. The HSS actively participates in the community including educational outreach and Fairview Park maintenance.

Member Smith asked where else in Orange County can one practice the hobby. Mr. Rittenhouse responded Irvine Lake and El Toro; both locations have speculation that they will not be around much longer.

Member Eckles inquired the reasons these areas have been eliminated in other cities. Mr. Rittenhouse replied the other properties were privately owned and are at their mercy. HSS could not afford to buy a portion. In response to a question from Member Eckles, Mr. Rittenhouse stated membership is cyclical; 85 members is the low point and he expects it to rise.

In response to public comment, Mr. Rittenhouse elaborated on the following: noise has not been a factor at Fairview Park; HSS has a DB meter and technician to monitor noise impact. If a flyer is in violation, either the HSS or any passerby can report the individual to the City and have their permit revoked. The permit has rules that Park Rangers can enforce. However because of budgetary reasons, members have not seen Park Rangers often but that is not affected by HSS.

Member Ramos queried if the club has reached out to the County or any other educational programs. Mr. Rittenhouse shared HSS has programs with Davis Magnet School and Wilson Elementary School.

Council Member Genis inquired if the pads that have been bolted to the dirt near Vernal Pool 7 had to do with the HSS. A resident stated there are two (2) pads so that model helicopters can land without disturbing the bluffs. Chairman Mehren added the pads are not associated with the HSS.

In response to questions from Mayor Pro Tem Mensinger, Mr. Rittenhouse shared HSS does not keep track of how many members are Costa Mesa residents. To encourage non-members to join, the club holds raffles every month, provides good incentives, has a booth at the OC Fair, and promotes it to every flier who utilizes the field.

Chairman Mehren thanked Mr. Rittenhouse.

### Waldorf School

Ms. Denise Ogawa, a parent and faculty member of the Waldorf School of Orange County (WSOC), presented this report. She indicated Fairview Park is a meaningful extension to their campus, which is located off Canyon Drive. WSOC primarily utilizes the Southwest quadrant yet occasionally expands to the Northwest quadrant and across the bridge on Placentia Avenue for science lessons, nature studies, and to conduct experiments; the frequency of usage ranges from daily to once a week. The WSOC appreciates the improvements made in Fairview Park so far such as the observation deck and seats created along the walking path. It would be okay with development that continues along a path that complements the open landscape and spirit of the park.

There were no questions asked. Chairman Mehren thanked Ms. Ogawa.

### Roles and Responsibilities of the Fairview Park Citizens Advisory Committee and the Parks and Recreation Commission

Member Smith requested this item be added to the agenda for clarification. Mr. Mejia presented this report. He indicated both groups are subject to the Brown Act, receive public comments, can only address items listed on the agenda, and may consider matters referred to them by the City Council, CEO, or Director.

Some of the currently ongoing projects that were previously approved may not have been presented to the Fairview Park Citizens Advisory Committee (FPCAC) prior to going to the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) because of timeline limitations including grant and completion issues. Mr. Ernesto Munoz added the FPCAC will receive an informational presentation on every new item that pertains to Fairview Park. The FPCAC can comment on it, the comments will be forwarded to the PRC, and the PRC can recommend action to City Council. The lighting at Fairview Park has been approved by City Council and is in the design phase. The FPCAC will receive a presentation once the environmental studies have been completed.

In response to a question by Member Cummings, Mr. Munoz recommended speaking with or e-mailing Chairman Mehren should committee members wish to add an item to the agenda.

In response to an inquiry by Council Member Genis, Mr. Munoz indicated the proposed parking lot at the end of Pacific Avenue will be addressed in the quadrant review. Council Member Genis requested that future items be listed individually on the agenda so that the public will know what is being discussed, instead of grouping them in quadrants.

In response to a resident inquiry, Mr. Munoz shared the 500-11 policy currently in place outlines the criteria for suggesting changes to the Master Plan. The same process is used to recommend that no changes take place.

**4a. Public Comment**

Public Comment was requested by Chairman Mehren.

1. Gilbert Collins, Costa Mesa  
It is important that committee members express their feelings towards the basic “passive” goals of the Master Plan. If not, he can see a City Council promoting things other than what the committee or other people want.
2. Resident, Costa Mesa  
Concerned the proposed list of changes to the Master Plan reflects the opinions of a small group of people. It is important to have a mechanism so the citizens can decide en masse if those changes should be added.

3. Resident, Costa Mesa  
What is the impetus to want to change the Master Plan?

Chairman Mehren stated he wasn't able to answer that. PRC Chairman Byron de Arkal stated the Master Plan needs to be reviewed every few years to determine if it still meets the needs of the community.

Council Member Genis asked where in the process will the committee be looking at community need and how will it be determined. Chairman Mehren stated staff will have to provide information on it.

4. Resident, Costa Mesa  
When is the census data going to be brought in?

Chairman Mehren requested it be agendaized for future meetings.

Mr. Munoz indicated the FPCAC was formed to represent the community and speak as to its needs. It may request any information necessary to make decisions regarding proposed usage of Fairview Park, such as the number of parks and census data, and staff will provide it.

5. Dara Hendrix, Costa Mesa  
Ms. Hendrix is a resident on Pacific Avenue bordering Fairview Park. She stated there is a significant issue related to security after hours; police do not respond in a timely manner. Her driveway is often used as a turnaround. When speaking of improvements, proper consideration to secure them also needs to be discussed.

Mr. Munoz stated the CEO has authorized two (2) part time positions to be added to the park. Their hours will not be in the evening; the Police Department will have to be relied on for that time. The proposed parking lot/cul-de-sac will address some of the issues Ms Hendrix discussed.

6. Cindy Black, Costa Mesa  
The committee selection is disingenuous. She is concerned on habitat conservation and deviations from the Master Plan.
7. Danielle Laughlin, Costa Mesa  
Ms. Laughlin inquired regarding the limits to minor amendments to the Master Plan and the timeline since it is already out of date.

Chairman Mehren referred Ms. Laughlin to the work plan timeline.

8. Patrick Quentin (spelling), Costa Mesa  
Mr. Quentin queried if the Plan calls for parking off Canyon Drive. He stated there is already a speed problem on Wilson Street and expressed concern about the affect a parking lot will have on increased traffic.

Chairman Mehren replied it does not call for a parking lot off Canyon Drive at this time; traffic is a big concern, not only on Wilson Street.

9. Dana Fisher, Costa Mesa  
Ms. Fisher would like to know where residents can determine where they legally stand regarding decisions being made on parking lot spaces and other changes.

Chairman Mehren stated he would also like some information on that.

10. Terry Welsh, Costa Mesa  
Mr. Welsh is the president of Banning Ranch. He shared the San Diego Fairy Shrimp is in the highest category of federally listed and endangered species. He asks the Committee to prioritize looking into the recently enhanced trail that goes through it.

Chairman Mehren recommended it be agendized as soon as possible.

In response to a resident inquiry, Chairman Mehren shared he prefers e-mails be sent to [fairviewpark@costamesaca.gov](mailto:fairviewpark@costamesaca.gov) to be included in the packet provided Committee members.

Council Member Genis added that under the Brown Act, the public is entitled to see any materials presented to the Committee. Chairman Mehren indicated they will be uploaded to the website. Staff provided copies of all items given to members including resident correspondence; these copies were located at the front table of the EOC entrance.

Member Cummings expressed the displayed proposed changes to the Master Plan list incorrect quadrants. Chairman Mehren suggested Member Cummings e-mail Ms. Lopez the quadrants he has listed so that she may proceed to make changes.

**4b. Correspondence received from the public**

Committee members and officials were provided copies of correspondence received to read at their pleasure.

**5. Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION made by Member Eckles to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2013 Fairview Park Citizens Advisory Committee meeting as written, second by Member Ramos, carried eight to zero with one abstention by Member Cummings.**

**6. Old Business**

**No items**

**7a. Review Master Plan – Southwest Quadrant**

Mr. Mejia and Ms. Ingrid Quon provided PowerPoint presentations on this report.

Mr. Mejia explained the Southwest Quadrant is 95 acres and comprised of two (2) geographical areas: the upper mesa and lower mesa, with approximately 70-foot difference between them and six (6) entryways. Existing conditions include the geology, type of soil, and hydrology changes throughout the entire site. Archeological significance includes human colonies in the upper mesa dating back to 1500 BC. Fairview Park improvements started in the early 1980s. Mr. Mejia explained the natural water flow of the area.

Ms. Quon is a Costa Mesa resident and one of the primary LSA Associates, Inc biologists who conducted the burrowing owl and vernal pool delineation surveys in 2006. She presented an archeological background on the Southwest Quadrant and its current conditions. She indicated its biological resources include seven (7) vernal pools and two (2) vernal marshes. Over ninety percent (90%) of vernal pools in California are gone; they are now primarily protected by the US Fish and Wildlife Services. Species in the quadrant include the white-tailed kite bird, a California Species of Special Concern and the California gnatcatcher, a California Species of Special Concerns and federally threatened.

Chairman Mehren thanked Ms. Quon.

Mr. Mejia described the projects that have been completed in the Southwest quadrant per the Master Plan. He explained future projects that have been approved by the City Council.

Mr. Mejia presented the two (2) concepts for the proposed parking lot; the plants proposed to be utilized are currently found in Fairview Park. In response to a question posed by Council Member Genis, Mr. Mejia stated the plants will be irrigated with reclaimed water from the Orange County Sanitary District.

Constraints in this quadrant include Placentia Avenue, steep slopes, bluffs and erosion, archaeological resources, existing fill soils, drainage and flooding, vernal pools, existing park facilities, and existing utilities. Opportunities are remnant native plant species, archaeological resources, trail linkage, a link to Talbert Nature Preserve, and the vernal pools.

Chairman Mehren thanked Mr. Mejia. Member Stiller indicated when the parking lot lighting report is presented by staff, he would like to know where the existing provisions for safety lighting are located.

Member Popp queried how the rain water will be collected from the upper bluff and transported to the lower vernal pool. Mr. Mejia replied the water will be collected at the south end of the park through catch basins and carried along an underground pipe parallel to the existing multipurpose trail to Pond A.

Council Member Genis asked for clarification on the drainage and plant palette chosen as opposed to the scrub in that area. Mr. Mejia explained the purpose is to utilize plants that currently exist in the park.

Mayor Pro Tem Mensinger inquired when the parking lot and play area were approved. Mr. Mejia clarified approval was given when the Master Plan was approved. Regarding funding, the City received a federal grant that was approved last year. Mr. Munoz added the Master Plan referred to was approved in 2001 or 2002. PRC Chairman de Arkal stated his recollection is it was the 2001 Master Plan.

Member Cummings commented there could be a better choice of native trees than the selected palate. Chairman Mehren agreed on the need to look into trees that will grow in that area. Mr. Munoz indicated that can be passed on to the PRC.

Public comment was requested by Chairman Mehren.

1. Valerie O'Brien, Costa Mesa

Curious why the City wants to place little entrances that will bring more traffic, place the playground far away, and why it doesn't route water to trees instead of a creating pipe to Pond A. The parking lot plan poses a possibility for future planning.

2. Bill Bowman, Costa Mesa  
There is a total lack of concern of the residents nearby. Placing lights will increase the problem of people congregating after hours. The proposed parking lot will make flooding worse; it will be about 50 feet (50') from the most eroded part of the slope and poses a lot of danger. Two-thirds (2/3) of the parking circle should be cut off to really make it ten (10) spaces. The City already has emergency access; it does not need it there
3. Gilbert Collins, Costa Mesa  
Requested the meeting be arranged differently and speakers stand up during presentations. Shelters are necessary in the play area. The parking lot can be placed closer to Placentia Avenue; the proposed design lacks innovation. Lights are not necessary for a park closed at dusk. He requests a summary of grants being used. Indicated he thinks the biological report by Ms. Quon was copied; he wished for a written summary of what she presented.
4. Bess Bowman, Costa Mesa  
Additional traffic and lights will raise the possibility of a lawsuit against the City. The proposed parking lot is too close to the bluffs. It is possible major slope erosion has started; and requests an update from soil engineers before the plans are finalized.
5. Jim Tillman, Costa Mesa  
A new parking lot is not necessary. The existing parking lot rarely gets full. What is needed is a nature preserve. He expressed concern for residents on Pacific Avenue.
6. Dara Hendrix, Costa Mesa  
A parking problem is present. Multiple cars park in front of her property and consume drugs and alcohol. Resident's driveway is used as a turnaround area which has caused damage to two (2) private vehicles.
7. Deborah Sado, Costa Mesa  
Strongly against the proposed playground: it does not make sense to build a playground a long distance from the bathroom, especially with children present.
8. Resident, Costa Mesa  
The proposed parking lot plan is 'piece-meal'. Before using design elements for the parking lot, the Committee should discuss parking for the entire park.
9. Erin Sloan, Costa Mesa  
Resident requested that speed bumps and 3-way stop signs be added to Pacific Avenue at Wilson Street if traffic will increase. By adding a parking lot, the City will be completely changing the culture of the street.



10. Geoff West , Costa Mesa  
Mr. West suggested placing a bathroom in the center of the entryway closer to the playground.
11. Dana Fisher, Costa Mesa  
An emergency turn around is not mentioned in the originally adopted Master Plan. Ms. Fisher would like to see a parking lot plan with specifications that support the size of ten (10) spaces.
12. Resident, Costa Mesa  
A parking lot will increase traffic and create an unsafe environment for children. A new parking lot and turnaround is not needed.
13. Harold Weitzberg, Costa Mesa  
There is no room for soccer and ball fields if the Committee is discussing parking spaces and bathrooms; it should be pulled from the agenda now to save time on future meetings

**7b. Regular Meetings**

Chairman Mehren shared a problem with the meeting time. Mr. Munoz elaborated on an expressed concern that meetings would coincide with General Plan workshops.

Member Eckles indicated the FPCAC meetings can still be held on Wednesday, if staff is available, in a different location.

Council Member Genis expressed concern for members of the public who want to attend both.

Committee members elected to schedule FPCAC meetings on the first Wednesday of every month; staff will provide location availability.

**8. Committee Member Reports**

Committee member reports were requested by Chairman Mehren.

Chairman Mehren reminded Committee members the proposed parking lot presentation was informational. Members can attend the PRC meeting as citizens should they want to comment.

Member Popp requested residents who expressed disruption in the park after hours contact him. He also objected to adding more agenda items. The committee is not to look back on what has been done but to look at what they want done in Fairview Park.

Chairman Mehren stated he was hoping the FPCAC would make a recommendation to the PRC to rethink the plan of the parking lot at the end of Pacific Avenue. There were enough questions brought up that more information is needed to satisfy citizens.

Member Popp made a motion to postpone any advice to the PRC relative to the parking lot until staff presents more information, Member Stiller second, and a vote was requested.

Mayor Pro Tem Mensinger indicated that this item was not listed in the agenda. Chairman Mehren requested it be added to the next meeting agenda. Mr. Munoz indicated public comments on the park lighting and proposed parking lot will be forwarded to the PRC.

Council Member Genis wanted to verify the vernal ponds are being delineated; she saw the flags up so there is progress for those concerned. She also wants to verify that when the bollards and cable are put up, it will be consistent to represent what the US Fish and Wildlife included in the Master Plan that was submitted to them, including the 10-foot buffer. She referenced Federal Register page 646, 12/07/07, page 706 8.6.

Chairman Mehren added the City was to protect the vernal pools properly and make sure is in conformance with that.

No further reports were heard.

**9. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m. to the next regular scheduled meeting on Wednesday, September 3, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. Location will be forthcoming.

Submitted by:



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**ERNESTO MUÑOZ**  
Public Services Director