

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

September 4, 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 4th 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 Wednesday, September 4, 2013, in the Neighborhood Community Center Adams Room at 1845 Park Avenue, Costa Mesa, California.

1. Call to Order: Chairman Mehren

2. Roll Call

Voting Members Present: Chairman Richard Mehren
 Vice Chairman Steve Smith
 Member Ron Amburgey
 Member Brett Eckles
 Member Dennis Popp
 Member Lee Ramos
 Member David Stiller
 Member Anna Vrska

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
 Mr. Bart Mejia, Parks Project Manager
 Ms. Yolanda Summerhill, Jones & Mayer, City
 Legal Counsel
 Ms. Alfa Lopez, Management Analyst
 Ms. Denise Cedillos, Administrative Secretary

3. Informational Presentations

No items

4a. Public Comment

Public Comment was requested by Chairman Mehren.

1. Gordon Bowley, Costa Mesa
Mr. Bowley requested to make a presentation on the Youth Sports Association at next month's meeting.

Chairman Mehren requested it be added to the agenda for October 2.

2. Kim Hendricks, Costa Mesa
Ms. Hendricks referred to pages 3 and 28 of the Fairview Park Master Plan to illustrate the Committee's goal. She stated the biologist showed what is there only after it was allowed to erode. She expressed she is not afraid to take it to court.
3. Bill Bowman, Costa Mesa
Mr. Bowman stated the proposed playground and parking lot would pose a danger and attract congestion that Pacific Avenue cannot support. It is very close to the bluffs which are eroding at a dramatic rate. The parking lot could be moved and sized to the original Master Plan.
4. David Laughlin, Costa Mesa
Mr. Laughlin recommends that preserving the park as an open space be forwarded to City Council with any recommendations by the Committee. He would like to know what the public can do to communicate with the Committee; he gets the sense they are not being heard.
5. Erica Norgard, Costa Mesa
Ms. Norgard queried the number of pre-manufactured playgrounds versus natural play areas currently in Costa Mesa.
6. Harold Weitzberg, Costa Mesa
Mr. Weitzberg is concerned with having toddler playgrounds because of the lack of bathrooms. The parking is ill-conceived and would have a significant impact on Pacific Avenue. He suggests no changes to the park and improving the passive qualities that it has.
7. Steve Pope, Costa Mesa
Mr. Pope shared next year is the 150th anniversary of national parks. The committee can be working towards aligning Fairview Park with this and preserving it as a nature preserve for perpetuity.

8. Larry Corder, Costa Mesa
Mr. Corder would like the park to remain as passive as possible. He indicated communication is not as well as it should be so he is re-opening his website (www.cmfairviewpark.com) and offering it for usage by the public and City.
9. Jordan Strickland, Costa Mesa
Mr. Strickland will be hosting Meet the Mayor on September 12, at 6:00 p.m., at 2303 Pacific Avenue. He stated if the park is illuminated it will attract more traffic; parking for visitors may be an avenue but not at the end of Pacific Avenue.
10. Devon Lucas, Costa Mesa
Mr. Lucas shared that residents near Fairview Park have to recognize the impact changes could have for them but also see the potential for the entire City. He would like to see nature preservation, parking, lit pathways, an amphitheater, and sports fields – perhaps in the northeast quadrant.

4b. Correspondence received from the public

Chairman Mehren stated the Committee is listening to the public and reads the correspondence received but is not at a point where decisions are being made.

5. Approval of Minutes

MOTION made by Vice Chairman Smith to approve the minutes of the August 19, 2013 Fairview Park Citizens Advisory Committee meeting as written, second by Member Popp, carried eight to zero.

6. Old Business

No items

7a. Review Master Plan – Northeast Quadrant

Mr. Mejia presented this report and explained the Northeast Quadrant is the smallest of the four (4) quadrants comprising approximately ten (10) acres. All trails are user defined and there are four (4) user defined entryways. Existing conditions include top elevation of approximately 70-feet above sea level, a relatively flat upper mesa, sandy silt soil, and a steep slope from Placentia Avenue to Canary Drive. The quadrant is bordered by Placentia Avenue to the west, Fairview Channel to the south, and a residential neighborhood to the north. There is a difference in elevation in the areas close to the golf course and Placentia Avenue. Two (2) main waterlines run east to west; the area drains south and west towards Fairview Channel. Archeological site CA-ORA-506 is located from the train station towards the north end of the park. Biological sensitivity is low.

The Fairview Park Master Plan includes an overlook area around a loop trail that starts on Canary Drive going south and a multipurpose trail. The multipurpose trail would require a different alignment than the user defined trail to be ADA compliant. Proposed is a 3-foot wide DG path switchback trail that wraps around contours of the slope.

City Council has approved funding to add steps at end of Canary Drive; the project is near the completion of its design and hopefully will go for bid and start construction in the next 2-3 months. Current projects include a signalized pedestrian and bicycle crossing next to Fairview Channel; the design and construction of landscape medians on Placentia Avenue; and decorative crosswalk and other improvements to the south of Fairview Channel.

Constraints in this area include the difference in elevation of approximately 8-feet to the top of park. The main lines at the top are for east Costa Mesa and the rest of the communities to the south. Opportunities include Master Planned trails that provide connection from the upper end to Placentia Avenue. The Master Plan also identifies an area adjacent to homes approximately 100-feet in width and recommends it be landscaped and irrigated for fire prevention.

Chairman Mehren thanked Mr. Mejia.

In response to a question posed by Vice Chairman Smith, Mr. Mejia stated the archeological constraints require that proposed improvements be done under the approval and supervision of an archeologist.

Member Ramos inquired if this procedure was done when the trains were placed in their quadrants. Mr. Mejia stated he was unaware but when the multipurpose trail that leads to the bridge was built they did the required study. Mr. Mejia confirmed all quadrants have had the study.

Member Popp queried if the proposed grasses will be watered with existing lines or if new ones will be placed. Mr. Mejia responded that the only area that will be irrigated is the proposed buffer between the homes and 100-feet south of it; the rest of the area will grow naturally.

8. Committee Member Reports

Committee member reports were requested by Chairman Mehren.

Member Eckles stated the mission of the Committee is to look at the existing Master Plan to see if changes can be made; it should evolve over time. He disagrees with Mr. Weitzberg's comments that the City has adequate ball fields. The northeast quadrant can be looked at to solve this problem. There is something here for everyone: open space, playgrounds, and active use.

Member Popp shared he agrees with Member Eckles and Mr. Lucas- the Committee is here to find out what can be done for the population. In response to the resident question of what can be done to influence the committee, he invites the public to meet with him directly so that he can talk and listen to them. He has met with Orange County Model Engineers to hear how they have helped with events at Fairview Park and the sports association on how they can contribute to the City.

Member Vrska shared she would like to see data about sports fields and has been doing some research she can present at a later meeting. She had a chance to meet with Mr. Fitzpatrick who presented the costs to pay schools for field usage. She welcomes additional help and requested Member Eckles provide any numbers he has.

Chairman Mehren requested that staff prepare information on how many different sports groups are available and the number of people involved. Mr. Munoz replied the information is readily available and some user groups in the City have a good handle on that including Mr. Bowley and Mr. Eckles. He can gather and bring it to the Committee.

Member Popp requested that information be broken down to the number of users from Costa Mesa. Vice Chairman Smith added the Committee has already received some information on that: the presentation given at the July 17 meeting indicated 3 more soccer fields would be needed by 2025. Member Eckles shared he would like to present numbers on youth athletes in the City and requested it be added to next meeting's agenda.

Member Stiller requested the information and its sources be available to the committee and public before the meeting. Mr. Munoz responded indicating there is a website for the Fairview Park Citizens Advisory committee that includes agendas, minutes, and other documents; it is located within the City's website. Member Stiller requested it be further announced and advertised in the Daily Pilot and the Daily Minute.

In response to a question posed by Chairman Mehren, Member Eckles shared every user group that has permits has numbers that can be provided.

Member Stiller stated the City is unique in that it has a low number of residences in developed property; he would like to know if this is projected to be shrinking or growing.

In response to Member Smith's comment, Member Vrska indicated the data is limited and only takes into account parks, not the schools, community centers, or other amenities available.

Member Amburgey stated competing studies could be done but the bottom line is most sports are on school sites; Fairview Park represents 50% of all park land in

Costa Mesa. In response to public comments that the Committee is not listening, Member Amburgey indicated he reads all the correspondence but may not agree with it. TeWinkle Park includes fields and gets used on the weekends; Fairview Park could not be designed differently to get less usage.

9. Director's Report

Mr. Munoz presented this report. He indicated that numbers, demographics, and projections that are available are included in the Open Space Master Plan. The Open Space Master Plan was produced years ago and the City Council has charged the Parks and Recreation Commission with updating it. The Open Space Master Plan is also available on the website. That is the information available at this point; any updated information would require the City to obtain a consultant. The Committee can review it and determine if it suffices. If not, it can direct staff to take the item to City Council to request approval for funding to retain consulting services.

Member Stiller queried how many years ago the Open Space Master Plan was updated; a resident responded two years.

Mr. Munoz stated the City had retained services of biologists to identify and locate the vernal pools westerly of Placentia Avenue. The report included the assessment of the conditions of the vernal pools as well as guidelines to mitigate any damages that may have occurred. It has been forwarded to US Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS). Once the City receives their response, it will be provided to the Committee for their comments and then forwarded to the Parks and Recreation Commission for recommendation to City Council.

On September 5, the City contractor will begin the installation of cable railing at the top of the bluff to dissuade people from using it because of its sensitivity to erosion.

As mentioned by Mr. Strickland, Mayor Righeimer has called for a meeting on September 12, at 6:00 p.m., to receive input from concerned residents relative to Master Plan improvements at the south end of Fairview Park.

The City Council authorized staff to write grants for 3.5 million dollars to move forward with Master Plan improvements at Fairview Park. Some of the grant money will be used to substitute money available from the General Fund to be able to do improvements at other parks and areas in the City.

In response to a question from Member Popp, Mr. Munoz stated USFWS has indicated they will need at least 2 weeks to make a recommendation based on what was provided by the biologist. All committee members were given a copy of the submitted report, it has been uploaded to the website, and copies were made available for the public. Any new information will be uploaded to the website.

Vice Chairman Smith queried if we are bound to execute the recommendation made by USFWS. Mr. Munoz replied USFWS will weigh in on the alternatives provided them and provide the City with direction as to what is acceptable to them. The vernal pools are federally protected so we will have to abide by that. USFWS may weigh in on all alternatives so it is up to the Committee to decide which is more feasible to execute.

In response to Member Popp's suggestions, Mr. Munoz stated the Committee will be notified once the report comes in and if it wants to hold a special meeting staff can arrange that.

Member Ramos inquired if there are any previous reports from USFWS. Mr. Munoz replied USFWS has been involved in reports previously; Council Member Genis stated that there was a previous report and showed her copy of it. Mr. Munoz requested Council Member Genis provide staff a copy to be distributed to the Committee.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m. to the next regular scheduled meeting on Wednesday, October 2, 2013, at 6:00 p.m., at the Neighborhood Community Center, Victoria Room.

Submitted by:



ERNESTO MUNOZ
Public Services Director