

OPEN SPACE AND ECOLOGY COMMITTEE

AMENDED MINUTES

Wednesday, February 5, 2014 6:30pm
Community Meeting Room
Brisbane City Hall
50 Park Place, Brisbane, CA 94005

Call to order

- Chair Salmon called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM

Committee members present:

- Court, Ebel, Fieldman, Hayuk and Salmon

Committee members absent:

- Sweeney

Staff members present:

- Management Analyst Muñoz

1. Adoption of the agenda.

- Adopted

2. Oral communications for items not on the agenda

- N/A

3. Dead tree removal process discussion with Maria Saguisag-Sid

- Saguisag-Sid went over the tree removal process and permitting process.
- Property lines must be determined before removal of a tree to ensure ownership.
- There are trees that are protected such as certain species types and heritage trees. The tree species are California Bay, Coastal Live Oak and California Buckeye. If a tree is determined that it should not be removed then a permit will not be issued.
- Submitted permit information is verified by a site visit.
- Most permits for private residents are accepted. A tree removed from a private resident is not enforced to be replaced. For public property trees are replaced at a one-to-one ratio. The permit process takes 3 to 10 days. There is no fee for the permit.
- Salmon: What is a special quality that would deny a permit? Saguisag-Sid: One example if there is a nest in a tree, we don't want to disturb the birds nesting in the tree.

- Salmon: Does a heritage tree ordinance still exist? Saguisag-Sid: This issue has not occurred in the time that I have been involved with the permitting process.
- Hayuk: What is the difference between a heritage tree and a protected tree? Salmon: A heritage tree is a historic tree in the community, the pine tree on San Bruno Ave. and Santa Clara St. and certain redwoods can be a heritage tree.
- Fieldman: Wanted to discuss the process of dead tree removal adding that the trees on Valley Dr. are dead. Saguisag-Sid: The process to remove these large trees is difficult due to funds available to both remove and replace the tree.
- Fieldman: The dead Monterey pine can pose as a public hazard. After being infected by Bark beetle and the tree dies it can fall. Fieldman added that it is a fire hazard.
- Ebel: Is it possible that insurance companies will pay for tree removal if it is a liability? Saguisag-Sid mentioned that this would cause the city to pry into private information of community members; also this would be difficult to implement.
- Salmon: Can the city help with costs? For example if the tree does not have to be replaced right away. Saguisag-Sid will look into this.
- Court: What trees will replace dead Monterey pines? Saguisag-Sid: There is a list of large tree species.
- Salmon asked: What is the cost to replace a tree? Saguisag-Sid: A couple of hundred dollars.
- Fieldman: I get a notice from the fire martial to cut the lawn each season, do businesses get these notices? Saguisag-Sid said she thinks they do. Fieldman would like for this type of notice to be sent to businesses to give them incentive to remove trees that are a fire hazard.
- Salmon: The main goal is to remove dead Monterey pine to ensure the survival of trees that are not yet infected. Saguisag-Sid will speak with council about this.
- Ebel: There should be a tree replacement program that replaces trees elsewhere if not directly where one was removed from.
- Court suggested that we contact a tree removal services to inquire about a bulk rate.
- Fieldman expressed concern about sudden oak death. It is a statewide problem. It should be determined if the dying oaks on Bayshore blvd. have this disease. Fieldman will send a map with the exact location of these trees to Saguisag-Sid.
- Salmon asked is the city has an inventory of the trees in Crocker Park not owned by the city. Saguisag-Sid replied that we do not.
- Salmon: Would the committee like to pursue removal of the dying Monterey pine and other diseased trees? All unanimously agreed.
- Court said all the trees that are diseased need to be identified, she will make an inventory.
- Salmon: Debris needs to be properly disposed of. Saguisag-Sid said in the renewed franchise agreement debris removal and street cleaning will be included.

4. IFGU tree planting event

- Muñoz gave updates on the event.
- IFGU tree grant program is giving the city 7 free trees. We will be planting 4 Magnolia ‘Samuel Sommer’ in the planters and 3 Pyrus kawakamii (Evergreen pear) in the lawn.
- Salmon: Will the Magnolia ‘Samuel sommer’ trees will be tall enough to create a canopy. Muñoz said they will. ‘Samuel sommer’ reaches 30 to 40 feet in height and a canopy spread of 30 feet.
- Salmon: Have the roots of the previous trees rotted out in the planters? Or will they have to be dug up? Muñoz said root barriers have been placed in the planters, thus there has been work done

since removal of the last trees. Muñoz will double check with staff that is going out there to remove the dead trees in the lawn.

- Salmon: What is a root barrier? Ebel: A root barrier is a heavy duty plastic collar that is placed in the hole where the tree is planted; it forces tree roots to grow down before laterally so it prevents roots from lifting the pavement.

- Fieldman: Are there enough volunteers? Muñoz: We have 15 volunteers, which makes about 2 people each tree.

- Salmon: How big are the trees and how big to the holes have to be dug? Muñoz: The trees are in 15 gallon pots. The hole has to be at least 2-2.5 times the size of the pot.

- Ebel: Will there be soil amendments? Muñoz: Fertilizer pellets will be added into the hole at the time of the planting. Rather than using store bought soil, additional soil needed will be native soil.

- Ebel: Will there be a tree care plan? Muñoz: It was contingent on the grant that a 2-year tree care plan was submitted. IFGU may do site visits periodically to check the trees.

- Salmon would like to amend the rental agreement of the park picnic tables so people will not hang objects off trees and swing on them. Branches have been broken off trees in the park in the past.

5. Liquid fuels storage- Fire code changes

- The City Council did not discuss this topic in their meeting this past Monday.

- Ebel: Caution should be taken around areas that contain protected species or mountains that can easily catch fire.

- Fieldman: Will the fire code changes apply to propane storage used at homes? Ebel: It only applies to larger scale storage.

- Ebel: Language should include how the environment and people will be affected.

- Salmon: Should a letter be sent to City Council? Ebel suggests a list of environmentally sensitive areas would be helpful to include.

- Salmon: Is there liquid fuel storage currently at Crocker Park? Salmon would like for a memo to be sent to council to ask them to strike Crocker Park from the list.

- There should be concern about wildlife interface zones.

6. Quarry Rd. clean up

- Fieldman: There is a lot of trash at the ad-hoc skate park. Fieldman cleaned up some items a few weeks ago and found; animal feces, spray paint cans and a cement additive can. Fieldman also discussed with Lisa Greenlee that people were using this area as a restroom and lunch stop, where they may be littering.

- Fieldman: There should be 2 more trash barrels on (with lids), Quarry Road and possibly a sign. Second, there should be a clean up day.

- Salmon: Who currently empties the trash barrels that are out there? Muñoz will check on this.

- For the clean up day, can we get a city truck to haul out the waste?

- Who owns that area of land? Fieldman believe that it is the State, Fish and Wildlife service.

- Ebel will ask Greenlee about truck drivers having lunch out there. A letter should be written to the Quarry operator to let their staff know.

- Salmon stated that the biggest issue is the ad-hoc skate park and the littering they do.

- Fieldman mentioned we need to get state or county permission to post a sign. The sign would encourage users of the park to stop littering.

- Hayuk said the other solution is to remove the skate park.
- Muñoz will look into how to get a sign.
- Salmon mentioned that the ownership of that area is uncertain, so it is difficult to get enforcement such as an officer.
- Muñoz: Should we do this clean up day for Earth Day in April? Committee members would like to continue to do habitat restoration on Costaños Canyon for Earth Day.
- Salmon asked the committee members if they would like to pursue both events. All unanimously agreed.
- Muñoz will contact Parks and Recreation to coordinate Earth Day at Costaños Canyon.
- Quarry clean-up will be done during the spring.

7. Fossil Fuels Divestment

- Fieldman: Some cities are divesting from fossil fuels such as, Seattle, Berkeley and San Francisco.
- The City of Berkeley resolution can be used as a template to write a letter for Brisbane.
- All committee members unanimously agree to submit a divestment letter.
- Fieldman will work with Schillinger and Muñoz to draft a letter.
- Fieldman is not sure when City Council will discuss this topic, Monday nights she is unable to make meetings and would like for another member to attend.

8. Review of last years work plan.

- For a carbon footprint calculator: Ebel previously had permission from Berkeley to use their calculator.
- Court and Salmon will work on the invasive species brochure.
- Fieldman and Hayuk will work on a questionnaire for restaurants for the polystyrene ban.
- Council should be addressed about this topic to mention that, this will not cause financial hardship on local businesses.
- The questionnaire that is developed should be no more than 3 questions long.
- Fieldman: A consultant was supposed to report back about code changes. Muñoz said the new codes have been postponed until July. This topic will be held until July.
- Salmon would like and update on CAG next meeting.
- Salmon proposed an adopt-a-block program to help with litter accumulation.
- Ebel suggested that presentations can be given to schools about littering. Ebel will contact the school about this. Fieldman volunteers to present.
- UPC should be encouraged to clean-up the roads.
- A memo will be drafted to council about littering issue.
- A fine for littering sign may be posted.
- The dumpsters on Lagoon Rd. and Tunnel Ave. have contributed to the problem.

9. Non-toxic stump removal

- Ebel found information about non-toxic methods to encourage stump removal.
- Ebel found the method using a high nitrogen fertilizer the first year, and a carbon source such as sugar the second year to be more scientifically sound.
- This method would potentially be used for the acacia trees that Peter Stiehler cut down to prevent re-sprouting.
- Muñoz will pass this information for review to Sweeney and Stiehler.

10. Miscellaneous

- We have one new OSEC applicant: Dr. Michael Abney. Hayuk and Salmon have renewed. Court will not renew.
- DEIR comments are posted online.
- Invasive species ordinance moved to next meeting.

11. Approval of the minutes.

- Approved.

5. Adjournment.

- Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM

*Public comment on the agenda items is welcome at the discretion of the Chair.