Open Space and Ecology Committee

August 26, 2015

Agenda

OPEN SPACE AND ECOLOGY COMMITTEE

AGENDA

Wednesday, August 26, 2015 6:30 PM
Community Meeting Room
Brisbane City Hall
50 Park Place, Brisbane, CA 94005

1. Adoption of the agenda

2. Oral Communications*

3. Presentation by Mark Heath of Shelterbelt Builders, contractor that performed Vegetation Management of Upper Brisbane Acres for 2015 per adopted plan

4. Chair and committee member matters
    a. Discussion of recreational access to Upper Brisbane Acres open space

5. Consider making recommendation to Council to adopt Climate Action Plan

6. Subcommittee reports
    a. Community Festival
    b. Letter to City Council requesting a statement of opposition to fracking
    c. Report on the California Conference on Climate Action Planning

7. Review of OSEC work plan

8. Staff updates: Council discussion of Brisbane Acres Zoning Regulations at the August 20 meeting, Natural gas/methane leak mapping, and Draft Climate Friendly Purchasing guide for City of Brisbane.

9. Approval of the minutes

10. Adjournment

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

Adoption of the agenda

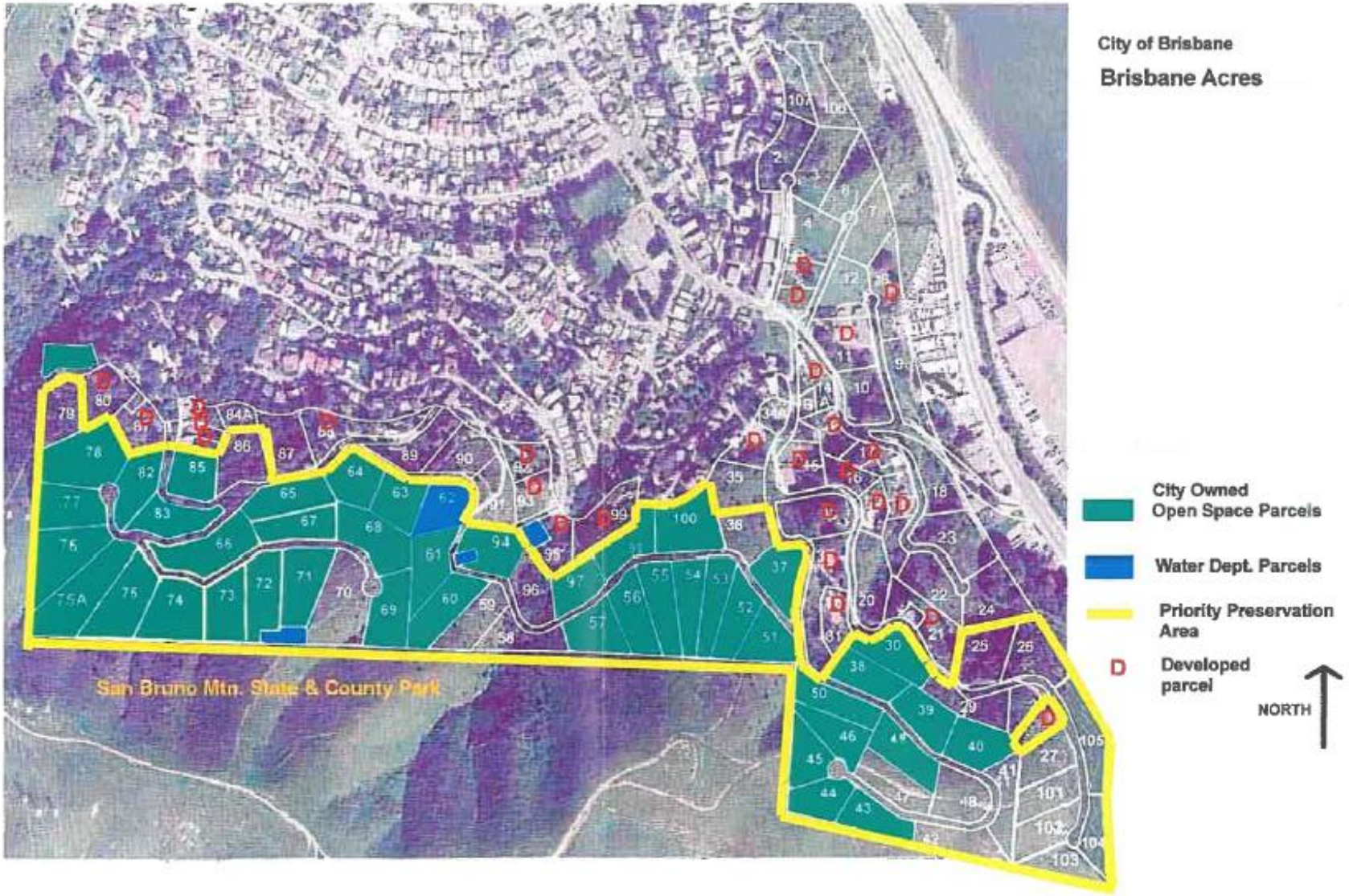
Oral communications

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

Presentation by Mark Heath of Shelterbelt Builders, contractor that performed Vegetation Management of Upper Brisbane Acres for 2015 per adopted plan

Chair and committee member matters

a. Discussion of recreational access to Upper Brisbane Acres open space



Lots 42 and 79 are pending purchase from the city.

Consider making recommendation to Council to adopt Climate Action Plan

Subcommittee reports

a. Community Festival

b. Letter to City Council requesting a statement of opposition to fracking

c. Report on the California Conference on Climate Action Planning

Letter to City Council requesting a statement of opposition to fracking

Open Space and Ecology Committee
The City of Brisbane

Honorable City Council Members
City Hall 50 Park Place
Brisbane, CA 94005

Dear Council Members:

The Open Space and Ecology Committee (OSEC) has discussed hydraulic fracturing (fracking), and its effects on ecology. Even though Brisbane's local ecology is not directly impacted by hydraulic fracturing, we are still concerned that the downstream environmental impacts will affect Brisbane. We are writing to encourage the City of Brisbane to join other cities and municipalities that are taking action to oppose hydraulic fracturing.

Hydraulic fracturing is a process used to extract natural gas and or oil trapped in shale and coal beds that are otherwise inaccessible. The energy companies dig wells, first drilled vertically, then horizontally, deep under the earth's surface. They then pump a highly pressurized mixture of water, chemicals and sand (slurry) down into the wells causing the rock to fracture, releasing gas and/or oil in large quantities. As with any enterprise, there are pros and cons. The energy companies would like us to believe that the pros outweigh the cons.

The pros are obvious. Locally produced gas and oil is less expensive and reduces dependence on foreign resources. Energy companies are hoping to produce enough gas and oil to eventually export; each well can deliver 300,000 barrels of gas a day. Lastly, it creates thousands of jobs.

The cons are quite concerning. Currently there are approximately 500,000 active hydraulic fracturing wells in the US..; each well can be fracked up to 18 times. A fracking job requires 1 to 8 million gallons of water and 40,000 gallons of chemicals. Fresh drinking water is used for hydraulic fracturing, which is trucked to the well sites. By the time a well is closed it has used up to 72 trillion gallons of water and 360 billion gallons of chemicals. The energy companies are lucky if they can clean up half of the slurry, the rest is left in the ground to dissipate. The energy companies are not required to disclose what chemicals are used, and some sources have noted caustic and radioactive chemicals.

The energy companies' claim there is no risk that the slurry could leach into the ground water. Unfortunately, studies show that methane concentrations are typically17 times higher in the drinking water near hydraulic fracturing sites than elsewhere. This has led to nearly 1,000 reports of water contamination surrounding areas where fracking operations have occurred, resulting in a number of health issues when the water is ingested. Recovered slurry is left in open pits, when evaporation occurs VOC's (volatile organic compounds) are released into the air, dramatically decreasing the air quality by creating ozone and acid rain.

Additionally, researchers from the USGS and the Oklahoma Geological Survey specifically mentioned that hydraulic fracturing contributes to earthquakes. Oklahoma's earthquake frequency has increased from three per year to hundreds per year from 1990 to 2009. Living in California where we are prone to earthquakes, it makes no sense to weaken the ground's integrity with hydraulic fracturing.

The OSEC sees hydraulic fracturing as a potential for environmental disaster. Cheaper gas and oil can be a benefit, but after reviewing the information, it seems prudent to err on the side of caution. Even though it may not initially affect Brisbane's ecosystem that is not the case for other cities that have to fight the powerful energy companies to stop hydraulic fracturing. We feel that Brisbane should support those cities. Please consider adopting an ordinance to ban hydraulic fracturing in the City of Brisbane.

Thank you so much for your help.

Sincerely,

The Open Space and Ecology Committee

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Notes on Work plan from July meeting

- Salmon would like to continue to have two to three restoration days per year. Next year there could be a spring and fall habitat restoration days instead of in June.
- Salmon would like to ask for council support in purchasing Levinson and Peking Handicraft properties.
- OSEC would like to know when the lot coverage letter will be addressed by council.
- Salmon would like to add contracting work to be done on Firth Canyon to the work plan.

Review of OSEC work plan

1. CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Climate Action Plan subcommittee/full OSEC and staff to develop plan using metrics from the RICAPS model and consultants. Upon adoption by Council, work on implementation.

2. VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Review and approve vegetation management plan for Brisbane Acres. Plan to indicate which parcels of land in the Acres need to be mapped, abated for weeds and receive restoration efforts.

3. CONSERVATION OF LANDS

Earth day- Habitat Restoration Day

Quarry Rd. Clean-up day

Bicentennial Walkway Clean-up day (?)

4. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Preserve Levinson and Peking Handicraft properties - Letter sent to Council, and properties included in San Bruno Mountain PCA application to ABAG

Paving of yards, permeable vs non-permeable surfaces- OSEC subcommittee drafted letter to Council, staff to edit and return to OSEC for approval

Lot coverage requirements re: interior courtyards in the Brisbane Acres zoning ordinance – Letter sent to council (Council scheduled to review Brisbane Acres zoning in August)

5. EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Education and Outreach Subcommittee

Local wildlife education

Day in the Park- Community Festival

Bike to work day

Lipman Science fair

Other publications through City News/Star/ Cable TV/ City Website and social media sites

6. MISCELLANEOUS SUBCOMMITTEES AND TASKS

Green Building Subcommittee – Input on Title 24 and Green building implementation – Currently on hold

Sustainability Subcommittee – Educate the public on Sustainability and conservation – Baylands Sustainability Framework review completed

Littering Education – Educate the public on littering including schools

Staff updates

- Council discussion of Brisbane Acres Zoning Regulations at the August 20 meeting
- Environmental Defense Fund nomination page for methane gas leaks

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OPEN SPACE AND ECOLOGY COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes

Wednesday, July 15, 2015 6:30 PM

Community Meeting Room

Brisbane City Hall

Park Place, Brisbane, CA 94005

Call to order:

Chair Hayuk called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

Committee members present:

Abney, Ebel, Hayuk, Keogh, Salmon and Vladimirova.

Committee members absent:

Fieldman

Staff members present:

Deputy Director of Public Works Kinser

Management Analyst Muñoz

1. Adoption of the agenda

Agenda adopted.

2. Oral communications

3. Chair and Committee member matters

a. Attending the California Conference on Climate Action Planning

- The California Climate Action planning conference is August 12-13 in San Luis Obispo. Ebel would like to go and asks if some of the costs could be covered. Kinser will check about incidental costs associated with the conference. Salmon moves to give Ebel $200 toward the conference, seconded by Keogh.

b. Pancake breakfast and plant sale at the Mission Blue Nursery is on August 9, from 9am-12pm.

4. Presentation from Ramona Arechiga, Natural Resources Manager of SMC Parks Department on Vegetation Management in the Habitat Conservation Plan area

- Kinser mentioned Arechiga has offered to come to present San Mateo County Parks, restoration efforts on San Bruno Mountain.

Arechiga presents:

- The mountain is undergoing scrub conversion on the mountain, which means loss of habitat for butterflies. Not all of the conversion is occurring in high priority areas.
- Coyote brush, bitter cherry and other natives, not just invasive species are being targeted for removal.
- Hayuk asks if conversion from grassland to scrub be considered natural succession.
- Arechiga answers: Grazing pressure and change in disturbance pattern can cause succession. Occurrence of fire has decreased; lack of fire does not reset the system. Lack of grazing and fire accelerates the process even more. Prescribed fire is not a management solution at this time. Smoke is a major safety consideration as well as air quality issues.
- South East Ridge map: fennel is an issue in SR1, red dots are Callippe observations, and blue dots are observations of Mission blues. The dots are representative of sightings; there could be other existing populations.
- Grasses that are tall grow above host plants for butterflies and make sightings difficult.
- Abney asked why there are not sightings where host plants are. Arechiga answers that the GIS data is approximately eight years old and the map is in need of being updated.
- Priority treatment areas were determined from a study by the Creek Side Center for Earth Observation/ Creek Side Science; the report will be available in August.
- Working with the USFWS to do seed experimentation. Viola has been very difficult to propagate and will make efforts when given a permit.
- A team of two to four people using cut and paint and mechanical removal methods for restoration efforts.
- Areas that contain summer lupine are priority areas since it is a summer host plant for Mission Blue.
- SR02- There was scrub removal last year with planting done after. This area is prioritized for work this year to continue the work.
- At Owl and Buckeye canyons the plan is to treat scrub and work with San Bruno Mountain Watch for replanting efforts.

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- OB5 and 6: the technical advisory committee identified lupine in OB 5. Scrub will be treated in this area that is two years or less of age. OB6 also had a sighting of lupine and will need brush removal.

- Ebel asked if herbicides will be used. Arechiga said it is an important tool to continue using; they target invasive species through cut and paint or targeted application. Herbicide used depends on the plant, reports online show what herbicides are used. They don't spray during windy days or rainy days.

- Ebel asked if blue butterflies she has seen could be Mission Blue. Cabbage butterflies can be mistaken as the Mission Blue Butterfly.

- If you hike in April, May and June there are other butterflies to see.

- Salmon asked if Callippe Hill will be turned over to the county. Salmon would like and update on this. Arechiga said the closest update won't be until the end of the year. No update on the McKesson property.

- SBMW will be awarded restoration contracts. Other contractors are still being considered.

- Salmon would like the link to the reports when they are available.

- Historical and annual reports are available online: San Mateo County Parks, Natural resource management- San Bruno Mountain Habitat Conservation Plan.

5. Environmental Action Plan Update

- Ebel would like to go over points on the plan from the last meeting.

- Ebel would like 50% of Brisbane's residents to work in Brisbane, not workforce. Ebel estimates this would be approximately one thousand people.

- Housing size affects an individual's carbon footprint. A home of a certain size is not sustainable. A lottery system could help increase the housing stock without building more homes in Brisbane.

- A potential issue that can occur is the increase in cars and decrease in parking availability.

- Green business certification was discussed in the subcommittee; it can be included in the plan if the whole committee feels it is worth the cost for the GHG savings.

- Ebel would like to add an aspirational goal of partnering with a biodiesel company.

- Environmental purchasing policy should include post-consumer content paper because the federal and county plans do. Brisbane will base their environmental preferred purchasing policy on San Mateo County's.
- Ebel states, banning gas powered lawn equipment in the Baylands should be extended to the rest of Brisbane.
- Electric equipment can be phased in with new businesses or replacement or equipment.
- The business license for a landscaper can require electric equipment.
- Brisbane could partner with a neighboring municipality to build a sewage treatment plan.
- Edible gardens have a huge impact on climate change: A large amount of water goes to agriculture and GHGs as a result of food miles. The waiting list is long for a spot in the community garden which, indicates more community garden space is in demand.
- OSEC would like to add gray water to the plan.
- Abney mentioned building a parking structure for residents to park their cars and have another form of transportation to get to their homes and around town. Kinser said the issue of regulating parked cars on the street was brought to council after a survey was done; there was no interest to move forward with action.

- Kinser mentioned there will be a draft plan for OSEC to review in early August before the next meeting on the 26th.
- Kinser discussed that measures currently did not cover the GHG reduction goals. The consultant recommended that Brisbane adopt a Climate Action Plan instead of an Environmental Action Plan. The CAP will contain a transportation section, in which state bills will help Brisbane achieve GHG reduction targets.
- Vladimirova asked if other cities that have adopted a CAP been successful in reaching their goals. Kinser explained all cities should have a plan with calculations that show they will reach their goal. GHG inventories in the future will determine if the plan was successful in reducing GHG emissions.

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- Salmon would like to add to aspirational goals: A plan to put solar on all businesses in Crocker industrial park. A grid on all businesses, connected array can feed into one solar bank. It can include covering the parking lots in solar arrays.

- Green building ordinance, measure EC1: Ebel would like to lower 10,000 sq. ft. to 5,000. Salmon would like to eliminate the size requirements. OSEC would like for EC1 and EC2 to be rewritten with Title 24 standards.

- Measure EC5: Ebel would like to require trees planted or PV in parking lots if a parking lot is being remodeled.

6. Discuss opposition of fracking

- Abney will write the symbolic letter to ban fracking to be addressed to City Council.

7. Review of OSEC work plan

- Salmon would like to continue to have two to three restoration days per year. Next year there could be a spring and fall habitat restoration days instead of in June.
- Salmon would like to ask for council support in purchasing Levinson and Peking Handicraft properties. These properties were included in the adopted PCA. Salmon would like feedback from the letter that was sent to council on this matter.
- OSEC would like to know when the lot coverage letter will be addressed by council.
- OSEC would like to move review of work plan to next meeting for further consideration for discussion.
- Salmon would like to add contracting work to be done on Firth Canyon to the work plan.

Video shorts

- The videographer costs would be $660, for 3 hours of filming and 8 hours of editing.
- Kinser said there is limited budget for OSEC and to consider prioritizing items for outreach and education and special projects. There were several outreach and education items in the CAP to be considered.
- Salmon would like to have the video shown in the community meeting room and on the community channel.
- Muñoz will send the contact information for the videographer to Keogh and Hayuk. Abney mad e a motion to let the subcommittee contract the videographer if needed before the next OSEC meeting.
- Keogh and Hayuk will review ideas from last year's recap for this year's fair.

9. Staff updates: San Bruno Mountain Natives and Complete Streets, Lot Coverage, Habitat Restoration Day, Next OSEC meeting August 26th at 6:30pm

- Kinser forwarded OSEC's support to the Planning commission to uphold the Complete Streets recommendation to implement San Bruno Natives into streetscapes when possible.
- The council will discuss zoning issues about the Brisbane acres to be brought to council in August.
- Last habitat restoration day had 25 volunteers; a lot of invasive species were removed.
- The CCA feasibility study will be complete in September and presented to the Board of Supervisors.
- One of the dead Monterey pines was removed from Valley Drive.
- The regularly scheduled OSEC meeting has been moved in August from the 19th to the 26th.

10. Approval of the minutes

- Minutes approved

11. Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned 9pm.

Adjournment

Next meeting is September 16, 2015