

Open Space Open Space



ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

CITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Wednesday, August 1, 2012, 1:30 P.M.
8th Floor Conference Room
City Hall Building, 2 Civic Center Plaza

Members Present: 7

Katrina M. Martich (1:38 p.m.), James H. Tolbert, Richard L. Thomas, Andres Quintana, Bill Addington, Kevin von Finger, Charlie S. Wakeem, Chair

Members Absent: 2

Joanne Burt, Lois A. Balin

Vacancies: 0

Planning and Economic Development Staff:

David Coronado, Lead Planner; Elizabeth Gibson, Senior Planner; Harrison Plourde, Planner

Others Present:

Lupe Cuellar, Assistant City Attorney, City Attorney's Office; Marcia Tuck, Parks & Recreation, Open Space, Trails and Parks Coordinator; Kareem Dallo, Engineering Division Manager; Rudy Valdez, EPWU-PSB; Gilbert Trejo, Malcolm Pirnie; Christine Boland, Customer Service Manager, Customer Service & Business Center; Judy Ackerman, Secretary, Franklin Mountain Wilderness Coalition; Ms. Tammy Miller, Parametrix

1. Meeting Called to Order

Chair Wakeem called the meeting to order.

2. Call to the Public (items not listed on the agenda)

None.

3. Discussion and Action

- a. Approval of Minutes: July 18, 2012

Chair Wakeem asked if Board Members had any additions, corrections and/or revisions for the July 18, 2012 meeting. There were none.

MOTION:

Motion made by Mr. von Finger, seconded by Mr. Thomas and UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR JULY 18, 2012.

ABSTAIN: *Katrina M. Martich*

b. Changes to the Agenda

None.

4. Discussion and Action: Timeline of the EPWU feasibility study that would provide a long term, sustainable supply of water to Rio Bosque.

Contact: Rudy Valdez, rvaldez@EPWU.org

Mr. Valdez explained Mr. Gilbert Trejo, Malcolm Pirnie, would be giving the PowerPoint presentation an overview of the Rio Bosque.

Mr. Trejo responded to questions and/or comments from:

1. Chair Wakeem
2. Mr. von Finger
3. Through the Board, Ms. Judy Ackerman (member of the public)
4. Mr. Kareem Dallo
5. Mr. Katrina Martich
6. Mr. Bill Addington

Mr. Trejo explained if everything is permitted and the feasibility study is ongoing; in the next couple of weeks Staff will submit a draft report to the Water Utilities for review to discuss which concepts seem to be viable. At that point, we will move into conditional studies and demonstration theories with the TCEQ. The TCEQ will want to see the different barriers and different treatment technologies to ensure the end water quality that the Bosque, ground water and, ultimately, treatment through the Jonathan Rogers. After that will be the demonstration phase; proving that yes, it can be done, it is sustainable and reliable. Then we will move into the preliminary design, followed by a detailed design of the concept, then construction. Depending on what the final concept is construction could be 3 to 5 years. The reason for such a long construction period is that if there are modifications required to the wetland, there are limitations as to when certain species can be planted.

Mr. Coronado will email copies of the PowerPoint presentation to the Board Members and members of the public.

Mr. Valdez suggested he would take the Board Member's questions to Mr. Balliew. Following Mr. Balliew's responses, he would bring those back to the Board.

Mr. Coronado preferred discussing the matter at the OSAB meeting, in a public setting, rather than going through Mr. Valdez.

Mr. Valdez noted that Mr. Balliew's schedule is somewhat sporadic.

Mr. Coronado suggested Ms. Martich email him her questions, as stated at the meeting, and any additional questions she may have. He will refer to the meeting recording to compile a list of questions for Mr. Balliew. Mr. Coronado explained he will draft the questions from the minutes, send them to Mr. Valdez and copy Mr. Wakeem.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN.

5. Discussion and Action: Mitigation Bank update.

Contact: Kareem Dallo, dallokf@elpasotexas.gov

Mr. Dallo introduced Ms. Tammy Taylor, Parametrix. Ms. Taylor gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Keystone Mitigation Bank Feasibility and Market Analysis.

Following her presentation, Ms. Taylor responded to questions and/or comments from:

1. Mr. von Finger
2. Mr. Bill Addington

FOR THE RECORD

Mr. Addington stated, for the record, that he does have a concern with any mitigation bank; where to go if we are going to destroy one place to save/protect/improve another. He stated that he has issues with the concept.

Mr. Dallo responded to questions and/or comments from:

3. Chair Wakeem
4. Ms. Marci Tuck asked Mr. Dallo what was the scope of this and who prompted it
5. Ms. Martich
6. Ms. Judy Ackerman, through the Board, commented on the report given by Ms. Taylor

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN.

6. Discussion and Action: East El Paso Greenbelt.

Contact: Charlie Wakeem, charliewak@sbcglobal.net

Chair Wakeem explained this is the most significant area that has the potential for open space value in the Open Space Master Plan on the eastside.

Mr. Quintana explained he went out and took pictures of the area; however, the map does not compare with the photos due to all the development and roadways since 2007.

The following commented:

1. Chair Wakeem stated he did not see much out there.
2. Mr. Valdez clarified the area is located outside the City limits; another important factor is whether or not there is a stormwater retention facility. He explained, just east of the property that is already developed, most of that is owned by Doug Schwartz. Mr. Schwartz has submitted a Master Plan just east of what is already developed.
3. Mr. Tolbert stated it is an eco-system and should be preserved.
4. Ms. Judy Ackerman, member of the public, commented on desert life/animals and the concept of a Master Plan and connectivity;
5. Ms. Martich commented on the value of Natural Open Space and unstructured play for children
6. Mr. Quintana explained the area is very flat, wide open space
7. Mr. von Finger commented on the benefit of open space for children to enjoy nature

Mr. Coronado presented two maps to the Board:

1. Land that is Government and Privately Owned; and
2. Land that is owned by Cities of El Paso, Horizon, County of El Paso, El Paso County Emergency, El Paso County, El Paso Water Utilities PSB, People of the State of Texas, Unites States of America and Privately Owned

Mr. Coronado explained that there are hundreds of lots that are already sold; he felt it would be appropriate for Board Members to look at the entire site, as listed on the Plan.

Mr. Valdez suggested Board Members investigate the Paseo Del Este development, perhaps near Mr. Schwartz' development, there may be some opportunities.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN.

7. Discussion and Action regarding trailhead alternatives 1 and 2 at Los Pueblos.

Contact: Charlie Wakeem, charliewak@sbcglobal.net

Ms. Tuck explained that City Council will take action on the trailheads next week, she has not yet received the document back from Texas Parks & Wildlife and cannot place an item on the City Council agenda with that document.

FOR CLARIFICATION

Ms. Tuck clarified that City Council will be taking action on an Interlocal Agreement with Texas Parks and Wildlife to begin these trailheads. She explained that it does not have to go to Council with a recommendation of either one of these alternatives..

FOR THE RECORD

Ms. Tuck stated, for the record, the general map shows the seven areas; additionally, the map notes Los Pueblos is labeled Ojo de Agua.

FOR INFORMATION

Mr. Valdez explained what the PSB Board approved does not have to go to City Council.

The following commented:

1. Chair Wakeem noted there are pros and cons to each of the trailhead alternatives. He preferred both trailheads.
2. Mr. von Finger recommended that the City decide which one makes more sense.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN.

LOT AT THE THUNDERBIRD SITE

Chair Wakeem asked Mr. Coronado if he had determined the ownership of lot at the Thunderbird site.

Mr. Coronado responded no, but he did have a map. Mr. Coronado explained the GIS shows the lot as being within the State; furthermore, the CAD website does not show anything on that lot.

Mr. Valdez added that is part of the property that the PSB is leasing from the State.

Mr. Tolbert and Ms. Tuck discussed Ms. Burt mentioning the cable.

At the next meeting, Mr. von Finger suggested Board Members ask Ms. Burt what exactly she was talking about.

8. Discussion and Action: Items for Future Agendas.

Mr. von Finger

1. Last meeting, Mr. von Finger noted, Board Members requested permission from City Council to get a presentation from TxDOT on a couple of items.

Mr. Coronado explained Staff has the request ready for placement on the agenda. Planning items go to City Council the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month. He wondered if it would be possible to coordinate with Ms. Tuck to place the trailheads on the August 21st City Council agenda.

Ms. Tuck responded that was her goal but she is waiting for Texas Parks & Wildlife to return the document to her. She cannot place an item on the City Council agenda without the document.

2. Information regarding the Ethics Training:
 - a. Was this something he could do on the web; and/or
 - b. How long will the training be.
3. Information regarding the linear bosques. Parks and Recreation is looking at available land along or land identified in the Open Space Plan and the land next to that too, the empty undeveloped farm land. He wondered if the CAD information shows whether or not the land has been developed, if the land is not developed it may be available for purchase.

Ms. Tuck responded she would give a PowerPoint presentation based on the current CAD information. She could show the ownership information and a separate aerial map.

Mr. Valdez noted the land has been platted.

Regarding the Keystone Dam and the possible intrusion into the subsurface water flow, Mr. von Finger explained, the TxDOT maps were not clear on how they were going to bridge Resler Canyon.

Chair Wakeem

1. TxDOT item on Cement Lake and the rezoning of the Northwest PSB to URD.

Mr. Coronado explained, on that project, the details on the public meetings, etc., everything is posted on the TxDOT website. He stated Board Members can easily access that information as well for the Loop 375 project.

2. The highway project with any effects to Cement Lake, Resler Canyon and Keystone Dam.

Referring to the minutes from the last meeting, Mr. von Finger noted the Motion included "both the Loop 375 Border Highway West project and the impact of the widening of the highway".

Mr. von Finger thought the formal name of the widening project is "Tract and Reliever I-10 Mesa to Executive".

Mr. Coronado explained Staff will amend the language for that item and add them both on the next agenda.

NORTHEAST LAND NEAR CHUCK HEINRICH PARK - INEXPEDIENT

Chair Wakeem asked if it was premature the Board asked that the PSB find the Northeast land near Chuck Heinrich Park and determine whether or not it's inexpedient so that the Board can recommend it as Open Space. He asked if this request could be posted on the agenda.

Mr. Valdez responded the best thing to do would be to rezone the property rather than declaring it inexpedient. He explained when a property is declared inexpedient it usually means the property is going to be sold.

Ms. Martich interjected the Board motioned Staff to prepare a request. That request should be moving forward at this point.

Mr. Coronado explained the first draft is ready, it has not gone out yet; furthermore, he and Chair Wakeem will review the document after the meeting. Mr. Coronado clarified the letter has been drafted, it has not gone out yet, the motion has been made. He suggested placing the item on the agenda again for further discussion. He thought that the letter included the language to allow the PSB to determine that first.

Ms. Martich recalled that Ms. Cuellar had recommended, instead of rezoning the property; that the Board try to get the property declared inexpedient and transferred to the Parks & Recreation Department. The Board wanted to make sure that it was passive use only; that language went into the motion. Only if it was not declared inexpedient to be released or sold to the City as a park, then the Board would pursue the rezoning.

Mr. Coronado will clarify the issue with Ms. Cuellar.

Ms. Martich

Commented on submitting her Annual Conflict of Interest Form, she noted that her form was due last month.

Mr. Coronado would check into it.

Mr. Tolbert

Presentation from the current TCEQ regarding the water at the Bustamante Plant.

Chair Wakeem explained in order to get any outside the city agency to come to this Board it must go to the City Council to authorize the outside entity to come before this Board.

Ms. Martich noted that TCEQ permits are public record and should be readily available or a copy could be made available via the Open Records Act.

Chair Wakeem

Requested a report from Mr. Balliew, EPWU-PSB, regarding the questions the Board Members had pertaining to the timeline of the EPWU feasibility study that would provide a long term, sustainable supply of water to Rio Bosque.

Ms. Martich asked Mr. Valdez why the permit could not be distributed to the Board.

Mr. Coronado asked Mr. Valdez to forward him the link and he would forward the link to the Board Members.

Mr. von Finger asked Staff to place a GPS dot in relationship to an aerial photo so the Board Members can see exactly where that discharge point is.

NO FURTHER COMMENT.

9. Adjournment

MOTION:

*Motion made by Mr. von Finger, seconded by Ms. Martich and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ADJOURN.***