

Open Space Open Space



ADVISORY BOARD

December 28, 2009
 City Hall – 4th Floor, 12:30 P.M.
 Engineering Conference Room
 2 Civic Center Plaza, El Paso, Texas

DRAFT

MINUTES

Members Present: 6

Charles S. Wakeem, Lois Anne Balin, James H. Tolbert, Bill Addington, Kevin T. von Finger, Richard L. Thomas

Members Absent: 3

Walt Phillips, Luis M. Ruiz, Robert Ardovino

Member Vacancies: 0

Ex-Officio Members Present: Gonzalo Cedillos

Parks and Recreation Staff Present: Nanette Smejkal, Parks and Recreation Director, Shamori R. Whitt, Open Space, Trails & Parks Coordinator, Richard Garcia, Parks Project Superintendent, Lucy Calderon, Recording Secretary

Others Present: Alfredo Lopez, Planning Division, Rudy Valdez, Public Service Board, Nick Constanza, Public Service Board and Veronica Soto, Economic Development

1. Meeting Called to Order – Vice Chair Charles Wakeem called the meeting to order at 12:32 p.m.
2. Approval of Minutes: November 23, 2009
 Motion by Kevin von Finger to approve the minutes as written. Second by James Tolbert. Motion carried (unanimous).
3. Call to the Public: None
4. Selection of Chair and Vice Chair:
 Motion by James Tolbert to select Charles Wakeem as Chair. Second by Kevin von Finger. Motion carried (unanimous).

 Motion by Charles Wakeem to select Richard Thomas as Vice Chair. Second by James Tolbert. Motion carried (unanimous).
5. Discussion and Action: Arroyo in the Montecillo Development and Relation to Cement Lake
 A power point was presented by Charles Wakeem on the Arroyo in the Montecillo Development and Cement Lake and adjacent wetlands which are in the Open Space Plan (Chapter 5).

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Discussion ensued about development in and around the arroyo area. Main concerns are homes being built in the arroyo with hard scape runoff that may affect wildlife and vegetation.

Fred Lopez, Planning Division, pointed out areas that have been platted and recorded but have not proceeded because the developer is in discussion with the City on a possible Smart Code project.

Motion by Kevin von Finger to have staff request that representatives of the Montecillo Development and Cemex attend the next board meeting. Second by Bill Addington. Motion carried (unanimous).

6. Discussion and Action: Downzoning of PSB Property

Charles Wakeem provided a PowerPoint presentation and stated that land annexed to the City in recent years especially in the Northwest sector of the City had been zoned for R-3 development which was the default zoning. The rezoning of all current undeveloped lands that do not have approved master plans or land studies to the Rural Farm (RF) Zoning category should occur immediately as per Open Space Master Plan recommendations.

Nick Constanza, PSB, stated that PSB has been working with the Deputy City Manager Pat Aauto updating the City/PSB Land MOU Policy. All PSB lands over 50 acres are master planned. City Manager has requested the threshold be decreased to 25 acres. A draft MOU has been developed and includes a policy that land being sold by PSB will go through City Manager and Planning Division to make sure proper zoning requirements or bidding documents are included before going out to bid. Draft will be presented to PSB Board in January.

Charles Wakeem suggested that the Open Space Board recommend downzoning PSB property and go before Planning LRC regardless of the MOU.

Motion by Bill Addington to forward a recommendation for Downzoning of PSB A-1 Property to the Planning LRC. Second by Kevin von Finger. Motion passed (unanimous).

Motion by James Tolbert that the Open Space Advisory Board recommendation be recommended for implementation by City Council. Second by Bill Addington. Motion carried (unanimous).

7. Discussion and Information: Development along Transmountain Road and Impact on Future Trail Extension

Fred Lopez presented a PowerPoint showing property along Northwestern to Transmountain Road that was rezoned in the 80's. Council designated the strip for future development. In 2004 Council rezoned Northwestern to gas line from C-4 to C-3, imposing a 40 foot landscape buffer (handouts). Conditions state a 40' wide buffer is required in any future frontage roads. A minimum of 25' landscape area shall include hike/bike trail of 12' and area retain natural vegetation with remaining 15' can be developed. TX Dot has approved plans to add frontage roads along Transmountain. Development will likely occur once frontage road is built.

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Richard Thomas arrived at 1:33 p.m.

Charles Wakeem passed out booklet on Scenic Corridor Design City of Scottsdale guidelines (handout). Mr. Wakeem stated that after speaking to State Representative Moody, a frontage road was being planned along either side of Transmountain Road. Mr. Wakeem is against a frontage road along Transmountain.

Kevin von Finger stated that the developer donated land to TX Dot and Mr. von Finger is also against a frontage road built along Transmountain Road.

8. Discussion and Action: General Land Office and Quarry Leased to Jobe

Charles Wakeem stated that Mr. Jobe is willing to set aside some of the land he leases from GLO along Arroyo 41-A for preservation. Mr. Wakeem believes all of 41-A from rim to rim, needs to be protected.

Motion by Kevin von Finger that the Open Space Advisory Board recommend to the City Council that the City work with State Representatives, Jobe and GLO towards a land swap that would protect the 480 acres and that the City determine whether the GLO lease is legal by formally requesting appropriate documents with the condition that the Board does not support the lease. Second by Lois Balin. Motion carried (unanimous).

9. Discussion and Information: Arroyo 41A Stakeholders Meeting – Item Postponed for next month

10. Parks and Recreation Staff Announcements

Shamori Whitt, Open Space, Trails & Parks Coordinator stated that she was asked to look into the availability of border fence mitigation funds. She is working through Financial Services Division to determine eligibility criteria from this (Department of Homeland Security) funding source.

11. Discussion: Items for Future Agendas

- Representative of Montecillo Development and Representative of Cemex for discussion with Board
- Representative of TX Dot for discussion with Board
- Report/Update on Jobe Quarry Lease
- 41A Stakeholders Meeting
- Storm Water Utility - Update on CIP Land Acquisition Projects

12. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Lucy Calderon, Senior Secretary