

MEASURE DD COMMUNITY COALITION MEETING
NOVEMBER 21, 2005
LAKESIDE GARDEN CENTER

Agenda Committee: Ron Bishop, David Bolanos, Sandy Threlfall
Minutes by Kathy Raymond, Executive Director, Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation

In Attendance:

Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee – Ron Bishop
East Bay Bicycle Coalition – Rick Rickard
Friends of the Cleveland Cascade – Jim Ratliff, Barbara Newcombe
Coalition of Advocates for Lake Merritt – James Vann
Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation – Kathryn Raymond
Jack London District Association – Simon Waddington
Lake Merritt Rowing Club – Jerry Denham
North Hills Landscape Committee – Gordon Piper
Waterfront Action – Sandra Threlfall
Garden Center, Inc. – Anne Woodell
UC Berkeley – Eric Nguyen
Adrienne Wong Associates, Inc. – Adrienne Wong
WRT – John Gibbs
Interested Citizens – David Bolanos, Diana Downton, Amit Price Patec

From the City of Oakland:

CEDA – Jason Patton
City of Oakland Public Works – Joel Peter
City of Oakland Public Works – Lyle Oehler
Council Member Reid's Office – Pat Mossburg
Council Member Kernighan's Office – Jennie Gerard
Council Member Kernighan's Office – Pat Kernighan

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 P.M. by chair Sandy Threlfall. The attendees introduced themselves. Changes to the agenda included the Steven Huss presentation will be postponed until the January meeting, as he must present it to the City Council first. Also, the matrix from the City providing information on the different surfacing options will be postponed to January due to the City needing to do some additional work on the matrix.

Sandy reported on the Oak to Ninth meetings that were held to discuss the EIR. She indicated that it is now up to the City Council what action is taken on this project. She did say that Theresa Nelson had asked some very poignant questions at the meeting, including why was a specific plan not done as was called for in the Estuary Policy Plan. It was admitted by the City that this was not done because it was too much money. It was asked what the relationship was to DD. In DD there is \$22 million to develop parks in this area and four specific parks are mentioned. Union Point Park did get \$4 million dollars of this and there is \$18 million left. The Developer is saying they do not need these funds, however, there is language in the bond that specifically states that these funds are to be used for these parks. Jim Ratliff indicated that the bond language could be found at www.smartvoter.org, go to Oakland and then the November 2002 election. There was some discussion on if the \$18 million could be given to the developer to develop these parks and then the developer could provide another \$18 million to set up some kind of endowment fund

for maintenance. This is a legal issue that is being looked into and so until we find out more the coalition is not taking a position on this at this time.

Lyle Oehler, Adrienne Wong and John Gibbs gave information on the tree removal that may occur in the 12th Street El Embarcadero Project. Adrienne Wong began explaining the process of how the plans became developed. They tried to set the bar high on what Lake Merritt should be and develop a plan that encompasses the entire lake area. The Lake Merritt Master Plan was developed with a lot of community input and took into consideration the wildlife refuge element around the lake. The plans call for a healthy ecosystem for the lake, increasing oak trees, more flowering plants and more habitats for wildlife. Looking at creating a necklace of oaks. Also, they identified the cultural landscape of trees in the park. Also the City called for vision corridors to see the lake from surrounding buildings. Keeping flowering plants by pathway 3 ft. and under for security reasons. Also, looked a lot at the maintenance issues. Some native plants and also those that meet bay friendly guidelines. Looking at creating color zones as well. Looking at mixed colors for street trees and also longevity. They are also putting some protection devices around the trees to try to prevent vandalism. Bosc trees are not being removed. They have gone through and tried to save as many trees as possible that are in good condition, many are not. Over by the municipal boathouse they only use recycled water, which limits the plants that can be used. By the restaurant area they are looking at culinary type plants. Gordon Piper did commend the plans that it looked like a lot of research had been done. There are some concerns, however, about the number of trees that are being removed and walks are being planned for interested citizens. A comment was made that more natives should be used, though it was recognized that some are being used that was commended but still would like to see more. It was also an area of concern that some large trees will be removed and replaced with newer trees that are smaller so the park may seem somewhat incomplete for many years until the trees mature. This is one of the costs of change and creating a park for the long term.

By 12th Street 235 trees are to be removed. The City thought this might be where there would be a bigger outcry because of the numbers. However, to do a whole redo of the area this is the cost. They will try to save as many sound trees as possible and may box some trees during construction that can be put back in afterwards. They have a reputable contractor that has a good history of doing this. The boxing of trees, however, is a cost issue. They are looking at trying to keep the magnolias by the Kaiser Center. The Committee at this point seemed to understand the need for the removal of trees in this area and that the Lakeshore area seems to be a bigger concern at this point.

By Lakeside there are 49 existing trees and 37 are called to be removed but adding in more so there will be a net gain of 24 more trees.

PROJECTS:

Lake Merritt EIR notice has been sent out and is on the Friends web site. There is \$8 million dollars in a Coastal Conservancy grant that they hope to receive from a Prop 50 Bond for this. However, the conservancy would like a more detailed EIR by 12th Street. So the City is working on a tiered EIR, taking existing EIR and they will tier this section off to make a more detailed document. The sub consultant Rajappan & Meyer is working on this, not sure when it will come out it is at least a month away. There is about \$30 million of DD funds for the 12th St. project. It was stated that

there will be some graphics put up around the lake about the project that should be up before the end of the year. Scheduled for construction in April 2006.

Traffic and Pedestrian Issues

Ron Bishop reported that only one slip turn is remaining at East 18th Street, all the others have been taken care of which is good news. Pedestrian safety is still an issue and Jason Patton works for the City's Planning and Zoning Dept. and his job is to make pedestrians safer. He did indicate that it is difficult to make a matrix of the possible options and pros and cons as the City is not to this stage. They are trying out a number of items. He did indicate that pedestrian islands are a cost effective way to improve safety, however, they need to be designed right. Pedestrian islands are cheaper than bulb outs. Since 12th Street will be turning into a real street they are trying to get it designed right. There is one by the Splash Pad Park at Lakepark and Grand. The issue with crosswalk markings is how to mark them so they get high visibility. They put in a crosswalk at East 12th, by 6th and 7th Ave. where they have striping on the street. The Crosswalks run parallel to the centerline and 24 inches wide to aid in matching the driver's line of site. Trying to get one at Cleveland Cascade and El Embarcadero. They also have advance limit lines to try and get the cars to stop before the actual crosswalk.

Gordon Piper came to the meeting to seek information about potential Measure DD Creek funding and if there was any way to utilize some of these funds to aid in the fire protection in the hills. There are many potential fire hazards around Temescal Creek and some new proposed construction could make this even more dangerous. We suggested Gordon come back to the next meeting when we would invite environmental services to give us a creeks update. It was noted Joel Peter should be the point of contact for Gordon and on January 13 there would be City Council committee meetings with the DD creek program prioritization lists and also the Studio One construction award on the agenda, and that staff reports for both items would be available on-line by Dec. 3rd. Joel said they had hired a consultant to look at the creeks list. Temescal Creek was on the list.

It was mentioned that we should set up a couple of committees to keep the progress of the coalition moving. One committee should look at the publicity and members included James Vann, Von Bishop and Barbara Newcombe. Also a financial oversight committee was suggested, David Bolanos said he would be on this, the committee also suggested he contact Ken Benson and Don Walls about participation. It was also suggested to contact Michael Killian.

It was asked if Joel could put together the Exec. Committee schedule for 2006 so we could perhaps get a continuous person(s) to attend, Liz Borowiec had expressed an interest. The last Executive Committee discussed that the restaurant proposed should be made accessible to the public. Also there are issues around construction costs, for example, Studio One is ready to go but about \$2 million short. Joel is looking at perhaps borrowing from another source of Bond funds that is not ready to go forward yet, and then repay with the interest at a later date.

It was also mentioned that Nancy Nadel should have a representative at these meetings since much of the DD funding is within her district.

FUTURE AGENDA SUGGESTIONS:

1. Continuation of Executive Meeting Discussion
2. Creeks Update

3. Review of matrixes
4. Public Art

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. and the next meeting is to take place on January 23rd from 7-9 p.m. at the Lakeside Garden Center.