

San Rafael Park and Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes: January 15, 2015

Chair Mihan called the meeting to order at 7: 05 p.m. at the San Rafael Community Center

Roll Call: Commissioners: Mark Bustillos, Eric Holm, Jeff Jones, Mark Machado, Ralph Mihan, Chair, Tom Oblatz, Commissioners, Patricia Bassett, Alternate

Commissioners Present: Bustillos, Holm, Mihan, Oblatz, Basset

Commissioners Absent: Jones, Machado

Staff Present: Carlene McCart, Director, Community Services, Dave Davenport, Parks Superintendent, Stephanie Lovette, Economic Development Manager

1. Action Items

A. Community Park Improvement Priority Input

Director McCart introduced the item with background on the history of Measure A funds supporting park, recreation and open space facilities in Marin County, the distribution of funds since 2013, and the process by which the City is soliciting community input for priority improvements to park facilities in San Rafael.

The Chair opened the meeting for public comment on Measure A community priorities

Judith Gallegos addressed the Commission with suggestions for Albert Park: increase capacity for trash collection with larger receptacles; replace existing seating at the entrance with single, backless benches; thin ivy at entrance for security; increase maintenance/policing of the park, replace playground with multi-age play equipment; install a restroom; create a volunteer maintenance effort. She submitted copies of the Parks survey she distributed to park users.

Superintendent Davenport commented on the maintenance schedule and noted that additional garbage receptacles have been installed on site. He also noted the Downtown Streets Team weekly collects litter in the park.

Hugo Landecker added support for the replacement of the playground in Albert Park, also commenting on the increased calls for Police Department service on Albert Park Lane.

Amy Likeover, spoke on behalf of the Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association, in support of the expansion of the playground in Albert Park. Likeover is President of the 200 member Association. She suggested formation of a Friends of Albert Park to assist in projects and repairs.

Stacy Lowman requested improved bike/ped pathways through Albert Park to accommodate Davidson Middle School students going to and from campus. She also noted currently Albert Park feels unsafe for children, especially in the morning hours, due to vagrant presence.

Martha O'Brian asked for a replacement of a large fallen tree in Gerstle Park, and for tables and seating in Albert Park to invite residents to spend time in the park.

McCart will send Ms. Gallegos a copy of the Albert Park Masterplan. Public input will continue through the March 19 meeting of the Commission, after which a recommendation will be formulated for presentation to the City Council.

B. Beach Park Concept Design Review
This item was postponed

2. Joint Meeting with Citizens Advisory Committee on Economic Development and Affordable Housing

A. Downtown Initiatives for Community Art

Stephanie Lovette, Economic Development Director introduced Tom Adams, Economic Development Specialist and the Committee members:

Bob Jackson, Dirk Brinkerhoff, Gordon Mansell, Phil Abby, Bill Carney

She explained that one focus of the CAC was arts and culture as a factor in the economic vitality of San Rafael in downtown San Rafael. She noted the Commission is the City Council liaison for matters of public art and cultural affairs, therefore the two appointed groups had intersection of interest and issues. Ms. Lovette invited ArtWorks Downtown and the Business Improvement District to make presentations to the joint groups for updates on what is happening with public art initiatives, and what is proposed for future inclusion.

Mihan welcomed the CAC and representatives and invited the presentations.

Elizabeth Seaton and Stan Gibbs, of ArtWorks Downtown were joined by Gary Jaffe, a member of the Board of Directors. The organization facility located on 4th Street includes four galleries, 4 retail outlet spaces, a ceramics center, 27 working artists' studios, 47 affordable housing units and reception spaces.

Artworks Downtown provides community outreach for the arts through facility management, public art interface, Second Friday Art Walks, juried art shows, and events. Seaton highlighted the following:

- AWDT has member artists from throughout the Bay Area
- Gallery shows are presented on annual themes; 2015 features art displays related to Climate Change
- The organization supports off site auxiliary art shows
- AWDT produces and coordinates with the City the Public Sculpture temporary rotating exhibits; there is a desire to increase the locations for the Public Sculpture program from 8 to 12.
- Information on AWDT is marketed through a monthly newsletter, website, and social media
- A new vender was recently installed in the restaurant retail space: Green Chili Kitchen
- 2nd Friday Art Walks attract 2-400 attendees, who, provided with maps, visit various locations and art installations each month, from 5-8 p.m.
- AWDT collaborates with Marin Open Studios, Youth in Arts, and California Film Institute

Committee and Commission members discussed the relationship of Falkirk Cultural Center with AWDT.

It was agreed that improved signage along 3rd and 4th Streets is needed to promote AWDT programs. The City can assist with the recognition of artists through media, and official appreciation. An ongoing funding source in partnership with the City is warranted. There was inquiry about the availability for Measure A funds to be applied.

Carol Thompson, representing the San Rafael Business Improvement District presented next. The goal of including art and culture experiences in San Rafael is to enhance San Rafael as a destination for visitors drawn by cultural assets. In this regard the BID collaborates with AWDT on the 2nd Friday Art Walks, California Film Institute, Marin Open Studios, and other arts organization. The BID produces the Banner Art Project on 4th Street, Merchant Window

Promotions, Downtown Paint Out, building on existing assets. Projects under consideration include Parking Lot Art, Ultra Theater Productions and more

After discussion, and expressed appreciation, the Joint Meeting was adjourned.

2. Commission Items

A. Director's Report

Interviews are scheduled for January 16 for the position of Recreation Supervisor vacated by the retirement of Gary Burns. The plans for Beach Park will be presented at the February meeting, where the Commission will review for consistency with the concept plan, safety, viability and site enhancement. The City Council has called for applications to fill the vacant position on the Commission created with the appointment of John Gamblin to the City Council. Staff has worked with ADA experts to mediate access issues to the Terra Linda Community Garden.

B. Parks Report

Davenport reported the December storms caused seven City trees to fall, and a small slide in Terra Linda. Previous work to clear DI catch basins, clear leaves from gutters, building roofs and other preparatory measures reduced exposure to storm damage. The Department of Public Works divides the City into 8 zones for street maintenance. Pickleweed Park fields were over seeded and are anticipated to re-open in May after closure in November. The infield and perimeter of the outfield in Albert Park was re-sodded. Turf repair and re-seeding was completed at the Terra Linda community Pool and Park. Crews planted 35 trees, and will replace a large fallen tree in Gerstle Park as the observation of Arbor Day. The continued draught conditions will delay Spring planting.

C. Falkirk Report

Risa DeFerrari was selected to assume the position of Program Coordinator – Falkirk Cultural Center. Risa comes to the City with skills in marketing, programing, and facility management. She has worked for the Chamber of Commerce and other non-profit organizations connected with San Rafael. Risa will start in February.

D. Reports from Committees

Mihan reported on a meeting with the San Rafael Pacifics that addressed issues for the upcoming season, and pointed out the annual report produced by the county of Marin on the disbursement of Measure A Funds.

Election of Chair/Vice Chair. Mihan and Holm were selected to serve as Chair and vice Chair for 2015.

E. Approval of Minutes, Meeting of November 20, 2014

M/s Holm/Basset to approve the minutes

AYES: Bustillos, Holm, Machado, Mihan, Obletz, Basset

NOES: None

ABSENT: Bustillos, Machado

3. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.