

**SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes of April 04, 2014**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Tom Golich
Phil Pryde
Deborah DeBow
Anne Harvey
Diane Coombs
Linda Oster
Don Wendt
Ann Gardner
Jack Shelver
Margaret Schlesinger
Dorothy McLin
John Kowalski
Ben Hillebrecht
Carol Carr
Dave Kreitzer
Bill Michalsky
Pat Whitt
Colleen Bradley
Arthur Schmitz
Jacqueline Winterer
Brant Bassett

REPRESENTING

CAC, Chair
Audubon Society
California Native Plant Society
Carmel Valley Planning Board
Citizens Coordinate for Century 3
Del Dios Town Council
Ramona Trails
Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley
Julian Community Planning Group
League of Women Voters
Lomas Serenas Property Owners
Rancho Bernardo Comm. Planning Board
San Diego City Agricultural Advisory Board
San Diego County Bicycle Coalition
San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy
Sierra Club
Torrey Pines Community Planning Group
Volcan Mountain Preserve Foundation
Eastern Property Owner
Coastal Property Owner
Central Property Owner

VISITORS/STAFF PRESENT

Dick Bobertz	San Dieguito River Park JPA
Susan Carter	San Dieguito River Park JPA
Shawna Anderson	San Dieguito River Park JPA
Brenda Miller	San Dieguito River Park JPA

Roll Call and Introductions

Chair Golich convened the meeting at 10:38 a.m. at the San Rafael Parish, 17252 Bernardo Center Drive, Rancho Bernardo.

Chair Golich asked that members of the CAC announce their names when they speak and/or make motions, so that it will be easier for Brenda to take the minutes.

Deputy Director Susan Carter took the roll call. A quorum was met with 18 in attendance.

Chair Golich asked for introductions and welcomed Dorothy McLin, representative for the Lomas Serenas Home Owners Association. Chair Golich announced that a letter from the JPA officially reinstating the Lomas Serenas HOA as a member of the CAC had been sent.

Approval of Minutes- February 7, 2014 - Jacqueline Winterer made a motion to approve the minutes and Bill Michalsky seconded. All in favor.

Chair's Report- Chair Golich reported that Lesa Heebner, council person from Solana Beach, has a Friday morning schedule conflict due to her role with SANDAG. Dave Zito has come on as the representative from Solana Beach. On the consent calendar was the reinstatement of the Lomas Serenas Property Owners. The JPA board had an election of officers. Dave Roberts is the new Chair and Don Mosier is the new Vice-Chair of the JPA board. Dave Roberts presented a check for \$150,000.00 for the new Bird Wing at the last meeting. The CAC's recommended changes were made to the donation and naming guidelines policy at the JPA board meeting.

Executive Director's Report- Director Bobertz reported that all member agencies except the City of San Diego have signed the revised JPA Agreement. The City Attorney would not allow this item on the agenda because he had not received direction to do so. A three member committee of Chair Roberts, Olga Diaz and Vice-Chair Don Mosier will meet with Mayor Faulconer on April 17. Our current JPA agreement will expire June 12, 2014.

Public Comment – Diane Coombs asked for the possibility of a sub- committee to determine an appropriate memorial in the park for Abbe Wolfsheimer. Deputy Director Carter stated that Abbe had a very strong personality, was vitally important to the formation of the San Dieguito River Park, and will be missed. Director Bobertz stated that this idea will be taken up at the JPA board meeting April 18th and then brought back to the CAC. Pat Whitt had a question about the JPA Agreement issue. Director Bobertz explained the agreement and issues surrounding it. All the other member agencies have signed the agreement except the City of San Diego. Letters have been sent by many groups urging the City to renew the agreement.

DISCUSSION/ACTION

1. Committee Reports

a. Project Review Committee

i. St. John Garabed Church – Shawna Anderson said she was the first of a three part presentation. On a large photo exhibit Shawna showed the property location of a proposed 13 acre, 350 seat church with 3 additional buildings. She showed the existing Formosan Church. Attachment 2 in agenda packet is the site plan for St. John Garabed Church. It is a total of 51,000 square feet. The property is agriculturally zoned and is not in the coastal zone, however, it does need Coastal Commission approval. The project came before the PRC in 2011. The PRC has spent a lot of time, met with the project applicant twice and has submitted three letters. Issues that Deborah DeBow and Margaret Schlesinger will bring up are that the height of the project is 93 feet – same as a 9 story building.

Margaret Schlesinger – second presenter, stated that the PRC has spent a lot of time and nothing has changed and they are frustrated. This has been going on for 2 ½ years. Gonzales Canyon is a valuable wildlife corridor. Coyote, mule deer and bobcats are in the area and will be impacted by this project. The church should have 3.35 acres based on these constraints, however it is proposed for 4.23 acres. She said that the PRC did not see the justification for the increase. Other projects in area - the Formosan Church and Rancho Valley Farms have adhered to the regulations and have not encroached into the MHPA. The plan is within 20' of the edge of the canyon slope and 93' high plus the impact of human activity has not been addressed adequately. Access from El Camino Real will impact an area of mitigation from the Formosan Church. Auto headlights will bother wildlife. The extra building size has not been adequately analyzed. The project plan appears to be a commercial endeavor. An alternative may be smaller buildings and more set back. The EIR does not address the option of smaller buildings.

Deborah DeBow – third presenter, talked about the impact on the wild animal corridor, the visual impact and the impact on the mesa. The mesa is elevated and is visible from the Open Air Classroom. The view corridor has not been addressed by the EIR. This concern has been raised in all the letters staff has sent. No native vegetation or tree will be able to hide this. Regarding the trail easement; they have agreed to permit a trail, however this is not in the draft EIR and should be. The draft EIR does not address any of our issues. The EIR is out for public review. Comments to the EIR are due 4/15/2014. Staff report has all of our comments to be taken to the JPA board on 4/18/2014. Chair Golich verified that staff will have to send a letter in response to the draft EIR by 4/15/2014, before the JPA meeting.

Discussion: Jack Shelver asked if we have made a recommendation of the height we would prefer. Deborah DeBow stated PRC did not discuss the specifics of the height. Margaret Schlesinger stated churches usually build a certain kind of church according to their customs. Bill Michalsky stated we should use the height of the Formosan Church, 45' as an example and asked about illumination and if the homes to the south have a concern. Art Schmitz said the building height is a big deal. Shawna explained the building is 40' tall, the dome is 50' tall and the cross is 7' on top of that. The church owns 13 acres. Anne Harvey questioned 20% encroachments. Phil Pryde stated that the church may be resistant to changing the shape of the church and or relocating the footprint. Typically churches want to be seen. Deborah DeBow did research of Armenian Churches and the one in LA does not look like this. She discussed amendment of height limit in draft EIR. Deborah proposed that an amendment be made that in the alternative section of the draft EIR the EIR address reducing the height to 45' to be consistent with

surrounding projects and list as an alternative. Bill Michalsky seconded the motion. Vote in favor by show of hands 14 in favor, opposed 0.

Phil Pryde made a motion to recommend that staff would send these comments in the form of a staff letter commenting on the EIR and ask the JPA board to support as well. Margaret Schlesinger seconded. Vote in favor by show of hands 16, opposed 0.

b. Trails Committee – Carol Carr –Commented that the River Park is getting an award for the volunteer mountain bike patrol at the Trails and Greenways Conference April 8-10.

2. Proposed Removal/Elimination of Lagoon Boardwalk – Deputy Director Susan Carter summarized the situation. The 1200' long boardwalk at the Lagoon is intended for pedestrians and nature study. It was approved in 2005, built in 2006 for approximately \$400,000.00. The Coastal Commission required when the permit was issued that when and if the south overflow parking lot was restored to wetlands in the future, the boardwalk could be relocated at that time. 22nd District Agricultural Association does not want it removed because it would cost them \$50,000.00 to do so. The Coastal Commission staff wants it removed, and is requiring the 22nd District to submit a restoration plan without the boardwalk. The reason is that the boardwalk is a raised structure that will impact bird life due to human activity and dogs. Without the boardwalk an additional .25 acre of wetlands could be created. Back in February of 2013 the Ag. District approved putting our Coast to Crest Trail next to the new bus lane. The Coast to Crest Trail will be an active multi-use trail. The boardwalk is used for Nature Study, which is one of eight uses allowed in wetlands. Staff is looking for action from CAC to take to the JPA board to officially oppose removal or relocation of the boardwalk. Comments: Dianne Coombs suggested getting in touch with the Bolsa Chica Lagoon. There are boardwalks in the area that have not destroyed habitat. Phil Pryde has led walks for the Audubon Society. South Padre Island in Texas has an area around the convention center that is a maze of boardwalks and the bird life is thriving. He argued that if designed correctly, boardwalks help preserve birds because they can escape predators if needed under the boardwalk. Mr. Pryde will write a letter stating that boardwalks are useful and necessary for endangered species. Discussion ensued regarding if dogs are allowed or if they are allowed on leashes only. Colleen Bradley noted the comment to take out part of the boardwalk to keep it a nature study (last bullet-page 28). Art Schmitz stated we can't eliminate dogs- they are allowed for blind people. Jacqueline Winterer stated the problem with dogs is if people don't keep them on leash. Margaret Schlesinger stated that the investment people made in the boardwalk is goodwill, goodwill for the Park and for the Coastal Commission. It is a good thing for all parties. Carol Carr backed up Jacqueline's comment that the majority of people keep their dogs on leashes. Director Bobertz stated truncating the boardwalk would only be presented to the Coastal Commission as a fallback position. Jacqueline Winterer made the motion

to support the retention of the boardwalk for nature study and bird protection. Phil Pryde and Bill Michalsky seconded. Vote in favor by show of hands 17, opposed 0.

INFORMATION

3. SANDAG “W-19” Wetland Restoration at the San Dieguito Lagoon (oral presentation - graphic attached) Shawna Anderson gave a presentation and update on an additional restoration project at the San Dieguito Lagoon. This project is a combined effort by SANDAG, City of San Diego, Caltrans and the JPA. It is a new area called W-19. They are looking at alternatives to restore approximately 60 acres of new wetlands. They are looking at different designs of wetland creations. There will also be some riparian restoration for mitigation of the El Camino Real Bridge. The utility corridor will be protected. They will be dredging, have done some vegetation mapping and will try to save some native species but will have some impacts. Deputy Director Susan Carter and Shawna Anderson are participating with the design team. California Fish & Wildlife Service does not like the use of berms. They look engineered and they would like to see design that does not use berms or only use in certain areas. Hydrologists say berms are used to allow river to continue to flow to ocean. If you don't use berms the flow slows and drops sediment and would cause damage to wetlands, and increase scour to structures. Deborah DeBow asked about the Bataquitos Restoration project. Anne Harvey stated that a landscape architect designed the Bataquitos project and that a landscape architect and the hydrologist should work together for it to look natural. Chair Golich said this is in the discussion phase. Shawna Anderson will come back with updates. Carol Carr said if this is part of the I5 widening project they could do it right and plant it with the right native plants. Deputy Director Susan Carter said it is difficult to get plants to grow because of the high salt content of the soil. Art Schmitz questioned the length of the SCE participation since the nuclear generation station has closed. Executive Director Bobertz reported Southern California Edison has to maintain and monitor the restoration for at least 29 more years.

4. Park Project Status

- a. Ranger Maintenance Building - Deputy Director Carter said that the name is Ranger Station and that an architect has come up with a site plan and they are gathering additional information for processing the required permits from the City and Coastal Commission. The plan will be brought to the next CAC meeting.
- b. Lagoon Open Air Classroom – Deputy Director Carter stated that the contractor's work is done. The rangers and volunteers will be busy constructing two wooden bridges, spreading

d.g. on the trails, planting and spreading mulch, putting in donor recognition on the boulders before the Grand Opening on May 13th at 10:00 a.m.

c. Sikes Adobe Creamery – Deputy Director Carter stated that the Grand Opening will be in June or July. Roof shingles and mud plaster is going on. The Friends of the Sikes Creamery are trying to get the items needed to furnish the inside. It is just about finished.

5. Communications – Bill Michalsky invited everyone to Lagoon Days, Sunday, April 13, 4:00 p.m. at the Powerhouse. There will be two speakers; John Hildebrand and Steve Schroeter. Linda Oster asked about beekeeping at Sikes - Susan Carter responded that a beekeeping class will be held on April 26th, but there will be no bee hives at Sikes. Carol Carr asked about the Visitor Center that was designed years ago. Director Bobertz stated that a meeting was scheduled with Supervisor Dave Roberts to revisit the design and fundraising. Deputy Director Carter stated that the Volunteer Appreciation event will be Sunday, June 1st at the Birdwing. Leana will be organizing the event. We have two new baby Rangers. Leana has a new baby boy and Jason has a new baby girl. Pat Whitt commented that the Riverscape newsletter has been forwarded to a lot of people. Phil Pryde noted that social media has a great value.

Adjournment: Chair Golich adjourned the meeting at 12:11. The next meeting will be June 6th.