



MINUTES
JOINT MEETING
**PARKS & RECREATION/PLANNING/
EQUESTRIAN COMMISSIONS**
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2011, 7:00 P. M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS CONF ROOM
245 E. BONITA AVE.

PRESENT

Planning Commission:

Chairman Jim Schoonover
Vice Chair David Bratt
Commissioner John Davis
Commissioner Stephen Ensberg
Commissioner M. Yunus Rahi

Parks and Recreation Commission

Chair John Margis
Vice Chair Caryol Smith
Commissioner Susan Davis
Commissioner Georgia Florentine
Commissioner Jose Martinez
Absent: Commissioner Amanda Avery
Commissioner Frank Neal

Equestrian Commission:

Chair Rebecca Pike
Vice Chair Claudia Cook
Commissioner Yvette Picconi
Commissioner Sonya Servier
Absent: Commissioner Marca DeMonaco

City Councilman John Ebner
City Manager Blaine Michaelis
Assistant City Manager Ken Duran
Assistant City Manager of Community Development Larry Stevens
City Attorney Ken Brown
Director of Development Services Dan Coleman
Director of Parks and Recreation Theresa Bruns
Facilities Manager Karon DeLeon
Director of Public Works Krishna Patel
Assistant City Engineer David Gilbertson
Planning Commission Secretary Jan Sutton

1. CALL TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE

Planning Commission Chairman Schoonover called the joint meeting of the Planning, Parks and Recreation, and Equestrian Commissions to order at 7:03 p.m. and Planning Commissioner Bratt led the flag salute.

2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

No communications were made.

3. REVIEW OF NORTHERN FOOTHILLS EQUESTRIAN TRAIL STUDY

Assistant City Manager Larry Stevens stated it seemed appropriate to have all three Commissions consider this item as they all have some form of oversight associated with the proposed trail system. He stated when the property was zoned Specific Plan No. 25 (SP-25) in 1999, it was envisioned that there would be an equestrian trail system in the foothills. With recent approvals of the NJD development and the new house on the DeFalco parcel, Staff felt now was the time to consider trail opportunities. While there is a condition in the NJD tract map to provide an east/west connection through their project, the purpose of tonight's meeting is to look at other trail opportunities, mostly in the southern foothills, and the feasibility of developing those trails. He outlined the existing trails in the park and county properties, along with the Poison Oak Trail that is currently under reconstruction. The trail along Sycamore Canyon Road has been closed due to stormwater damage, and there are no current plans to bring it back into operation. There has also been historic use of various private properties for trails, typically using the motorways as a way to traverse them, which is a more informal system. The information provided in the package is Staff's best understanding of existing trails and their names, and the intent is to try and create a feasible trail system in the foothills.

Assistant City Engineer Dave Gilbertson went over the various parks and trails within the City's boundaries, and the legends used on Exhibit H. He stated there is a proposal to have the South 40 Acres dedicated to the City, and there is the possibility of a proposed trail and a refurbished trail in this area. He stated parts of the Wildwood Motorway would likely be incorporated into the NJD development. They also looked at connecting to the trail coming from Shirimar, which currently deadends before the South 40 Acres; however, it is so overgrown, it would be cost prohibitive to build a trail from that area. It is similar to the Sycamore Canyon trail in that the creek in the area could wash it out each year, so maintaining it in passable condition could be very difficult. In trying to identify a connection from the north part of the foothills down to Sycamore Canyon, there is the possibility of extending the Secondary Trail shown in blue to connect to the Strawberry Trail. There is currently a gate between the City property and the South 40, but felt they could provide a connection to where the bunkhouse is and went over what it would take to bring the Secondary Trail into usable condition.

Planning Commissioner Rahi asked if the Poison Oak Trail is a primary connection. He also asked if the Secondary Trail and the solid red trail shown in the South 40 were both necessary or are they to choose between one or the other.

Assistant City Engineer Gilbertson stated the Poison Oak Trail is a main trail. The Secondary Trail connection will cost more to improve and maintain. As far as if both proposed trails are necessary, that will be up to the City to decide; both are possible with however many connections are needed. The Reservoir Access Road can be reached from both Sycamore Canyon and the DeFalco property and, while it is not defined as a trail by the County, it is a maintained dirt road which provides viable access from the south to the north.

It was also noted that the Poison Oak Trail connects to the Reservoir Access Road and then up to the Wildwood Motorway.

Assistant City Manager Stevens stated they have had discussions with Mr. DeFalco, who currently lets people use the trails on his property, about formalizing that arrangement. He has indicated he may be willing to do that.

Planning Commissioner Davis asked if the Shirlmar trail was extended, would it still deadend at the NJD property. He also asked how do riders using the trails on Allen and San Dimas Avenues access Horsethief Canyon Park.

Assistant City Engineer Gilbertson stated if the Shirlmar trail was to extend to that point, they might be able to grade a connection to the proposed trails in the NJD project. However, **Assistant City Manager Stevens** stated NJD was opposed to the proposed trail on the eastern portion of the property because it came up by one of the graded house pads. The feasibility of extending the trail from Shirlmar was more dependent on the lower portion and there are more difficulties there.

Equestrian Chair Pike stated riders using the trails on Allen and San Dimas Avenues come up San Dimas Avenue to Maverick and then follow the trail east into the park.

Equestrian Commissioner Picconi stated she used to ride up the Shirlmar trail 30 years ago and it was never washed out by the weather. She tried recently to go up there but she couldn't get past the fence and there was a woman who came out and yelled at her for being up there.

Assistant City Engineer Gilbertson stated they have also spoken to the woman who owns the property near the top. They tried various ways to get down to the old trail but the slope is so overgrown, they were unsuccessful.

Equestrian Commissioner Picconi stated she used to take that trail up to where the barn is on the South 40, and while it was nice trail back then, it was very narrow in places and should only be used by more experienced riders.

Equestrian Chair Pike stated she liked the plan overall but felt the most essential trails would be connections made by the red and blue dotted lines because this would create loops going in two directions. Not having connectivity has been an issue and she felt this was a nice plan.

Parks & Rec Chair Margis stated he supported the desirability of pursuing the Shirlmar trail, and if it can't connect to the NJD trail in the North 40, to try and create a connection to the trail in the South 40. He would also like to see if some type of connection could be made over to Amelia Avenue.

Planning Commissioner Ensberg asked how many riders do they think would utilize these trails.

Equestrian Commissioner Cook stated there are over 100 horses stabled at Ann Meredith's on Foothill Boulevard. The other thing to consider is there are a lot of hikers that would utilize the trails as well.

Assistant City Manager Ken Duran stated there are over 200 horses stabled at the Sycamore Canyon Equestrian Center at Horsethief Canyon Park.

Assistant City Manager Stevens stated that as well as the more than 300 horses at the boarding facilities, there are many properties in that area that have horses kept on-site, so there would be quite a lot of people who could utilize the trails.

Planning Commissioner Davis asked if the reason the woman at the top of Shirlmar was stopping people was because the trail was crossing her property.

Assistant City Engineer Gilbertson stated her backyard opens up to the trail, but he wasn't sure if it actually crossed her property or goes in along San Dimas Avenue.

Assistant City Manager Stevens stated they would work with the property owner if they were going to take the trail along there, and thought he was hearing the Commissioners say they would be interested in having the extension explored further. In regards to the suggestion to try and create a connection to Amelia Avenue, once the road to the NJD project is constructed up Cataract Avenue, it may not be possible to create an east/west crossing. There may be an opportunity to provide access if they were traveling along Foothill Boulevard, but thought Glendora does not consider that route viable for trails.

City Manager Michaelis stated the thing to keep in mind is the City can build trails but they tend to be difficult to maintain. They are looking for a prioritization on not only what is worth constructing, but what is worth the continued cost to maintain, such as is it better to extend the Shirlmar trail or build the proposed trails in the South 40, because they can only cover so much for maintenance.

Planning Chair Schoonover asked if the park fees that are collected from developers are dedicated to just general park and recreation uses or can they be designated to something specifically, i.e., the fees collected for the Brasada project would be used for trail maintenance in the foothills.

City Manager Michaelis stated it might be possible to use those fees when collected towards trail maintenance, but that would be something that would have to be discussed in the future.

Planning Chair Schoonover stated maybe the City could apply for State grant funds to help with costs.

Assistant City Manager Stevens stated they have mostly used County funds for most of the trail work, including Sycamore Canyon and Horsethief Canyon Park. In response to questions about prioritizing, he stated the solid red line trail is similar to the Poison Oak Trail in that it is there but it needs work to improve it.

Planning Commissioner Davis felt that would be a lower priority than the Secondary Trail extension and the dotted red line trail, because you could use Maverick for an east/west access.

Assistant City Manager Stevens stated it seemed like there was support to focus on the South 40 red trails and the Secondary Trail, and to look at the Shirlmar Trail as a possible future trail.

Equestrian Commissioner Cook felt connectivity was very important in that area because with the Sycamore Canyon Trail closed, Sycamore Canyon Road is too dangerous to use with the people who drive recklessly out of Camp Glen Rocky.

Planning Chair Schoonover opened the meeting for public comment. Addressing the Commissioners was:

Stan Stringfellow, representing NJD, 326 W. Arrow Highway, stated overall he felt this plan was a good beginning. He stated they are proposing an opportunity to put a trail along the southern portion of their property parallel to Dalepark which would allow people to get over to Shirlmar and then across to Maverick, allowing them to bypass Foothill Boulevard. He also thought the Secondary Trail connection to the Strawberry Trail was a good idea. He expressed concerns over opening up the Shirlmar trail again because it was originally blocked off following several accidents where horses rolled due to the narrowness of the trail. It would also connect to an area that is slated to be preserved by the Army Corp of Engineers. He also thought there was another trail below the Poison Oak Trail which would need clearing but could present an opportunity for another trail.

Mr. Stringfellow stated while they are conditioned to provide trails as part of the NJD project, they had concerns over the design in a couple of areas, and it doesn't appear there is any evidence in the study that any biological impacts were taken into consideration for these trails. He encouraged RKA to carefully consider SUSMP and Water Quality Board guidelines, especially when considering the design of trails on their property. They are working with the Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Fish and Game to determine areas on their site that can be used for mitigation. The location of those areas could have an impact on how trails are designed and where they could be located, and it may require fencing to be installed to protect conservation areas. He felt the study was incomplete and they needed further information before they can determine where trails should be placed.

Planning Commissioner Davis asked if there are proposed mitigation areas in the South 40.

Stan Stringfellow, NJD, stated potentially. They did not know what the City will end up doing in regards to that property so they are studying all areas. If the City does not take possession of the property, then they will use it for mitigation.

Assistant City Manager Stevens stated they are looking in the area near the caretaker unit, and what they are proposing would go along the edge of the graded pad and not into the jurisdictional gully area. The green trail is not in an area NJD is looking for mitigation in.

Stan Stringfellow, NJD, stated the green trail was a graded road and is overgrown at the point where the trail is proposed. They are concerned about how waste is going to be contained and how run-off will be handled at various locations based on water quality required. He would like them all reviewed in the design and study.

There being no further comments, the public comments were closed.

Assistant City Manager Stevens stated they will do some additional work on the study based on tonight's comments and then determine what the next step in the process will be. They may even have more information about the development project and possible issues at that time. This issue will probably be incorporated into budget discussions for next fiscal year to see what they will be able to accomplish financially. He stated if anyone has further questions or suggestions after this meeting, to pass them along for consideration through Staff or their Commission Liaisons.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Sutton
Planning Commission Secretary

Approved by Planning Commission:
Approved by Parks and Recreation Commission:
Approved by Equestrian Commission:

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