



Parks & Recreation Commission Staff Report

To: Parks and Recreation Commissioners
For the meeting of May 20, 2014

From: Theresa Bruns, Director of Parks and Recreation

Subject: Review of Proposed Development at 299 E. Foothill Boulevard as it relates to Horsethief Canyon Park

Summary

A development is currently proposed for the property at 299 E. Foothill Boulevard which considers extension of Walnut Avenue into Horsethief Canyon Park.

It is within the prescribed duties of the Parks and Recreation Commission to advise the City Council on matters relating to the development of public parks, and to take initiative in planning for future parks and recreation areas and facilities, as well as determining means of keeping present areas and facilities at an acceptable level.

The purpose of the Commission's review of the proposed development at 299 E. Foothill Boulevard is to provide comments and/or recommendations to the City Council regarding the potential extension of Walnut Avenue as an access to Horsethief Canyon Park.

BACKGROUND – The Proposed Development

The current property owner at 299 E. Foothill Boulevard is in negotiations with the Olson Company to purchase and develop the site.

The project includes the proposed development of 48 two story single-family detached homes on approximately 6.4 acres in a gated community. The project proposes 232 parking spaces, including garage spaces; 52,895 square feet of open space including a multi-purpose equestrian trail along the west project boundary, and 24,928 square feet of central neighborhood recreation area at the east end of the site consisting of a swimming pool, children's play area, bocce ball, and horseshoes. The residential homes will be developed in 5 phases with 9 homes in Phases 1 and 2; 10 homes in Phase 3; 8 homes in Phase 4; and 12 homes in Phase 5. Walnut Avenue will provide access to the project from Foothill Boulevard. Walnut Avenue may ultimately be extended north by the City to connect with an existing parking lot in Horsethief Canyon Park. However, any future extension beyond the site is not part of this project.

As part of the proposed project the applicant will be developing a trail to City standards that will connect with the existing trail on the north side of Foothill Boulevard and run north along the west property line of the project to connect with Horsethief Canyon Park. At this time it is the City's intent to manage and maintain the trail once it has been completed.



BACKGROUND – Horsethief Canyon Park

In 1979, the City purchased the 110 acre property now known as Horsethief Canyon Park. Following the purchase, an architectural firm was hired to develop a master plan for the park taking into consideration the needs and desires of the community at that time. The conceptual plan at that time included sports fields, but no improvements were made at that time due to lack of funds for construction.

In 1986, construction of the sports field facilities planned for Horsethief Canyon Park were moved to San Dimas High School and the SportsPlex facilities were built.

In 1995, following many public meetings, the City Council approved a conceptual design for the park and authorized design development for phase I construction. The plans and specifications for the project were developed, the project was put out to bid and construction began.

In 1999, Phase I construction was complete and Horsethief Canyon Park was opened. The park's amenities included: infrastructure improvements; an access road; parking lot; a lighted soccer field; a practice soccer field; a picnic area; playground area; restroom building; multi-use trails; horseshoe pits; and landscape enhancements.

In 2000, a three-party agreement was approved with the City, Rodeo Committee and Sycamore Equestrian Center for the development of an equestrian arena for community use and for the annual rodeo. Construction of the Community Equestrian Arena was completed in 2001.

In 2003, following public participation meetings, the City Council approved the design for Horsethief Canyon Park Phase II and authorized design development.

July, 2005 Phase II grand opening was held, with amenities including: dog park; multi-use open green space area with walking path, picnic shelter and climbing boulder play area; and enhanced landscaping.

For discussion, is the opportunity for road connectivity from Foothill Boulevard to Horsethief Canyon Park via the extension of Walnut Avenue.

Historic Perspective:

1. Park site plans have included the road extension:
 - Sycamore Park and Academy of Western Arts – 1980's
 - Horsethief Canyon Park Conceptual Design Plan – approved 1995
2. During the planning and public input process in the early 1990's, Public Works staff met with the owner of 299 E. Foothill Boulevard to discuss an exchange of property in order to accommodate park access from Foothill Blvd. Property owner declined.
3. Public Works prepared cost estimates for the entire road design, from Sycamore Canyon Road to Foothill Boulevard during the Conceptual Design phase in 1995.

Current Perspective:

1. 110 acre park site currently served by one point of access, one way in and out.
2. Currently the west end of the park, i.e. dog park, is inaccessible during the weekend of the San Dimas Rodeo.
3. Future park development phases will increase use opportunities and the need for greater circulation and parking.
4. Emergency service access to park and foothills is limited to Sycamore Canyon Road.
5. Evacuation route in the event that San Dimas Canyon Road is washed out or impacted by fire or flood.

Considerations:

1. Noise impact to residents on Longhorn (4) and Butterfield (4)
 - a. Minimum 20' setback from rear of property line to road
 - b. Setback to include multi-use trail, landscape and trees
2. Traffic impacts
 - a. Road will service the 48 home development and the park
 - b. Intersection on Foothill regardless of extension into the park

RECOMMENDATION

Facilitate discussion and formulate recommendation from the Parks and Recreation Commission for the City Council.