



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE  
OPEN SPACE / CONSERVATION ELEMENT COMMITTEE**

Monday, January 12, 2009

6:30 p.m.

Pasadena City Hall

Grand Conference Room S-O38 (Basement of City Hall – southeast corner)  
100 North Garfield Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101

The meeting was called to order by Chair Richard Janisch at 6:40 pm.

Present: Anne Dove, Don Bremner, Edwina Travis Chin (Vice-Chair), Laura Garrett, Madhu Kumar, Mike Coppess, and Richard Janisch (Chair)

Absent: Belinda Faustinos, Cara McLane Meyer (alternate), Carolyn Naber (alternate), George Wilson (alternate), Jane Beesley (alternate), Paul Edelman, Roger Gray (alternate), Stephen Acker (alternate), Tim Wendler (alternate)

City Staff: Laura Dahl and Scott Reimers

**I. Public Comment on Matters Not On the Agenda**

Dale Trader, representative from Pasadena Neighborhood Coalition, has been meeting with elected officials to develop an urban trail plan in conjunction with the Arroyo Seco Foundation. Mr. Trader presented a handout/map highlighting the former rights-of-way of the major freight railroads (Union-Pacific, Burlington Northern-Santa Fe). For the most part these rights-of-way are vacant – without permanent structures, or are owned by Caltrans. Mr. Trader also presented pictures from Ojai showing the possibility of changing these rights-of-way to bikeways. He also discussed the notion of a Holly Street extension towards the east for trail linkages. Burlington Northern-Santa Fe has a real estate representative.

Mike Coppess discussed his field inspection with Mr. Trader along the vacated railroad rights-of-way along Foothill Blvd. and Walnut Street.

Committee Member Bremner asked how the trails would cross north-south streets. Mr. Trader mentioned that La Cañada-Flintridge has done some of these crossings and uses painted crosswalks (the Flint Wash Trail).

Committee Member Dove has contacts for the other real estate representatives from the other railroads. Whittier has a Union Pacific right-of-way that was changed into a trail.

Vice-Chair Chin asked how wide this easement is. Mr. Trader stated that it is probably 25 feet wide. There is some sense of urgency because Mr. Trader and Committee Member Coppess observed some of the right of way had been changed to parking lots and had block walls around them. Fritz Puelicher mentioned that some of the right of way is being used by car dealers. Ms. Dahl stated that portions of the area were acquired by the City and sold to the adjoining property owners.

Vice-Chair Chin raised the issue about potential private encroachments of the industrial park (PD-1) at Eaton Canyon Wash into the open space areas. Vice-Chair Chin observed that there is no apparent visual boundary between the private and public lands. She inquired if the industrial park users paved over public property, and asked what legal position exists between the city and commercial property owner in terms of reclaiming land if there has been an encroachment? Ms. Dahl stated that staff would look into the matter and report back to the Committee.

Pasadena Neighborhood Coalition is concerned over the ice skating rink that is planned to be built in an open space corridor. Mr. Trader stated that the rink should be located in the Central District.

## **II. Approval of minutes from December 8, 2008 - See Attachment 1**

Committee Member Bremner motioned to approve the minutes and Vice-Chair Chin seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and the minutes were approved without changes.

## **III. Presentation by Richard Gomez, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works Watershed Management Division**

Provided a PowerPoint Presentation on the LA County Department of Public Works function.

Fritz Puelicher asked Mr. Gomez if there are any plans to take the concrete out of the Eaton Wash and change it into a more natural system. Mr. Gomez stated that while working on a project at Tujunga Wash, LA County Public Works found after conducting a hydrology study that found in order to remove the concrete channel walls two rows of homes on either side of the wash would have to be removed in order to maintain the same level of flood protection. There are plans under consideration for naturalizing the Arroyo Seco.

Chair Janisch asked if there was an assessment of where the channels in Pasadena are located. What steps should the committee take to initiate some of the naturalization projects? Mr. Gomez stated that the committee would first need to identify locations and the type of project, and then submit a Partnering Form or apply for a Flood Control Permit. LA County Public Works has a drainage Thomas Guide that will show the larger systems in the Flood Control District and has plans in its map vault.

Mr. Trader expressed hope that the committee would work with the surrounding communities so that trails can be connected. A water filtration system, such as the one located at Sun Valley Park would work well for Hahamonga or the JPL filtration tanks.

Meredith Mackenzie, from the Arroyo Seco Foundation, stated the lead agency over the clean up of water in Hahamonga is the EPA, as it is a Super Fund site. There is a dynamic positive interaction between the County and the City's Public Works Department/Parks and Natural Resources Division that is going on behind the scenes. Rosa Laveaga and Martin Pastucha from the Pasadena Public Works

Department should be contacted for cross-internal information regarding the City's current activities regarding agency interaction.

Committee Member Dove asked about the status of the Army Corps study for the Arroyo Seco improvements. Ms. Mackenzie answered that it is waiting for final appropriations by the Federal government. It will take two years to complete the study once funds are released.

Vice-Chair Chin asked if the County had anything that indicates any heavy flood areas in Pasadena, and would these areas benefit from similar types of solutions, such as in Sun Valley? Mr. Gomez responded that it would be necessary to look into unmet drainage needs to determine potential flooding issues. Vice-Chair Chin also inquired about the soccer field off the Eaton Canyon Wash next to the flood control land at Sierra Madre and Washington. She asked if the Flood Control District has jurisdiction over those types of projects since ground water quality is important? Ms. Dahl answered that the City has jurisdiction over development standards. Each local agency is responsible for the run off from development into the county flood control. If runoff is directed into the wash then a permit would be required.

Committee Member Bremner asked if there was a state law setting up TDMLs (Total Daily Maximum Load) that communities must abide by, by a certain year? Mr. Gomez answered by stating that the City of Pasadena is retrofitting 400 catch basins to reduce storm water pollution. The County is now embarking implementations plans for metals and bacteria.

Vice-Chair Chin asked if there are any regulations or guidelines on how much water must be reclaimed by a certain date for each community. Mr. Gomez stated that there are no requirements for communities to hold back water.

Committee Member Dove asked about the organizational structure for regulating the local watersheds. Angela George is in charge of the Los Angeles River area. Mr. Gomez handles the Upper Los Angeles River Watershed including the Arroyo Seco. Giles Colmes oversees the Lower Los Angeles River Watershed which includes the Rio Hondo and Ballona Creek.

Committee Member Coppess inquired how to get access to walk the Eaton Wash? Mr. Gomez replied that access would require a permit from LA County Public Works (which is located at 900 S. Fremont Avenue, 8<sup>th</sup> floor in Alhambra.) A Temporary Entrance Permit would cost approximately \$50. There is a large water facility south of the Eaton Dam. Committee Member Coppess stated that it would be helpful to walk the wash with someone that can describe the constructions.

#### **IV. Public Participation Program**

Traveling Kiosk: Ms. Dahl noted that MIG is completing the questionnaire. It will be e-mailed and placed on the web when complete. The kiosk is intended to travel to public places and public meetings. Kiosk information was presented. Three panels are included—the first discusses conservation, the second discusses open space, and the third discusses public participation. Staff would like to have it at the Neighborhood Church's event on January 31. Committee Member Coppess thought it looked good and interesting—something he would stop and look at.

Vice-Chair Chin asked if there would be a student and adult kiosk. Ms. Dahl stated that the one kiosk is meant to be targeted for all age groups. Committee Member Garrett felt the wording looked to be appropriate based on her experience with the Forest Service—the design should be as simple as possible, eye catching as possible, with as few words as possible. Committee Member Bremner agreed that the design looked right—the organization appears good. Three panels seemed just about right. Vice-Chair Chin offered consideration of a fourth panel that people could write on a post-it and attach it to somewhere on the kiosk or mark where you live. Ms. Dahl reminded the Committee that staff would not always be at the kiosk so they should consider the kiosk's maintenance. Linda Zinn suggested just asking for zip codes and making other fields optional. Committee Member Dove suggested pairing the dots with a numbered questionnaire. The questionnaire will be used to populate the mailing list. Vice-Chair Chin suggested the conservation panel should include the word sustainability along with a note on the kiosk about the on-line green test. If people want the kiosk to come to their event they should contact Laura Dahl. Ms. Dahl said she would let the committee members know when kiosk is finished. Vice-Chair Chin also suggested that the kiosk should include the word recycling and highlight the number and value of light bulbs that the City just gave away.

Community Fair: The Community Fair has been scheduled for Saturday, February 28 at City Hall Courtyard, 9 am -12 pm event. The venue offers shelter in case it rains. Tours of City Hall could be offered as well to showcase the green technologies incorporated into the refurbishment/seismic retrofit.

Staff is searching for an inspiring speaker with Judy Wilson of the MIG consultant team. Chair Janisch asked if other departments be there. He was interested in having booths from other organizations and departments. Staff will need to send out invitations for groups outside of the City. Ms. Dahl read a list of potential organizations. The committee suggested other names: California Native Plant Society, Pasadena Walks, Equestrian Trails Inc./Rose Bowl Riders, Altadena and La Canada Trails Folks, and the Altadena Crest Trail. The committee should e-mail Laura Dahl if any other groups should be considered.

Staff would like to have booths to educate the public and get information including maps to interact with—where they live and where they go. Staff is considering a photo contest —the kiosk would solicit photos as well as the website to be presented at the workshop; some display of photos at the workshop; The purpose of this first workshop is educate people what we doing, conservation actions in process, concerns from residents, resident visioning. Staff is working at developing interactive stations.

Chair Janisch asked if there would be a process schedule for the element of future outreach events and meetings to hand out at the Fair. Ms. Dahl replied that yes that could be possible.

Committee Member Anne Dove asked how long the kiosk will be used. The kiosk would be used from before the kick-off event and extend until the end of the process. Staff can change the questionnaire and content on the kiosk accordingly.

Staff is considering having small groups or other activities. Committee Member Garrett suggested it would work better to have staff and committee members available to answer questions from the public. Vice-Chair Chin suggested having areas dedicated to certain topics where people can interact. Ms. Dahl suggested a fluid and unstructured process so that people can leave when they want. The advertisement would state when the formal activities will occur. Chair Janisch offered consideration of a more structured workshop. Vice-Chair Chin stated that the first step is getting the word out and get the

public excited—get them hooked on coming to another event in the future. She also suggested that there should also be recycling bins all around. Committee Member Bremner suggested that the committee members have name tags so that they can be identified as members of the Open Space and Conservation Element Committee and as a resource to people in attendance.

Chair Janisch asked that staff mention that we plan to do tours and site visits on forms used for populating the mailing list.

Ms. Dahl stated that staff is proposing to have some kid-friendly activities at the community event. Staff will talk to the Eaton Canyon Nature Center about a mobile exhibition. Linda Zinn, suggested partnering with Kidspace as well for some environmental exhibits and activities. Staff will look at what giveaway items would be available—light bulbs and coloring books. Chair Janisch stated that the Tree People should be invited—they may give out trees for the event or have ideas for children’s activities.

Committee Member Bremner offered that Tim Brick does an impersonation of William Mulholland. He and Michelle Zack do something where they perform as Benjamin Eaton and his wife.

The committee scheduled a special meeting on January 26, 2009. It would primarily be on the design and setup of the community event. Vice-Chair Chin suggested that a follow-up meeting be scheduled to make sure the kiosk is as clear as possible. The committee could talk about presence at the Neighborhood Church Green Event, the kickoff event, and future workshops. There would be no guest speaker. MIG would be present.

## **V. Open Space Land Inventory**

Ms. Dahl presented the Land Inventory criteria. The inventory builds on objective criteria and factual data. Ms. Dahl presented two maps showing an aerial photograph overlaid with information on vacant parcels. The purpose of the maps was to show that many open space areas might include some parcels that are not vacant. Vice-Chair Chin asked what criteria are used to determine the potential of a land parcel to be considered as open space. Ms. Dahl identified two property types—residual open space of existing development and other properties that have potential to be acquired or protected as open space. Committee Member Garrett suggested a workshop topic of exploring the use of easements; perhaps discussed at second workshop.

Vice-Chair Chin suggested that the committee consider urban open spaces for connectivity to the outside edges. This is related to improving water quality.

Committee Member Anne Dove suggested consideration should be given to data collection that is not driven by parcel information. An opportunity driven analysis should be conducted; the overlaying land uses is the last criterion considered. The parcel based view does not take into account the trails, connectivity, and systems of the City. Maybe the maps need to show soil permeability and where wetlands were and compare to storm drain locations to show areas where percolation can occur.

Committee Member Garrett asked how often is the California Natural Diversity Database list updated? Committee Member Dove responded that the database is based on voluntary submittals; it is not comprehensive or systematic. Ms. Dahl suggested that staff might also look at EIRs for recent wildlife

information. Committee Member Coppess suggested identifying and surveying rights-of-way and easements for potential trails.

Under Watershed Area, change to the County or the RMC. Committee Member Dove suggested obtaining data of the permeability of the soil, Raymond Basin. PWP may have information on permeability of the soil.

## **VI. Eaton Wash Trail Project**

Laura Dahl, and Chair Richard Janisch and Committee Member Coppess met with Julianna Delgado to talk about using Cal Poly students study areas of interest to the Committee. Possible projects include Earthside Nature Center and the city-owned site at 175 and Kinneloa. At that meeting, Ms. Delgado presented information on the Emerald Horseshoe Concept Plan prepared by Cal Poly students. Chair Janisch would like to post the Concept Plan on the website or send it to committee members. The idea is to take the concept plan and turn it into a master plan and get it incorporated into the CIP. The Emerald Horseshoe Concept Plan may need to go to Recreation and Parks Commission for review and adoption. Ms. Dahl, we need to look at whether this plan would conflict with other plans. Committee Member Bremner commented that the final plans that the County has for the Altadena Crest Trail have not been released due to ongoing litigation.

## **VII. Agenda Items for Next Regular Meeting and Special Meeting On January 26, 2009**

- Continue with participation and kick off
- Invitation for groups.
- February Meeting
- Elizabeth Pomeroy will be first choice as the guest speaker.
  - If not available then, staff will find someone else. Michelle Zach might be another person to invite. Other guest speakers could be invited from PWP, Edison, Pasadena Real Property Division, Army Corp of Engineers. Perhaps something on more sustainability such as on the IRP and the water shortage plan.
- Continue with the land inventory.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

Chair Janisch adjourned the meeting at 9:15 pm. Committee Member Bremner motioned to approve. Vice Chair seconded.

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Robert Avila, Recording Secretary