



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE
OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION ELEMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING**

Monday, March 9, 2009

6:30 p.m.

Pasadena City Hall

Grand Conference Room SO38 (Basement of City Hall – southeast corner)

100 North Garfield Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101

Web page - www.cityofpasadena.net/OpenSpace

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

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

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

City Staff: Laura Dahl, Rusty Whisman (intern)

I. Public Comment on matters not on the Agenda

Mr. Kneisel commented that having regular committee meetings twice per month would be appropriate. Chair Janisch responded that meetings would be held according to committee needs, and would be scheduled twice per month when needed, as in January and February.

II. Guest Presentation – David Ford, Region Manager for Local Public Affairs, Southern California Edison

Mr. Ford presented information about Southern California Edison's Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project, which will deliver approximately 4,500 megawatts to an estimated 3.5 million homes of primarily wind-derived energy from the Tehachapi Wind Resources area. The proposed project will result in the construction of 250 miles of high voltage (500 kilovolt lines) over 250 miles. Mr. Ford stated that the project would use Edison's existing right-of-way in the Pasadena area, and that it would require one additional 220 kilovolt power line to be strung through existing towers. The project, according to Mr. Ford, is part of Edison's \$18 billion in upgrades planned over the next decade, and is in line with municipal and California dictates which call for a greater portion of energy to come from renewable sources. Mr. Ford also noted that the Draft Environmental Impact Report is currently taking public comments, and will be made available to the committee and the public.

Committee member Kumar asked if there was cause for concern about the project's impacts. Mr. Ford responded that it was already within the right-of-way in the Pasadena area. Vice Chair Chin expressed concern about how this proposed project would affect land currently designated as open space in Edison's right-of-way, since the charge of the committee is to plan for open spaces. Committee Member Bremner asked if Edison's current policy of not constructing any permanent structures in the right-of-way still stands, and if it will in the future. Mr. Ford said he would forward these questions to Edison's real estate department to better answer these questions. Chair Janisch asked if Edison had explored the idea of placing their lines underground. Mr. Ford said that he had not heard of placing a 500 kilovolt line underground, and that it would be expensive when compared to using already-existing towers. Committee member Garrett asked Mr. Ford, referring to page six of his presentation, whether the projects' towers were pre-existing or not. Mr. Ford responded that some would be new, some would use existing towers, but that there would be no new towers in the Pasadena area.

Mr. Ford thanked the committee and public attendees for their attention and the opportunity to speak, and stressed that he wanted to be a liaison between the committee and Edison. He stated that he would direct the committee's questions back to Edison, and that he would send an electronic version of the draft EIR to Ms. Dahl to put on the Committee's webpage.

III. Approval of minutes

Committee Member Kumar moved to approve the minutes and Committee Member Bremner seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and the minutes were approved without changes.

IV. Community Fair Recap and Questionnaires follow-up

Ms. Dahl thanked the people who attended and volunteered at the Community Fair. Vice Chair Chin expressed the need to more widely publicize community involvement events. Ms. Dahl commented that the event had been promoted through the Pasadena Weekly, In Focus, erroneously in the Pasadena Star News, emails sent to neighborhood association, and other means. A possible phone tree was discussed for future events. Chair Janisch stated that he received positive feedback about the accessibility of the website.

Ms. Dahl invited the public attendees and committee members to collectively summarize the comments received from the Community Fair and returned questionnaires. Ms. Dahl wrote down common themes from the questions as committee and community members called them out.

Community Fair Comments:

Question 1A sought to understand where respondents went to go to see nature and open space, and what places might be included on a map of natural open spaces. The most common responses were:

- Edison Corridor
- Earthside Nature Center
- Pacific Electric right-of-way
- Hillsides around the Art Center
- General comments about using under-used areas
- Use pocket park inventory
- Parkways and median strips
- Schools – McKinley and Blair
- Hillside property – Ave. 64

Question 1B asked participants about the differences between the city's open spaces and natural areas in the past and present. Common themes included:

- More developed now
- Fewer trees now – groves gone
- Save what is left

Question 2A asked fair attendees to identify natural areas and resources that they hope residents will continue to see in fifty years. Most of the responses were locations already listed with little additional input. These were popular responses:

- Many comments about trails
- More open space
- More trees, native landscaping
- Linkages
- Accessibility
- Small open spaces
- Habitat areas
- Community gardens and fruit trees
- Places to just relax and sit

Question 3 asked what activities community members would like to do in Pasadena, and what would make it easier to participate in these activities. The following were common themes:

- Trails
- Bike Paths
- Places to do photography, paint
- Places for non-humans to live
- Hiking / walking
- Water – fishing, kayaking
- Restoring native habitats
- Horseback riding
- Communing with nature

Question 4 requested that fair participants make a pledge on how they might be more conservation-minded in their everyday lives. Most commonly pledged measures included:

- Stop cutting down trees
- Plant natives
- Energy efficient appliances
- Use green power
- Use less energy
- Reuse bags

Questionnaire Responses:

Question 4 from the Kids Questionnaire asked for ideas on how kids might preserve nature and protect the environment for the future. Response themes included:

- Using less water
- Conserve more
- Local foods

- Solar energy
- Public transit

Questions 3 and 4 from the Adult Questionnaire asked about Pasadena's biggest environmental problems, and what it would take for Pasadena to become a world-class city for conservation.

Themes of the responses to these questions were as follow:

- Renewable energy
- Education
- Green space and habitat
- Water
- Overdevelopment – lack of a plan
- Green development
- Air pollution
- Increase pedestrian friendliness
- Public Transportation
- Recycling – Business, Condos
- Restore, recapture natural spaces
- Lack of budget commitment
- De-channelizing the Arroyo
- Fencing

Question 2 from the Adult Questionnaire asked respondents to think about ways Pasadena can make sure people in Pasadena can always have natural open space as part of the city. The most common responses were:

- Protect what open space we have
- Acquire more open space
- Re-green and restore open spaces
- Require mitigation related to development
- Connectivity – accessibility
- Protect areas from defacement, littering
- Walking distance to open spaces
- More awareness of open spaces – educating kids through the curriculum, advertisement
- Access to open spaces – transit, bus ads

Question 1 from the Adult Questionnaire asked where respondents went to enjoy nature and open space. Popular destinations included:

- Arroyo Seco
- Hahamongna
- Eaton Canyon (some respondents mentioned it was overcrowded on the weekends)

Some of the overall themes of the comments received from both the Community Fair and questionnaires that could be used for a vision statement were:

- Education
- Habitat
- Overdevelopment
- More open space
- Linkages

- Accessibility
- Protect what we have and acquire more
- Require mitigation

V. General Plan Learning Event – tentatively scheduled for May 2, 2009

Ms. Dahl discussed the possibility of combining the next community involvement event with Open Space and Conservation elements with the event scheduled for the Land Use and Mobility elements. This event could be used for both information gathering as well as for disseminating information about general plans.

Ms. Dahl asked for suggestions for panel themes and speakers for this event. Ideas suggested for panels included how the Open Space and Conservation elements link to other elements, explanations of all of the elements and their focuses, and an overview of the general plan and how it relates to development and everyday life, as well as an explanation of why high-density development has been a goal. Other topics suggested included current legislation that affects community members, including Assembly Bill 32 and Senate Bill 375. Possible speakers for these panels included Rick Cole, Steve Preston, instructors from the UCLA and UC Irvine extensions, as well as planning staff and managers. Another panel topic put forth was on funding for open space and innovative ways of acquiring new open space. Speakers suggested included Elva Ya,nez of the California Endowment, Belinda Faustinos, Meredith Mackenzie, and Nancy Steele.

A presentation on ecosystem and nature services detailing how conserving nature produces benefits was suggested for a panel related to the Conservation Element. Possible presenters for conservation-based panels include a representative from USC's Sustainable Cities group, Tim Brick of MWD, Mickey Long of Eaton Canyon, presenters from an APA conference such as Ed McMahon of the Urban Land Institute, and a Humane Society urban wildlife specialist. Green infrastructure was also mentioned as a possible conservation-related panel topic.

VI. Agenda items for next meeting – April 13, 2009

Two agenda items are planned for the next meeting, which will be held April 13, 2009. The first is a presentation from a guest speaker, who has not yet been determined. Presenters suggested for the next meeting are Tom Selinske, a representative from the Pasadena Unified School District, a real estate representative from Caltrans, as well as Meredith Mackenzie and Tim Brick.

The second item planned for the next committee meeting is a review of the Land Use Inventory, which City staff is in the process of preparing

VII. Adjournment

Chair Janisch motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 p.m. Chair hearing no opposition. Meeting adjourned.