

**Approved Meeting Minutes**  
**PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
 7-26-10

ATTENDING: Bank, Coomber, Kirby, Southworth, Hudson, Soderstrom, Madison, Volin,  
 Weiss, Walkling, Madsen, Vann, Simmons, Pellegrini, Shalaby  
 NOT ATTENDING: Beyaert, Williams, Godfrey, Johnson, Mercurio, Walters,  
 STAFF ATTENDING: Barial, Pfuehler, Wiese, Rivoire, Escobar, Breines, Johnson, Cameron  
 GUESTS: Director Ayn Wieskamp  
 PUBLIC: Norm Kidder

The meeting began at 7:01 p.m.

**1. Approval of Minutes:**

PAC member Volin moved and PAC member Vann seconded approval of the June 24, 2010 meeting minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved with edits.

**2. Introductions:**

Chair Kirby asked PAC members and District staff to introduce themselves, as well as members of the public.

**3. Board Member Comments:**

Director Wieskamp talked about her experience at the Dublin Hills dedication which was well attended and highly anticipated. She distributed the District's Green Transportation flyer to PAC members. The District is applying for a TIGER II grant from the federal Department of Transportation. Erich Pfuehler, Legislative Affairs Manager, added it is a highly competitive process and only about 1% of all applicants will be awarded grants. Wieskamp stated the Board's appreciation of staff during this time of budget constraint, as the District is holding open 35 positions in an effort to avoid layoffs. Wieskamp discussed the Stanford Staging area in Fremont. Fremont City Council member Suzanne Chan mentioned to Wieskamp the Mission Peak walk is very wet this year.

PAC Chair Kirby mentioned engaging with the City of Fremont to support building a bridge across the Alameda Creek along the Bay Trail. He added this is a project supported by the Mayor of Union City.

PAC member Vann noticed the sample support letter for the TIGER II grant application and asked if the letter needed to be signed by an elected official. Pfuehler responded that was an example, but anybody could send a support letter. Vann suggested each member of the PAC send a letter. PAC member Walkling asked about the deadline. Pfuehler answered August 10<sup>th</sup> and added letters should be sent to the District so they can be packaged together with the application. PAC member Simmons asked if this information was sent to the mayors. Pfuehler said not yet, only the state legislators have received the sample letter thus far. Shalaby asked if the text of the letter could be e-mailed to PAC members. Pfuehler responded he would do so.

**4. Public Comments:** None.

**5. Presentations:**

**a. Social Media Program Guidelines – Rosemary Cameron, AGM Public Affairs and Carol Johnson, Community Relations Coordinator**

AGM, Public Affairs, Rosemary Cameron, opened by stating social media has grown incredibly and is here to stay, namely: Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, You Tube and E- newsletters. It is imperative the District understand and develop access to it. Since 2007, the District has come to learn the website is the hub for social media. Input to the District via Flickr has been very robust and so successful that all of the pictures in the District's 2010 calendar came via Flickr posts. The cover of Living Landscape was a Flickr post. The District's Facebook fan page is going quite well, twittering has proven tremendously successful and the District is now being "followed" by the media. The District also has a channel on You Tube. Interestingly, You Tube is now the second heaviest hit website in the world. Google is the first. The District has 3,500 fans on its Facebook page, over 1,400 followers on Twitter, 801 photographers in a Flickr group and over one million unique users have used the District's website. The District added a share button to the website. There are also unofficial Facebook fan pages. One challenge is to keep positive communication flowing so information on unofficial posts are not at cross

purposes with the District. For example, the Friends of the Botanic Garden met with District staff to discuss the Facebook page they intend to post.

Carol Johnson, Community Relations Coordinator, stated communication is changing. Old forms of communication, such as newspapers, are fading and social media is the new way people are getting information. Johnson mentioned Public Affairs staff receive Google alerts each day to see who is blogging about the District. The District needs a policy which provides administrative guidance to its employees who use social media. As an example, she referenced the Jr. lifeguard posting and working with them to ensure it better reflected their role with the District. Johnson continued the master plan update will use blogs and Facebook to engage the public.

PAC member Shalaby asked if each employee can currently blog or Facebook. Johnson answered that right now the Public Affairs Division is taking the lead on managing the flow of information. Currently, each division or District staff who wants information distributed via social media contacts Public Affairs to coordinate. PAC member Madsen commented the number of ways employees can communicate via social media are multiple and may be difficult to control through Public Affairs. He wondered if there were guidelines for how employees should represent the District in their private social media postings. PAC member Southworth asked if there were legal ramifications should the District implement a Board-approved policy. Cameron responded an overarching policy was not needed at this time, but guidelines were appropriate. PAC Chair Kirby, PAC member Weiss and John Escobar, AGM Operations all noted these guidelines provide etiquette to staff and are not a directive from the Board. PAC member Weiss asked if the District's social media goals are effectively communicated to staff during their orientation so they understand the benefit of social media to the District. Cameron responded this is a good idea and an employee-wide orientation had not been done yet. PAC member Soderstrom expressed concern that social media could inaccurately describe District trail and park use policies and/or locations. Cameron mentioned District social media refers users back to the website which is the definitive site for District communications. The District cannot really control unofficial posts, but history has shown social media self-polices itself for the most part. Escobar agreed more informed users typically correct misinformation. Johnson added out of 4,000 Facebook users, no negative postings have been made. Cameron added most people who join the District's Facebook are supporters and users of the parks. Kirby added social media users do self correct. Soderstrom expressed his surprise, as a frequent user of District parks, about how many people actually in the parks ignore the rules and postings. He wondered if social media could help communicate District park rules better. Kirby added social media can certainly be a tool, but some users may still need to learn the hard way. Escobar asked PAC members to let public safety know if they see violations while they are in the parks.

**b. Review Trails Checklist – Brian Wiese, Chief, Planning, Stewardship and GIS, and Raphael Breines, Senior Park Planner**

Brian Wiese, Chief, Planning, Stewardship and GIS opened with a quick overview of the trails checklist. The District has had a difficult time building new trails – particularly because of the endangered Alameda Whipsnake. The checklist is intended to provide guidance on which trails might be suitable for multiple use without physical changes which require CEQA evaluation. The goal is to strike an appropriate balance between bicyclists and all other users to ensure safe, enjoyable, responsible access to District trails. Raphael Breines, Senior Park Planner, has been running the checklist process for the last six years and is familiar with the views of certain environmental groups, as well as certain members of the bicyclist community. Almost everyone is dissatisfied with the process. The trails use checklist will likely be a big focus during the updated master plan process.

PAC member Simmons asked when Save Mt. Diablo buys land, does the District encourage them to develop trails. Weise responded no. Escobar added if a non-profit buys property and wants to develop trails they typically consult with the District.

Breines explained the checklist is a low tech matrix which has been in place since 2004. Over the last six years, over seven miles of trail have been added. Breines further explained members of the public can request a trail use change to the District. It is evaluated by the East Bay Area Trails Council (EBATC), which is not as active as it once was. Breines expressed his concern the public just does not have a good overall understanding of the trail system. The public needs to ask more of staff to get

them maps and lists, and be more strategic in trails they wish to change. The checklist is limited and has a very high threshold. Significant re-routing of trails may also require a land use plan change. PAC member Weiss commented he thinks the checklist is comprehensive. He wondered if change proponents should meet in the parks rather than Peralta Oaks. Breines commented this was a good point. Director Wieskamp commented the Board makes site visits to the trails in question. Weise added most meetings were at Peralta Oaks in order to facilitate maximum participation, but he concurred site meetings would be more effective. PAC member Simmons asked if alternate day usage was considered and if trail etiquette signage could be communicated via social media. Wiese stated the District did consider alternate day trail use, and it will be raised again within the master plan update. He also expressed an interest in speaking with Simmons more about the social media possibilities. PAC member Shalaby asked if the District acts as a mediator between different usage groups. PAC Chair Kirby added this was the original mission of EBATC. He added there were high expectations for this process, and it has become clear the checklist process is taking up to two years to complete. He is pleased to hear this will be discussed as part of the master plan update. The District should work to create a better way to address public requests and make the process more equitable. PAC member Bank added EBATC considered most of the easier trails already and the bicycle groups are discouraged because the remaining trails are mostly not suitable for multi-use. PAC member Madison commented that over time the types of people using District trails will change. The District needs to balance new uses with protection of the resources. Southworth went back to the alternate day use idea. Madison said it is currently used at Lafayette Reservoir and has been successful. Escobar added it would have to be a near district wide policy. Madison added he did not think people would be confused. Wieskamp thought alternate day use was a good idea. There was considerable discussion from staff and PAC members Coomber, Kirby and Hudson about the trails use change checklist.

**c. Black Diamond Mines Naming – Brian Wiese, Chief, Planning, Stewardship, GIS and Anne Rivoire, Park Planner**

Anne Rivoire, Park Planner began with a powerpoint presentation of this recommendation item. Black Diamond Mines staff, Traci Parent and Gary Righetini, picked the site. This item has been approved by the Executive Committee of the Board. Rivoire stated development of the Room G Right was a long range priority of John Waters. It is fitting and an honor to rename the room, the John Waters Auditorium. The current capacity is 50 visitors and the long range vision is to add a second entrance to increase the capacity to 285 people. PAC member Vann asked for an explanation of how a second entrance would increase the capacity from 50 to 285. Rivoire did so. Escobar pointed out a large portion of the room is full of sand. PAC member Volin added the mines would not exist without John Waters.

PAC member Volin moved approval and PAC member Pellegrini seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. October 17<sup>th</sup> is an open house at the mine. Chair Kirby asked District staff Pfuehler and Barial be given the flyer to distribute to the PAC.

**6. PAC Member Comments**

PAC member Soderstrom toured the north Garin land bank in an effort to better assess access points. It is a beautiful area with access from Don Castro and from Stonebrae. The next practical access is Bailey Ranch. There is a parcel on Five Canyons Parkway where the owner has run out of money. It would be an ideal spot for a staging area which would allow local horse owners to have access to the trails. He recommended PAC members tour the facility as well. Wiese suggested Soderstrom discuss his thoughts with the Planning Division. Kirby added he also toured the site and there are a number of challenges with regard to access. Additional questions regarding access were asked by Southworth and Wiese to which Kirby responded.

**7. Report from the Chair - Kirby spoke with AGM Mike Anderson about the master plan process, which is likely to take two years. The PAC will be allowed to have input and provide comments to the Executive Committee of the Board. Kirby announced master plan surveys were sent out this week. Wiese added the District is conducting surveys in an attempt to learn which policy issues are important to both park users and non-users. There will also be a scientific telephone survey and a non-scientific web survey. Kirby suggested a “featured button” for the master plan be added to the website. Escobar added the District has an email list of 35,000 who will get a notice about the web survey. Simmons asked if the telephone survey will include cell phones. Wiese thought only land lines which skews the results.**

Kirby wanted to remind committee members in their discussions with the public that their views are their own and not necessarily those of the PAC or the District. The PAC's function is to make recommendations collectively to the Board. Wiess agreed the PAC should speak with one voice. PAC meetings are for debate, but once a decision is reached that should be the position PAC members express in public.

**8. Board Committee Reports**

PAC member Bank did not attend the Operation Committee. Kirby attended the Executive Committee.

**9. Status of Recommendations** – Has been updated.

**10. Old Business** – None.

**11. New Business** – None

**12. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Summary of Actions:

1. The June 24, 2010 meeting minutes were unanimously approved with edits.
2. The PAC recommended the naming of a room in the Black Diamond Mines the "John Waters Auditorium."
3. There is no meeting in August.
4. The next meeting is September 27<sup>th</sup>, which is the annual barbecue meeting at Garin.
- 5.

Respectfully submitted,  
Yolande Barial