

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Police/Fire Conference Room
April 28th, 2014
400/420 15th St.
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

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13/1028.3 – Discussion of a Skateboard Park.....1

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:38PM.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

C. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Manna, Allard, Allen, and Hersman
Absent: Rothans, Cajka, Miketa
Others Present: Director of Parks and Recreation Mark Leyman, Recreation Services
Manager Idris Al-Oboudi and Recording Secretary Linda Robb.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The March 24, 2014 minutes were approved with the following correction:

Motion to adjourn vote – “No” vote corrected to read Commissioner Rothans

Commissioner Hersman motioned to approve minutes with correction. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Allard.

Ayes: Commissioners Manna, Hersman, Allen and Allard

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Cajka, Rothans, Miketa

E. CEREMONIAL

None.

F. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Chairman Manna opened the floor to audience participation and stated that no decisions have been made as to the possible location of the skateboard park. He stated that this meeting is about trying to move forward to present as a recommendation to the City Council. He stated that the Commission is not trying to force any locations upon anyone but that it is important to consider a skate park as we are surrounded by other cities providing skate parks .

Stephen Robins – 1500 block Herrin St. Mr. Robins inquired as to how the locations are narrowed down. Chairperson Manna explained that the locations scouted by Aaron Spohn were used as a starting point and various criteria are applied. Chairperson Manna assured Mr. Robins that the criteria would be made available to the public.

Barney Bouvier – 500 block 17th St. Mr. Bouvier favors the northeast Veterans Parkway. He also believes that it would be a good idea to poll high school and middle school students.

Blake Bordokas – 400 block 32nd St. Mr. Bordokas agrees that majority of users will be students but there is definitely an older element as well. He thinks it would be a good idea to reach out administratively through the city as it has been difficult to administer the survey on his own at school.

Commissioner Hersman mentioned that last time, the students filled out their surveys in class. And that this might be a better way to administer the survey.

George Bordokas – 400 block 32nd St. Mr. Bordokas stated that he sees all ages of skaters and skaters have many varied interests. Doesn't want to send his kids to other communities to skate. Studies have shown that skateboard parks are safe and that noise is not a big issue. Costs will be less by picking locations that do not need lots of demo and infrastructure.

Julie Profet -1300 block Lynngrove Dr. –Ms. Profet stated that sound studies do not address the actual sounds. Comparing skateboard sounds to cars is not realistic. Half of the Manhattan Beach population live nearer to Hermosa and El Segundo parks than they would be to a park in Manhattan Beach. Ms. Prophet suggested that Manhattan Beach help Hermosa Beach improve their park.

Stephanie Robins – 1800 block Herrin – Ms. Robbins stated that the Commission should focus on the areas that are least contentious. She stated that she doesn't think a skateboard park is a bad idea under the right circumstances but does not want the park to be a regional draw. She believes that the center field location at the back of Marine Park is a good location because it wouldn't impinge on as many residents.

Sharon Fuller – 1300 block Park View Ave. – Ms. Fuller feels the Marine Village location would be bad because of the large volume of traffic in the area. A skateboard park would cause much congestion and would be dangerous.

John Arazaga 1500 block 18th St. –Mr. Arazaga reiterated the sound issue. Skaters do not just skate on the ground. Skateboards on metal railing, jumping and landing all cause different types of sounds.

A resident near Polliwog Park (name not available) expressed concerns about putting more things in Polliwog park There are already traffic and parking issues on Redondo Ave. with kids running back and forth.

Seth Rementer- 30th street – Mr. Rementer stated that it's a mistake to consider adults as just another participant. The older element makes for a more enjoyable environment for all whether it be because it keeps the kids on better behavior or because they bring their kids. If we build a skatepark it should be built for kids as well as adults. He asked that questions for adults be added to the survey.

Laura Santos – Ms. Santos stated that we do not have to be the best at everything to attract people from other areas. For how few people will be using the skatepark, she believes the costs are not justified. Ms. Santos feels that it would be unwise to spend so much money when needs will change as skateboard park designs evolve.

Penny Bordokas - we've built all these fields for sports that accommodate far fewer people. instead of focusing on a number. Tennis courts

Annette Abram – resident of Senior Villas –Ms. Abram was concerned about the noise if park is located at Marine Village.

Kurt Schwader 1600 block 18th St. –Mr. Schwader stated that to say that it will only be used by a few isn't true, if we build a skateboard park, people from other areas will come. The environmental impact study that was done before the middle school was built said that there would be no impact, but there is. The sound of grinding skateboards is loud. The skateboard park noise is being compared to a dumpster and dumpsters are very loud.

Mike Hill - 19th St. – Mr. Hill what sites are on the list and how will the Commissioners decide which locations would be presented to the City Council. He asked if the residents located near a potential site opposed the location, would that be considered.

An unnamed resident asked if there has been outreach to local skate parks. Commissioner Hersman assured the resident that Staff had reached out. Director Leyman stated that the Ad-hoc Committee had visited several local skate parks. Recreation Services Manager Idris Al-Oboudi stated that to the high 90th percentile, most feedback has been positive. Some parks have made minor adjustments and improvements. Many of the negative concerns of the public did not come to fruition.

James Kessel - 5th St. –Mr. Kessel thinks that Marine Park is the best location. He spoke with a Westchester resident who said that her neighborhood has benefitted from the removal of the basketball courts and the installation of the skateboard park. Mr. Kessel inquired about fundraising. Commissioner Hersman stated that the Commission must first present options to the City Council and if the park is approved, there will be many opportunities to raise funds.

Stephanie Robins – Reminded the Commissioners that Polliwog Park is designed to be a catch basin for floodwaters and that the need for permeable land is essential to protect the surrounding community.

Stephen Robins is against the skate park being in Polliwog Park. He said that unless you live near the park, you do not know how noisy it is on a daily basis.

George Bordokas stated that Polliwog Park is very large. It seems like there may be a way to carve out 10,000 square feet for a Skateboard park in the 14 available acres.

One resident asked to please include skater input into the design of the park so that it isn't built badly.

Chairman Manna closed the floor to audience participation

G. GENERAL BUSINESS

13/1028.3 – Discussion of a Skateboard Park

Chairperson Manna, with regards to costs, stated that skateboard parks are a relatively inexpensive addition. Initially the building is expensive but there is not much maintenance required. The park would cost a quarter of what it cost to turf the soccer field. Chairperson Manna suggested that the criteria be measured against the Marine Avenue location as no better sites have been proposed. This is the site that staff had originally suggested.

Chairperson Manna stated that we would like to move forward with a recommendation to the City Council. There are many social benefits. With all of the concerns, most people have said that they aren't against a park, they just don't like the location and there are concerns about how the park will be funded.

Commissioner Hersman stated that since there are three commissioners absent, she would be more comfortable going through the list and discussing the locations instead of just picking one so everyone sees that the choices were carefully considered.

The following locations were reviewed by the Commissioners and eliminated for the reasons listed:

1. The Beach/Strand @ 26th/27th St. – The City does not have ownership of the land, needs to go through Coastal Commission
2. The Beach/Strand El Porto area – The City does not have ownership of the land, needs to go through Coastal Commission
3. Lower part of Bruce's beach - The City does not have ownership of the lower part of Bruce's beach, it belongs to the County.
4. Peck Ave. Begg Pool Parking lot – Include on list – Pros – impacts few residents, West of Begg Pool best location - There are current plans to revisit the pick up and drop off of MBMS on Peck Ave. west of Begg Field. Commissioner Allen stated that he likes this location as it impacts fewer residents. Commissioner Allard stated that the pool expansion may be an issue and parking spaces would be affected.
5. Bruce's Beach (upper terraced) – include on list – cons are terraced landscape will need costly grading
6. Ladera School Field – Would be very difficult to satisfy ADA requirements
7. MBUSD maintenance yard - The school district has potential future plans for this site. There is no infrastructure
8. Manhattan Village field south –the location
9. Polliwog Park, Open grass area along Redondo Ave.– Commissioner Allen is concerned about destroying the aesthetics of Polliwog Park with a street location.
10. Polliwog Park, area along Manhattan Beach Blvd. east of Historical Society House – This location is facing the street and would be very small.
11. Veterans Parkway –The end of Veterans Parkway is private property and the Veterans Parkway Master Plan was recently passed by City Council.
12. Manhattan Heights Paddle Tennis Courts – This location is very small, close to many residents and would require the removal of a well used amenity

The list was narrowed to the following locations which were further reviewed by the Commissioners.

1. Manhattan Village Field, Northwest corner of parking area – Commissioner Allen stated that the northwest corner of this location would be good when the mall is redone because of the planned parking structure. This location would impact relatively few residents, is of ample size and is on City owned land.
2. Marine Avenue Park - baseball center field – this location is the most shovel ready. The infrastructure is there and it would not require removing any amenities. Visibility is a concern with this location. There is heavy opposition from the user groups for this location.
3. Marine Avenue Park - basketball courts – this location has the infrastructure but would require removal of the heavily used basketball courts and the Pay and Play Raquetball court which is on a long term lease agreement. There is heavy opposition from the user groups for this location.
4. Marine Ave Complex- This location would require a reconfiguration of fields and is also opposed by the user groups.
5. Bruce's Beach upper area- This area would be cost prohibitive as it would require grading. There is also strong neighborhood resistance due to the historical nature of the site.
6. MBUSD Peck Ave West of Begg Field – This location would have less impact on homes than others and would be easy to develop. There is good visibility and the size is good. This location would affect parking for the Concerts in the Park. The City has plans to look at this area for other projects. Access to area is very narrow.
7. Polliwog Park, NE area between old restrooms and MBMS (near Picnic Pad #10) This location makes the most sense in Polliwog Park as there is good visibility. Some trees would need to be removed, that will be difficult. The location is convenient for the middle school students but may have to be closed during school hours limiting accessibility.

This list was narrowed to the following 3 locations

1. Marine Ave park (3 locations)
2. MBUSD Peck Avenue – west of Begg Field
3. Manhattan Village Field Northwest Corner

Director Leyman stated that the neighborhoods would be noticed and separate meetings for each location would be held. The Manhattan Studios and Northrup Grumman would be noticed as well.

May 12th - Marine and MBUSD facility locations ad-hoc committee meeting

May 13th - Manhattan Village Field Ad-hoc committee meeting

May 19th – Parks and Recreation Commission meeting

Director Leyman clarified that at the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, the locations will be reviewed. Likely, the Commission will request further information from staff on specific locations to be discussed at the June Commission meeting, where the Commission will formulate

their recommendations and options. Staff will take those recommendations and options, prepare a staff report and present them to the City Council tentatively for the second meeting in July at the earliest.

H. COMMISSION ITEMS:

Chairperson Manna announced that he had attended Parks and Recreation Commission meetings in Hermosa Beach and El Segundo to see how they operated and also to make the Commissioners aware of CAPRCBM. Mr. Manna would like to organize informal gatherings of Commissioners of local cities.

Commissioner Hersman announced that the ribbon cutting for the Tot Lot would be held Saturday, May 3, 2014 at 10:00 AM.

Commissioner Allard announced that the Petanque Court is almost finished and there will be a ribbon cutting when it is done.

I. STAFF ITEMS

Director Leyman thanked the Ad-hoc Committee

MOTION: Commissioner Hersman moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Allen.

Ayes: Commissioners Manna, Allen, Allard and Hersman

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Cajka, Rothans, Miketa

J. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m. to the next Parks & Recreation Commission meeting on May 19, 2014.