

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Manhattan Beach City Hall
1400 Highland Ave.
Manhattan Beach, CA 90266
May 19, 2014
6:30 PM

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

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Manna, Rothans, Cajka, Allard, Hersman, Miketa
Absent: Commissioner Allen

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Hersman moved to approve the April 28, 2014 as written. Chairperson Manna seconded the motion.

Ayes: Commissioners Manna, Rothans, Cajka, Allard, Hersman, Miketa
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Commissioner Allen

The motion passed.

D. CEREMONIAL

Certificate of Recognition – Thomas Cajka
Certificate of Recognition – Nancy Hersman
Certificate of Recognition – Madison Miketa

E. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (3-Minute Limit)

Chairperson Manna opened the floor to audience participation. Seeing none the floor was closed.

F. GENERAL BUSINESS

13/1028.3 – Discussion of Skateboard Park

Chairperson Manna emphasized that no decisions on location have yet been made.

Blake Bordokas, resident – Mr. Bordokas indicated that he is a constituent of the City who does not play any organized sports utilizing current amenities. He stated that the City should provide a skateboard park that he and many others could use. The park should be in a central location to allow skateboarders to express themselves legally.

George Bordokas – resident – Mr. Bordokas wanted to introduce a location that he feels meets or exceeds all criteria previously presented. This location in Polliwog Park would yield approximately 12,000 sq. ft. of skate park. The location is removed from residents and does not take away any amenities. The trees would provide a sound buffer. Mr. Bordokas stated that the Marine Ave. center field location is the worst location for many reasons and would ensure that the skateboard park would fail.

Gary Kessel, resident and father of skateboarders – Mr. Kessel stated that it is a shame that a city of this magnitude doesn't have a skateboard park of its own. Mr. Kessel presented a petition with approximately 90 signatures in support of a skate park.

Julie Profet, resident living across from Polliwog Park – Ms. Profet stated that all locations in Polliwog park were already ruled out for many reasons. She stated that the sounds of a skateboard park are stressful and that no one wants to live near the skateboard park. She emphasized Polliwog Park is not centrally located and that most people live closer to Hermosa or El Segundo parks. She asked why couldn't the City help enhance the Hermosa Skate park?

Jaden Kessel, resident - gathered signatures for the petition presented by Gary Kessel, Mr. Kessel stated that most people he approached were supportive of the skate park even if they didn't appear to be skaters. Mr. Kessel supports the Polliwog park location proposed by Mr. Bordokas.

Laura Santos, resident living near Polliwog park – Ms. Santos stated that she has been to all but one meeting and always leaves frustrated for the following reasons: 1) How will skaters pay for what they want? The City has many other things that need funding; 2) If the park is supervised, the City has a higher liability, if it is unsupervised, then the City loses control. 3) Skateboard park design needs change with time; 4) each of the sites proposed have many negatives; and 5) Manhattan Beach was built before skateboarding was popular. Ms. Santos' opinion is that we do not have a good place for a skateboard park.

Stephanie Robins, resident – Ms. Robins stated that she has attended all meetings and thought that we had solved the issue of location. Ms. Robins requested the specific statute of the Brown Act that substantiates the exclusion of non-supportive citizens.

Andrew Lelchuk, Regional Commissioner for American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) – Mr. Lelchuk stated that he supports a skate park but the location needs to be decided. He represents 1700+ kids using fields that might be impacted and does not believe that it is appropriate to displace existing programs. Based on the three locations presented, the Center Field location on Marine Ave is the best option as it does not displace any users. Mr. Lelchuk shared a statement from Eric Karros who could not attend.

Steve Staver, President of Manhattan Beach Youth Basketball (MBYB) – Mr. Staver stated that with over 2000 kids in the League, losing space would be very difficult. Losing the courts would mean cutting back on practice times for younger players. The high school league does not get practice time now. MBYB has resurfaced City courts and provided new adjustable hoops. MBYB can't afford any court loss at this point.

Seth Rementer, resident 30th St. – Mr. Rementer stated that skateboarding is a sport for kids that do not fit into many other traditional sports. There is a need for a space for skateboarders to practice. No one is asking for all of the basketball courts and tennis courts, just a space. He feels that the location behind Center Field is less than desirable and agrees that Polliwog Park is a good location because it is a large area and it wouldn't require displacing any other sports.

Bruce Field, resident – Mr. Field stated sometimes we have to say no. We can't accommodate everybody. We have to be selective about what we say yes to.

Chairperson Manna closed the Floor to public participation.

Commissioner Hersman gave an update on the Ad-Hoc Committee meetings. Six meetings have been held so far discussing operations, locations, funding and design. At the last Commission meeting, the Commission went through 20 locations and applied the objective criteria, ending with five possible locations. There were to be additional meetings noticing the residents and businesses surrounding the five locations. Staff informed the committee that two of the five were unable to move forward due to long term agreements, so the three remaining locations on Marine Ave were discussed. Commissioner Hersman stated that since the last meeting, she has learned that the Polliwog location will not require the removal of trees and can accommodate a larger park than originally thought and should be reconsidered.

Commissioner Rothans stated that he understands the concerns on taking away user space. The commission asked the Ad-hoc committee to hold meetings and make recommendations. He encouraged the committee to go back and look at the options again so that the Commission could present five locations to the City Council.

Commissioner Allard stated that the purpose of the Ad-hoc Committee was to get input from the community. As two of the five locations were eliminated reducing the number of locations to three. Commissioner Allard stated that he is also against taking space away from sports. He stated that he did a walkthrough of the proposed location in Polliwog Park and it seemed that it was a small location.

Commissioner Manna stated that the Commission is not trying to take anything away from anybody, it is trying to give. Skateboarders are athletes. They have no place to practice their sport. The key is location, funding will take care of itself. Commissioner Manna feels that parks are part of the City infrastructure so spending money is not a bad thing. A lot of feedback from residents supporting a skateboard park has been received. Nobody wants it in their backyard but no better locations have been proposed.

Commissioner Cajka stated that this has been a six year process and it is disappointing to see where we are now. He stated that the Committee needs to go back to the community and find additional locations and they should not be prioritized when presented to the City Council.

Commissioner Hersman requested suggestions from citizens for locations. The Committee wants to hear ideas. Commissioner Hersman believes that having a skateboard park is a benefit for the skaters as well as the community.

Commissioner Miketa agreed that there was a lot of negativity at the Ad-Hoc Committee meetings and not many positive suggestions. Commissioner Miketa agrees that other sports should not be displaced and that more locations should be considered.

Commissioner Rothans made a motion to send the matter back to the Ad-Hoc committee for further consideration. The Committee will find five viable location options that do not impact sports user groups to bring back to the Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hersman and passed.

Ayes: Commissioners Manna, Rothans, Cajka, Allard, Hersman, Miketa

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Commissioner Allen

Director Leyman asked for clarification on the specific location in Polliwog Park so that staff can further review the location and provide the proper footprint to the public. He also stated that a timeline for the additional Ad-hoc Committee meetings needs to be established for selecting the additional locations. Once those locations are chosen, residents and businesses within 1000 feet of the location will be noticed for public comment.

Prior to the additional meetings, new Ad-Hoc committee members need to be chosen. A special meeting to choose the new Ad-Hoc committee members cannot be held before June 1st, as that is when the new Commissioners start their terms.

Commissioner Allard clarified that 5 locations will be vetted by the public before being presented to the Commission.

Director Leyman informed the Commission that all material related to the Skateboard park has been posted on the MB Forum on the City's website.

Commissioner Hersman stated that she hopes that the youth sports groups will come out to the meetings and support some new locations.

G. COMMISSION ITEMS
none

H. STAFF ITEMS
none

I. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Hersman moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Allard. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Ayes: Commissioners Manna, Rothans, Cajka, Allard, Hersman, Miketa

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Commissioner Allen