



Oakland Measure DD Community Coalition

Measure DD Community Coalition Meeting Notes for May 17, 2021

The virtual meeting was called to order over Zoom at 7:10 p.m.

A video recording of this meeting is available: [view recording](#)
Specific video links for major agenda items are embedded in the minutes below.

The meeting was chaired by Jennie Gerard. Bill Threlfall served as recorder.

1. Measure DD Coalition attendance list:

BART – Robert Prinz, Robert Raburn

Bike East Bay – Rick Rickard

CALM – James Vann

Community for Lake Merritt – Adrian Cotter

East Bay Regional Parks – Dee Rosario

East Bay Rowing Club – Virginia Roe

Friends of Joaquin Miller Park – Mike Udkow

Lake Merritt Institute - John Bowers, Charles Brooks, Paris Organist, Gary Shrago

Lake Merritt Weed Warriors – Jennie Gerard

Oakland Heritage Alliance – Naomi Schiff

Rotary Nature Center Friends – Katie Noonan, David Wofford

Waterfront Action – Bill Threlfall, Sandy Threlfall

Interested Citizens – Dianne Fristrom, Vince Geronimo, Linda Morton, Bob Redman, Myra Redman

City of Oakland:

Measure DD Program Manager – Kristin Hathaway

Watershed Division – Mike Perlmutter, Jen Stern

Public Works Agency, Assistant Director – Richard Battersby

Public Works Agency, Facilities Services – Derin Minor, Craig Pon

Oakland DOT – Charlie Ream

Following introductions, Naomi Schiff noted that John Sutter had passed away recently. She recognized him as a leading contributor to the public realm in Oakland and to Measure DD in particular. She then played this [three-minute video](#) in his honor. The recognition concluded with a moment of silence in memory of John.

2. The agenda was adopted without revision.

3. Minutes of 3/15/2021 were approved.

4. Lake Merritt Bicycle Improvements Project – Charlie Ream ([video link](#))

Charlie noted that he works for the City's Bureau of Great Streets in planning and project development. He gave an overview of the purpose and scope of the Lake Merritt Bikeway Improvements Project, presenting highlights in a series of slides covered in the video link above. Construction is anticipated in late 2022.

Charlie responded to Coalition questions about connections and busses and then noted that more information may be found at <https://www.oaklandca.gov/projects/lake-merritt-bikeway>

5. Measure DD Project Updates – Kristin Hathaway ([video link](#))

Kristin commented on the status of most projects, with her remarks very closely following the notes in the project status column of the [May 17, 2021 Project Status Summary](#) spreadsheet.

Following are a few special highlights:

- Estuary Waterfront projects: *The City is still encountering difficulties in negotiating with the involved property owners for the agreements needed for trail progress. Kristin noted that the City is looking into retaining a new easement consultant to pursue progress in these negotiations with intractable owners.*
- Park Street Bridge: *Kristin announced a major point of progress: Both the Coast Guard and Alameda County have issued approval for the City to proceed with design development of an over-water, under-bridge connection. East Bay Regional Parks also supports the plan. These agreements are the culmination of planning and negotiation efforts dating back to 2006! ([View 2009 photo of a Waterfront Action field trip to the High Street Bridge catwalk – part of the early planning effort.](#))*
- Fruitvale Bridge Gap Closure: *Negotiations with the property owner have finally yielded the required easement agreement. Design will soon move forward here!*
- Estuary Park: *Kristin announced that Ali Schwarz will be retiring from the City soon and will be replaced by Christine Reed as project manager.*

Several questions followed Kristin's report:

- John Bowers inquired whether the City was considering exercising its power of eminent domain to address the recalcitrant waterfront property owners. Kristin indicated that the City typically is reluctant to consider this action, but at John's request she agreed to "look into it" and get back to us at a future meeting.
- Rick Rickard asked if the locked gate across the Bay Trail near the planned Fruitvale crossing is being addressed. Kristin advised that BCDC's requirements will control this use, but that the City's project design will gate off the trail from the owner's property, which will obviate the need for the owner to retain the gate blocking the trail.
- James Vann inquired about the proposed new easement consultant fits in with the previously hired easement consultant. Kristin's response may best be understood from [the video](#).
- Virginia Roe announced that installation of the new JLAC dock is nearly complete. She also commented about the importance of garbage containers at the estuary shoreline.
- Katy Noonan asked about the status of the tide gate protocol request. Kristin said that she hopes to have a document to share by the July Coalition meeting.

6. Lake Merritt Signage – Jen Stern ([video link](#))

Jen shared drafts of six interpretive signs that the City hopes to have installed by December of 2021. The drafts may be viewed here:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1uk11HjUbuwINSdtfA1pxBVaV8O5FcjFv?usp=sharing>

She commented on the extensive experience of the designers, who are from [Wildways Illustrated](#). She noted that there is limited room for text on the signs, so the plan is to provide fuller text on the [City's Creeks, Watershed and Stormwater web page](#), and she invited suggestions about the content of that text and the signs themselves be sent to jstern@oaklandca.gov.

Brief Q & A and commentary followed the presentation.

6. Lake Merritt decomposed granite pathways – Richard Battersby ([video link](#))

Richard described the function of the OPW Facilities Service Division and then introduced Craig Pon and Derin Minor as his team involved in the pathway matter. He noted a key difficulty: there isn't a designated organization within the City that is responsible for parks and trails maintenance. This situation leads to reliance on special and unpredictable funding. Nevertheless, Richard emphasized that his bureau is stepping forward to develop a solution for the Lake because parks and trailways are critical. He commented that has asked Craig Pon to work on developing a sustainable funding plan for DG pathway routine maintenance.

Craig reviewed the history of his investigation of pathway options and indicated that even a pilot test repair will require cutting out a section of 65 to 100 feet of failed path. In response to a question about schedule, he offered to try to get back to the Coalition with more information as soon as "this week". Brief Q&A followed.

On behalf of the Coalition, Jennie expressed appreciation to Richard and Craig and confirmed that Craig would plan to participate at our July 19 meeting to fill in needed details.

As an afterward, Richard advised that the outdoor restroom at the Rotary Nature Center is now open.

7. Measure DD Coalition administrative support ([video link](#))

Jennie stated that Bill Threlfall of Waterfront Action has been providing administrative support for the Coalition for many years and invited him to say a bit about this matter. He offered the following comments:

"I've been happy to serve the Coalition for the past 11 years. Waterfront Action's contract for administrative support ended last year in December, but since then, we've simply carried on as volunteers.

About three weeks ago, the City issued a new RFP for administrative support. That RFP includes significant changes to the job, which no longer fits my interests. Accordingly, Waterfront Action will not submit a proposal. I'm retiring. The minutes I take tonight will be my last.

Under the RFP schedule, the deadline for proposals is tomorrow, and the consultant selection will take place June 1. I will continue as a volunteer until that date. Everything thereafter will be handled by the new consultant or by City staff.

You won't get rid of me though; I'll continue to participate in Coalition meeting. "

A few Coalition questions about the contract process followed, and then Adrian asked for discussion of whether Coalition's web presence should be taken over by the City and relocated to the Stormwater division web page. Discussion ensued, with some expressions of hesitancy about the City plan. Mike Perlmutter offered assurance that despite expressed concerns about the utility of the City's overall web site, he intended a first-class implementation of the Measure DD part of the City web site. Bill noted that the pages at waterfrontaction.org/dd are publicly available on the internet where they may be copied by the City for its use.

The discussion closed without clear consensus regarding Coalition action.

8. Appointment of 2021 Agenda Committee ([video link](#))

Jennie invited nominations or volunteers per the Coalition's [adopted guidelines](#). James expressed interest in soliciting involvement of Bob and Myra Redman, but also noted that they by then had left the meeting. No other nominations were offered from the floor. Discussion followed and ultimately the existing committee consisting of Jennie Gerard, Adrian Cotter, and David Wofford agreed to continue service and they were appointed.

9. Announcements and reports ([video link](#))

- a) [Rotary Nature Center Friends on-line events](#). Katie described details in the video and put them in the Zoom chat for those interested.
- b) [Lake Merritt Advocates Summer of Sundays](#). Jennie introduced this emerging plan for a series of 10 organized volunteer sessions to pick up trash around the Lake on Sunday evenings. She will follow-up with details as they develop.
- c) David mentioned his experience as a boy of meeting and being inspired by John Sutter.

10. Review of work assignments to Coalition participants: ([video link](#))

- Kristin to investigate use of eminent domain for waterfront property owners unresponsive to negotiations (request from John Bowers)
- Jennie (lead) and Naomi to develop a list of projects by District and then follow-up with appropriate invitations to council members for staff participation at Coalition meetings. (remaining from January)
- Kristin to investigate and share the City process which will guide or limit the advancement of funded Measure DD "wish list" projects (remaining from March)
- Jennie to write to LaTonda Simmons re: unanswered questions re homelessness presentation (remaining from March)
- Kristin to ask Ha Nguyen for photos of the completed Harbor Master trail marking project.

11. Agenda suggestions for next Meeting:

- Decomposed granite path repair/replacement – Craig Pon
- Final design at Harbormaster site – Kristin
- Status of Tide Gate Protocol – Kristin
- City process for “Wishlist” implementation – Kristin
- Cryer site insurance update – Kristin
- Use of eminent domain for waterfront trail - Kristin
- Design for marsh shoreline fence - Kristin
- [Audit](#) review – Bill

The next Coalition meeting is scheduled July 19, 2021, at 7:10 p.m.
Over Zoom.

Adjourned at 9:12 p.m.