

MEASURE DD COMMUNITY COALITION MEETING
NOVEMBER 15, 2004
LAKESIDE GARDEN CENTER

Agenda Committee: Jennie Gerard, Liz Borowiec and James Vann
Minutes by Kathy Raymond, Executive Director, Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation

In Attendance:

Beat 15x NCPC – Jim Ratliff

Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee – Ron Bishop

Butters Land Trust – Jesse Roseman

East Bay Bicycle Coalition – Rick Rickard

East Bay Regional Parks District – John Sutter

Friends of the Cleveland Cascade – Jim Ratliff, Barbara Newcombe

Friends of Studio One – Patrick Daughton

Coalition of Advocates for Lake Merritt – James Vann

Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation – Kathryn Raymond, Judy Johnson

Greenlink Taskforce – Nancy Rieser

Lake Merritt Institute – Liz Borowiec, Stana Hearne

Waterfront Action Coalition – Sandy Threlfall

Also:

From the City of Oakland:

CEDA – Kerry Jo Ricketts-Ferris

City Auditor – Michael Kilian

Council Member Reid's Office – Pat Mossburg

Public Works Agency – Joel Peter

Public Works Agency – Brooke Levin

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 P.M. by chair Ron Bishop. The attendees introduced themselves. It was mentioned that the minutes of October should reflect that \$900,000 is needed to install fireplugs around Lake Merritt to help protect the facilities in Lakeside Park.

MAINTENANCE ISSUES:

Brooke Levin, an Asst. Director with the Public Works Agency overseeing the Facilities & Environment Department came to the meeting to discuss the maintenance issues that the City of Oakland is facing. Brooke manages 390 people in her Department. Brooke mentioned that there has been limited coordination between the Capital Group of PWA and the Maintenance Groups (PWA and Parks) within the City. One example she gave is the Eastmont Police Station, a brand new building was built but no operation and maintenance budget was allocated. Public Works managed to negotiate with the Police Services Agency to provide \$500,000 for basic maintenance but this is only enough for partial services for a building that is open 24/7. The actual cost to maintain the facility is? The issues of Parks and Medians are more illusive but face the same problems. In the future volunteers' projects will enter into an "adopt a spot" agreement that will clearly outline everyone's support and commitment to the project beyond just the capital piece. The City is working with a bare bones staff of gardeners and there is \$1,500,000 LLAD (Landscape and Lighting Assessment District) deficit. The City also has frozen the hiring of new positions in an effort to manage its current deficit situation. Currently only 5 facilities have full time gardeners, including 2 at Lakeside Park, 1 at the Rose Garden, 1 at Dunsmuir and 1 at DeFremery, all the other parks receive a few hours here and there of maintenance by several roving gardening crews

consisting of a total of (number) gardeners. Public Works is trying to determine acceptable service levels. They have two more facilities coming on line within months, Mandella Parkway and Union Point Park. They hope to develop a comprehensive list of volunteer groups that work with parks, creeks, watersheds, etc. and develop a volunteer program. They want new projects to be thought out from a maintenance perspective, for example, a fountain has to be maintained at swimming pool standards; new plantings should take into consideration drought resistance, low-maintenance types of plants. It was asked if Brooke would hire a volunteer manager and she indicated there were already people in her office working with volunteers on creeks and watersheds and she wanted to implement someone for parks as well.

CATEDRAL OF LIGHT

A presentation was given on the proposed Cathedral going up at Grand and Harrison. The Catholic Diocese of Oakland has no cathedral in Contra Costa or Alameda County after the last one had to be demolished. It was the priests that voted to have the cathedral here in Oakland. They currently project \$131 million building project that would have an open plaza and other amenities. The building would be 130 ft. tall from sidewalk level. To date they have \$83 million raised and they need about another \$12 million by May to break ground in May. They hope to have the dedication in January 2008, they anticipate 2000 person years to build this cathedral. The architect was selected after a very laborious process and in the end Craig Hartman, a local architect, was selected. The design is inspired by the Catholic tradition of two circles and a fish, which is a Christian symbol of a gathering place, though the design is really two spheres. There will be a parking lot 2 levels deep that will hold 200 spaces and the Cathedral will hold 1,500 people, it will be the biggest Catholic Church in the Diocese. There was some concern about the wall along Harrison St., they said it would have a 12 ft. high elevation and would have planters and hanging plants, would try to make it look nice aesthetically. There will be a conference center that they will rent out, just below the plaza and a coffee shop and bookstore. These will all earn money for the Cathedral, in addition the parking garage will also bring in some fees, though there will be allocation for cathedral visitors and about 50 to 80 ongoing reserved spots. There was some mention of concern over the possibility of sediment in the lake and that a storm water plan was needed to protect the lake during construction. The cathedral will be made of a solid concrete base with wooden vaults and light from the top, the outside will be glass. It was also mentioned that there should be accommodations for adequate bicycle parking.

PROJECT UPDATES:

There was a question about the idea of installing wetlands by the 12th St. Dam. Jorgan, a biologist from Phil Williams & Associate and subconsultant to Rajappon/Meyer, the City's consultant for 12th Street has brought up the possibility within the context of the 12th Street project. Today it exists as a natural beach that is mostly mud. There was one possibility of installing a beach but there is worry that it could easily erode due to wave action. A wetland concept is also being looked at; the idea is to try to get people connected to the water. The overall thought of the group was that wetlands may be better because a concern about safety and maintenance if a beach were installed. It was mentioned that the channel on the other side of 12th St. would be a new wetland of about an acre. It was suggested that we should invite Jorgan to the next DD meeting to hear more about wetlands at Lake Merritt. Joel stated he would have to check on this, as the City would have to pay for his time.

Joel Peter, Public Works Agency, said the 12th St. public meeting had about 150 people in attendance and the consultant is compiling the comment cards. Overall

the meeting was very positive. It was asked when the interim solution for the 12th St. project would be implemented. Joel said the design was done and the funding was from a transportation grant and had been given to another division within Public Works, the transportation Department for bidding. However, this has not been done yet. It was stated that Vladimir from the Transportation Dept. would be the one to speak with and it was suggested we invite him to a future meeting.

Studio One design is continuing and they are still looking into energy efficiency ideas for incorporation into the project. The Office of Parks and Recreation is looking to find alternate venues for the art classes. The architectural features are pretty much set. There will be a deck over the front entrance with a portico. The process overall is moving along well.

A question was asked about access around the Pier 29 restaurant. Access scenarios include acquisition and relocation of the business or working around the structure. Currently 2/3 of the physical site improvements sits on Army Corps property. The City needs the Army Corps to work with the current landowner to resolve encroachments issues in order for the project.

The 1st progress report to the Life Enrichment Committee was rescheduled to the 11th of January at 6 p.m. They plan to present specific projects and funding recommendations for the Lake Merritt System wide Improvements budget allocation. The committee could accept staff recommendations or ask to make changes. The first series of bonds was sold July of last year and the next series will be sold in July of 06. So far only a limited amount of money (about \$3 million) has been spent from the first series (\$70,050) million for staffing, design, consultants, administration, etc.

It was asked if there are fire trucks that carry sump pumps and if that could be a way to protect the Lakeside Park Area from Fire. Kerry Jo said she didn't know but would look into this.

ANNUAL MEETING:

It was decided the annual meeting should be held on a Saturday in some kind of public location. March 12th from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. was the date and time selected.

Next Agenda Items that were suggested:

1. 1. Financial Report – expenditure review
2. 2. Annual Meeting and 2005 Schedule (no meetings in Aug. March and Dec.?)
3. 3. Invite Vladimir from PWA Traffic Division
4. 4. Estuary Park – set a group policy.

The next meeting dates were set, they will continue to be on the third Monday of the month. The next meeting date is January 17th at the Garden Center in the Ebell Room.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.