

Community Services Advisory Commission
Special Meeting
City Hall - Community Room
777 Cypress Avenue
Redding, California
February 28, 2012, 4:00 p.m.

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 pm. Commissioner McElvain led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE

The following Commissioners were present;

Adam McElvain, Susan Hinz, John Wilson and Bob Brennan. Commissioner Leona McCoach joined the meeting at 4:08pm.

Also present were Community Services Director Kimberly Niemer, Management Analyst Matthew McCallum, Deputy City Manager Greg Clark, Parks Superintendent Paul Anderson, and Executive Assistant Sarah Sheetz.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The minutes from the Special Meeting held on January 25, 2012, the monthly Parks Maintenance Activity Report, the monthly Recreation Division Activity Report, and the monthly Tourism Activity Report for January 2012 were presented.

Chair Wilson commented on the Parks Maintenance Activity Report, and that he has seen a significant increase in graffiti around the City. Director Niemer advised that there was some discussion in the Director's Meeting that morning regarding the impacts of AB109, which is the realignment of the prison system in California. There is a spike in graffiti, vandalism, and homeless camps. The expense of cleaning up graffiti takes away from monies that could otherwise be spent on more constructive endeavors.

Chair Wilson inquired as to whether there is a sign at the Reginato River Access advising that video surveillance is being used. Director Niemer advised that she would look into it.

Motion: To approve the Consent Calendar.
(Made by Commissioner Hinz, Seconded by Commissioner McElvain)

AYES: Commissioners
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

PARK DEVELOPMENT FUND UPDATE

Management Analyst Matt McCallum provided a report on the Park Development Fund. He summarized that in 2014/2015 there is currently an anticipated shortfall in the fund for meeting the debt service payments. He advised that there are no ongoing projects in the department, and that the problem may be self-correcting if additional building permits come in during the time period.

Commissioner McCoach inquired as to the possibility of refinancing the debt. Analyst McCallum advised that is one of the options. He also advised that approximately 160 building permits in the next 3.5 years would make up the difference. He stated that there is a possibility that there are enough additional funds in the 128 fund that it could carry the Park Fund. He stated that if the City were looking at doing any bonds in the next 3.5 years that is another option.

Analyst McCallum clarified that we are anticipating 26 building permits between January and June 2012, and that the projections are based on 45 single family, fully paid units per year for the next 3.5 years. He provided some history for the 2009 - 92 units, 2010 - 98 units, 2011 - 61 units. He advised that the break even point would be an additional 39 permits per year over the next 3.5 years.

Commissioner Hinz inquired as to whether or not there has been any consideration by the City Council to cut fees for single family residential as opposed to duplexes, multi-family residential, including park fees? Analyst McCallum advised that fees have been kept at the 2010 level. Director Niemer advised that a waiver program has been adopted for wastewater and traffic impact fees, but because of the condition of the Park Development Fund, park fees have been off the table. She also advised that the timing of payment for permit fees has been changed, extending payment to when the Certificate of Occupancy is issued, which has affected cash flow.

Commissioner Hinz inquired as to whether or not staff is prepared, and knows, that in two years we are out of money and are six hundred thousand dollars in the hole. Director Niemer advised yes, and that the deficit would be addressed during the budgeting process. She advised that is why we have not brought any new projects to the table for the past few years.

Commissioner McCoach inquired as to whether or not the Park Development Fund would be reimbursed for seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars for legal fees paid in the settlement agreement with Dale Construction on the Big League Dreams project. Director Niemer advised that the seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars was not borrowed, but rather the project was determined to be a Park project and that the Park Development Fund was determined to be the best source of funding for the settlement.

Director Niemer advised that there is a better paper trail on the Soccer Park project, and that the record reflects that the Council wanted to move forward with the project, even though it was costing more than what the Commission was recommending would be financed out of the Park Development Fund. She advised that there was specific discussion about that being a 'borrow' out of the Park Development Fund, but there was never a loan payment or schedule delineated.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner McElvain asked that Director Niemer clarify that there is a project of a \$200 million dollar aquarium being developed in Redding. Director Niemer advised that there is a gentleman in town who has several good ideas, but is not bringing any capital to the project. She advised that she is not optimistic about the prospects of that type of project at this time.

Chair Wilson inquired as to the progress of the subcommittee assigned to review the Redding Municipal Code as it relates to Park Rules and Regulations. Director Niemer advised that the subcommittee has reviewed two models from other jurisdictions in comparison with the Redding Municipal Code, and will be meeting again prior to submitting revisions to the City Attorney for review. Commissioner Hinz advised that a lot of the work that needs to be done is clean-up, and making sure that all of the rules and regulations are contained in one location.

DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Director Niemer provided an update on the Fantasy Fountain Re-Creation project, advising that donations are at approximately \$130,000, and that there are many in-kind donations as well. The Record Searchlight has been placing ads, and we have recently lined up Steve Gregory who is donating equipment and time to do the demolition work, Carter Fencing will be donating the fencing, and Duco Concrete will be doing the saw cutting. Approximately \$70k is still needed to purchase the equipment.

Work is still going on at Turtle Bay East, with many plants now going in. We are getting ready to re-open the Community Gift Program as there are several table and bench pads available in the area.

Community Services is working on a grant application with Turtle Bay to do some public art around the Sundial Bridge and the Monolith, to tie that in with the promenade between the two buildings.

The Lake Redding Pavilion has been moving slow, however, the Marine League is still actively raising money and the project is pending.

Terry Hanson will be recognized at the State Trails and Greenways Conference by the State of California for a lifetime achievement award. This underscores how fortunate we are to have Terry Hanson in our community and on our staff. The award will be presented at a luncheon at the Conference in April.

(Joint Meeting with the Planning Commission convened at 4:40 p.m.)

DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL AMENDMENT OF THE REDDING RIVERFRONT SPECIFIC PLAN PERTAINING TO THE AREA NORTH OF STATE ROUTE 44 WEST OF SUNDIAL BRIDGE DRIVE, GENERALLY AROUND THE CIVIC AUDITORIUM

Planning Manager Doug DeMallie summarized the staff report. He provided a background on the item, noting that the City Council (Council) had requested that the Planning Commission review the Redding Riverfront Specific Plan (Riverfront Plan) for a potential amendment to provide a more detailed land use plan in support of the Civic Auditorium (Auditorium). He said the Council directed that review of the Riverfront Plan and development of a recommendation be conducted in concert with the Community Services Advisory Commission (CSAC).

Mr. DeMallie explained that the proposal for the study and refined land use planning for the area around the Auditorium came forth from CSAC member Adam McElvain. Mr. DeMallie stated that CSAC, on a 4 to 0 vote, forwarded a proposal to the Council that would establish CSAC as the body directing development of a master plan, with the assistance of a liaison from the Planning Commission and additional support from volunteers from the community at large.

The history of the Riverfront Plan was also provided by Mr. DeMallie, who noted that it was adopted in the early 1990s and remained in effect upon adoption of the 2000–2020 General Plan Update. He then summarized those sections of the Riverfront Plan pertaining to the Convention Center area, including a description of the land uses allowed under the "Public" land use designation of the property. He discussed the differences between specific plans, area plans, community plans, and master plans. Mr. DeMallie noted several factors listed in the staff report for the Planning Commission's consideration in addressing the need to update the Riverfront Plan. He said staff recommended that the Planning Commission recommend to the Council that the Redding Riverfront Specific Plan not be amended based upon a determination that the existing Riverfront Plan land use policies and designations adequately support the Auditorium under existing and foreseeable conditions. He pointed out that this action would not preclude the Council from authorizing CSAC's original intent of taking the lead on developing a master plan as a vision for the Auditorium.

CSAC Commissioner Adam McElvain asked Mr. DeMallie if he considered a master plan of the area an amendment to the Riverfront Plan. Mr. DeMallie reiterated that staff's recommendation was that the Riverfront Plan not be amended and that a master plan would be a separate and distinct effort from an amendment of the Riverfront Plan. He indicated that the staff report pointed out the reasons why staff felt it was not appropriate to amend the Riverfront Plan or develop a master plan at this time.

CSAC Commissioner John Wilson inquired if the original Riverfront Plan committee had preferred the concept of a specific plan instead of a General Plan amendment. He believed the committee members had invested their time in studying the area in order to determine and recommend what would be best for the City. Mr. DeMallie advised that specific plans could not be in conflict with the City's overall General Plan. He stated that the committee found the Riverfront Plan to be consistent with the City's General Plan at the time and that it addressed the community's desires.

Planning Commissioner Chris Young asked why the current Turtle Bay campus was not being addressed. Mr. DeMallie explained that the Turtle Bay area was under a 99-year lease, which gave the organization very strong control over land uses. The Chairman opened the public hearing at 5:05 p.m.

Bruce Alexander, a 25-year Board member of the Redding Rodeo Association (Association), suggested that the future of the Association be included in discussion of potential land uses for the area. Mr. Alexander stated that the Association was an integral part of the community and contributed income to the City from its rodeos. He wanted to ensure that a new home for the Association was secured. He recalled that the Association started looking at relocating to a different area and had looked at sites both within and outside the city limits. Mr. Alexander noted that once a location was found for the Association, the area presently being utilized would be available. He indicated that the Association currently had a five-year lease with a potential five-year extension.

Charlie Harper, Bethel Church, advised that Advance Redding, which currently held the lease agreement for the Civic Auditorium, was a week away from its final inspection for the office building and that things were moving along smoothly. He mentioned that the lease was for 4.75 years, with the option to renew for another five years. He said Bethel Church intended to be in the Auditorium for the full ten years.

Maurice Johannessen agreed with staff that it would be premature to address the Riverfront Plan at this time. Instead, he believed the future of the Auditorium itself needed to be studied, not surrounding land uses. Mr. Johannessen pointed out that the property surrounding the area was encumbered with leases for the next ten years and that there were only three viable, privately owned parcels. He urged the Planning Commission to accept staff's recommendation. Determining that no one else wished to comment, the Chairman closed the public hearing at 5:24 p.m.

Mr. McElvain indicated that CSAC had been studying the Auditorium for the past several years. He said CSAC had twice voted unanimously to pursue a master plan for the area. He urged the Planning Commission not to vote for an amendment to the Riverfront Plan but to vote for a master plan for the Auditorium area. Mr. McElvain explained that the proposal would provide a foundation for the public to create a vision for this area. He acknowledged that the staff report noted that the area in question was open to many land use opportunities, but he pointed out that keeping the opportunities open for the past 20 years had not produced successful public ventures in those areas. He contended that both the rodeo grounds and Auditorium were underutilized. Mr. McElvain noted that planning for the Stillwater Business Park (Stillwater) had begun approximately ten years earlier.

In response to a question from Mr. McElvain, Mr. DeMallie said there was no current development at Stillwater, but there were some parties interested in the business park. Mr. McElvain acknowledged that after ten years of planning for Stillwater, the City was still trying to find suitors for the business park. He felt a master plan for the Auditorium area would be an opportunity to plan without pressure and would give the public an opportunity to provide the vision. He wondered if a master plan would currently be considered appropriate for the Auditorium area if the Auditorium had been closed instead of leased to Advance Redding.

Commissioner Emmett Burroughs concurred with Mr. Johannessen. He agreed that it was important to plan for something that would be conducive to the City of Redding lifestyle and the community at large; however, he did not believe it was the right time to consider a change in the Riverfront Plan. He also felt Turtle Bay and the hotel should be given a chance to produce results once construction was complete. Mr. Burroughs emphasized that studies and reports would be needed, and the issue of secondary access across the river would have to be addressed. He said this would take time and money, which the City did not have.

CSAC Commissioner John Wilson reiterated that the subject property was being leased for ten years. He pointed out that if someone wanted to develop on the remaining parcels of private land, the individual project could be considered at that time. Mr. Wilson clarified that his vote earlier at the CSAC meeting was only to review the proposal, and he was satisfied with the review. He disagreed with the comparison to Stillwater because Stillwater was bare, unimproved land, as opposed to infrastructure and development in the Auditorium area. He did acknowledge that there was a problem with the lack of parking in the area. He maintained that if the Redding Rodeo Association had an event while another event at the Auditorium was scheduled, there would be no parking available. He asserted that a new secondary access was a necessity but would cost millions of dollars.

CSAC Commissioner Leona McCoach addressed the Council's motion to the Planning Commission. She asked if another option for a motion to not address the issue further at future CSAC meetings could be considered as well.

Ms. Wonacott said the Council had requested that the Planning Commission review the Riverfront Plan for a potential amendment to provide a more detailed land use plan in support of the Auditorium. She advised that the Planning Commission did not have the option for a master plan before them, but that what CSAC decided to do was up to the CSAC Commissioners.

Mr. Young was not opposed to creating a citizen's committee to discuss what the future would hold for the area. He felt the City should always be looking ahead at least ten years out. He did not see a problem with a committee proposing uses, development, and changes in the General Plan. Mr. Young believed the City would recover from the current economic slump, but he did not think it should wait for the money to be available for secondary access.

Commissioner Cameron Middleton supported Mr. McElvain's proposal. He believed the time was right for public discussion on what should be done with the property. Mr. Middleton observed that the Riverfront Plan was 22 to 25 years old, considering that the committee started discussing the document in 1987, with adoption in 1990.

Mr. Middleton continued that there was little development activity currently being conducted in the City, so there would be time now to address the issue instead of waiting for the leases to expire, which could also contribute to the possibility of financial interests influencing the use of the property. He noted that a committee that was formed to try to save the Auditorium had collected approximately 2,600 signatures in a short period of time, which he felt indicated a high public interest for the area.

Mr. Middleton referred to a report written by Mr. McElvain in which he listed some of the items that had changed since the Riverfront Plan was adopted, which included construction of the Sundial Bridge and Turtle Bay Arboretum, Museum, and Hotel; pedestrian and bike trail access; population growth; increased traffic; and adoption of a new General Plan and Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan. He repeated that he believed the timing was right, and he supported Mr. McElvain's proposal.

Motion: Commissioner Cameron Middleton moved that the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council form an exploratory task force comprised of three Planning Commissioners and two Community Services Advisory Commissioners, to be designated by their respective Chairs from those Commissions, to study or evaluate the feasibility of creating a master plan that will be appended to the current Redding Riverfront Specific Plan on the boundaries indicated in the staff report.

Discussion: Mr. Middleton believed his motion was within the scope of the motion made and approved by the Council.

Ms. Wonacott pointed out that not all the Commissioners had commented on the matter.

Commissioner Bert Meyer, who had been on the original committee for the Riverfront Plan, had understood that the Auditorium would always have to be subsidized. He believed the City was fortunate that Advance Redding was intending to lease the Auditorium for ten years. He observed that the whole area had been the subject of the Riverfront Plan and was never just about the Auditorium or posse grounds. Mr. Meyer asked for clarification of the Council's motion—was the Council asking the Planning Commission to amend the Riverfront Plan or to create a standing committee to discuss the issues.

Mr. DeMallie clarified that the Council was asking the Planning Commission to consider whether an amendment of the Riverfront Plan should be the vehicle for creating a refined land use master plan for the Auditorium area.

City Attorney Rick Duvernay advised the Planning Commission to specifically answer the Council's directive in the form of a motion and that if the Planning Commission desired something different as well, another motion could be made.

Planning Commissioner John Ryan wondered if the Planning Commission was interested in opening up the Riverfront Plan to address a smaller area. He inquired if a staff member also needed to be present if there were going to be three Planning Commissioners and two Community Services Advisory Commissioners on a committee. Mr. Duvernay responded that if the Planning Commission's motion included a recommendation that the Council form a committee, that committee would be subject to the Brown Act and open meeting laws.

Mr. Middleton confirmed that the intent of his motion was to make the committee subject to the Brown Act to make the process public, fully open, and transparent.

Ms. Wonacott complimented the committee members who had drafted the Riverfront Plan, noting that it was created with foresight and provided a great amount of flexibility. She pointed out that the current Riverfront Plan provided the flexibility that would allow someone to pursue a particular use for the area. Ms. Wonacott contended that there would be less flexibility in a more detailed plan. She believed staff should wait until there was a better sense of how the Auditorium was going to operate and the feasibility of a secondary access. She was satisfied with the current Riverfront Plan and did not wish to see it revised.

Mr. McElvain thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Mr. Young asked Mr. Middleton if there was something specific he wanted to see happen in the Auditorium area.

Mr. Middleton replied that he did not have a specific vision for the area; instead, he wanted to help create a proper open public process to see what the community desired. He felt if a committee was formed, the City could help to facilitate the process. Mr. Middleton did say, however, that he would like to see the parking situation improved. He believed if the City waited five or ten years, the entire Riverfront Plan, which included the Park Marina Drive area, would have to be addressed.

Ms. Wonacott asked if there were any legal constraints with revising only a portion of the Riverfront Plan. Mr. DeMallie did not believe there was a legal prohibition of amending only a certain portion of the document. He warned, however, that once the Riverfront Plan was opened, conformance with existing California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) laws could become an issue. He mentioned that there had been many changes in CEQA law since 1990 and that if the Riverfront Plan was amended, it would not be able to be certified under the previous Environmental Impact Report and a new CEQA document would be required.

Mr. Duvernay agreed with staff that there was some risk in moving forward with amending a portion of the Riverfront Plan and that this was not the right venue. He explained that planning powers that cities had were for the most part intended to address private, not public, property. He said a government entity did not need a specific plan to restrict itself in development of public facilities; he cited Big League Dreams, City Hall, and the Redding police station as examples of those public facilities.

Motion: Commissioner Cameron Middleton moved that the Planning Commission recommend to the City Council that the Redding Riverfront Specific Plan be amended through the process of completing a master plan done by a committee, a task force of five total Commissioners, three members of the Planning Commission and two members of the Community Services Advisory Commission; those members to be appointed by their respective Chairs in order to put together, after public testimony, a master plan that is to be appended to the Redding Riverfront Specific Plan.

Second: Commissioner Chris Young.

Ayes: Commissioners Middleton and Young.

Noes: Commissioners Burroughs, Kempley, Meyer, Ryan, and Wonacott.

Abstain: None.

Absent: None.

Motion failed.

Motion: Commissioner Emmett Burroughs moved that the Planning Commission recommend to the City Council that the Redding Riverfront Specific Plan not be amended at this time.
Second: Commissioner Diane Kempley.
Ayes: Commissioners Burroughs, Kempley, Meyer, Ryan, and Wonacott.
Noes: Commissioners Middleton and Young.
Abstain: None.
Absent: None.

Mr. Meyer noted that he was not against the formation of a committee but that there was already a committee called Friends of the Civic Auditorium and that dialogue on the issue was ongoing.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Wilson adjourned the meeting at 6:10p.m.



Chair John Wilson