

MINUTES

City of San Diego
Park and Recreation Board

DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE

January 9, 2008

Meeting Held at:

Balboa Park Club, Santa Fe Room
2150 Pan American Road West
San Diego, CA 92101

Mailing Address is:

City of San Diego
Park and Recreation Department
202 C Street, M.S. 35
San Diego, California 92101-3860

ATTENDANCE

Present:

Wilbur Smith - Chair
Fred Blecksmith – Vice Chair
Dennis Otsuji
Michael Theilacker
Rodger Utt
Marian Marum
Dann Mallec
Stuart White
Simon Andrews
Jim Winter – Staff Representative

Absent:

Vincent Marchetti (Excused)
Don Leonard
Kathryn Fulhorst

CALL TO ORDER–The meeting was called to order by Chair Smith at 8:35 am.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - December 12, 2007 MEETING

Approved: Vote: 8-0

REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCES - Fiesta Island General Development Plan

COMMUNICATIONS – Kate Zimmer representing the Fiesta Island Dog Owners (FIDO) spoke regarding the minutes of the December 12, 2007 meeting. The minutes of December 12, 2007 state that FIDO does not support the phasing out of off-leash areas on Fiesta Island. Ms. Zimmer reiterated FIDO's position on this issue and explained that FIDO does not feel the smaller off-leash areas that may be developed within the City will provide a comparable experience to the larger, contiguous open space that dog owners currently use on Fiesta Island. The larger space on the island allows people to exercise, such as jogging, with their pets. Therefore, the off-leash area on Fiesta Island should be considered a regional resource. In addition, FIDO does not concur with the statement made by the consultant in the December meeting that the public beach location was decided primarily by a process of elimination based on other uses on and in the surrounding waters of Fiesta Island.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – Mr. Smith gave a brief summary of the items that came before the Park and Recreation Board's December 2007 meeting. This included the renaming of 39th Street Park to Ward Canyon Neighborhood Park, and update on grant funding Senate Bills, the golf business plan, joint use update and potential park sites on excess City land.

STAFF REPORT – None

OLD BUSINESS – None

ACTION ITEM 1:

Fiesta Island – General Development Plan (GDP) – Continued from the December 12, 2007 meeting.

City Staff: Paul Jacob, Associate Engineer, Park & Recreation Department

Presenters: Mike Singleton, Principal, KTU+A

Cheri Blatner, Senior Associate, KTU+A

Harmon Nelson, Harmon Nelson Design

Alison Whitelaw, Platt Whitelaw Architecture

Mr. Singleton started the series of presentations by giving the Committee a brief overview of the areas within the plan that were revised based on the comments received in the November and December 2007 meetings. These areas were concentrated in the developed regional parklands, the architecture and the signage.

Ms. Whitelaw discussed the architectural components of the plan and pointed out the revisions that were made base on the Committee's previous comments. These revisions included revising the floor plan of the comfort station proposed for the campground to provide more privacy and space at the showers as well as providing two family style restrooms with showers at one end of the building. The architectural colors for all the structures will be lighter in color and will reflect the natural colors and textures found on the island. Natural daylight and ventilation will also be emphasized in the architecture for both the comfort stations and park shelters.

Committee comments regarding the revised architectural element of the plan:

- Some benches should be added between the showers in the campground comfort station.
- During the construction document phase be sure to include little things like hooks for towels.
- It was the Committee's opinion that the small park shelters are not needed. Carefully placed trees and tables with holes for umbrellas could serve the same purpose for park users.
- The question was raised on how the number and size of the comfort stations were calculated. It was explained that the number was based on the plumbing code requirements, parking areas and anticipated use. During peak times the City would most likely provide portable toilets and permits for larger groups require the permittee to provide portable toilets.

After the architectural presentation and discussion, Mr. Singleton introduced Cheri Blatner of KTU&A to present the refined designs of the three primary developed regional parkland areas on the island. These areas were defined as the South East Park, the South Central Park and the South West Beach Park. Each of these developed parks will contain common elements such as parking lots, paths and walkways, open lawn areas for informal play, playgrounds, multi-use trails, native vegetation, comfort stations, signage and large park shelters. The smaller park shelters shown on the plans will be eliminated based on the comments above.

The unique item of the South East Park is the pedestrian bridge over the roadway that will connect this

developed park with the interior portions of the island, the undeveloped portion of the off-leash area and the South West Beach Park.

The South Central Park is somewhat isolated and will provide larger open play turf areas as well as sand and turf volleyball. An amphitheater type structure is proposed for the slopes facing the volleyball sand and turf areas.

The South West Beach Park will be shared by off-leash and non-motorized watercraft users. It will contain the same common elements of the other developed regional parklands in addition to a dog show area, boat ramp for non-motorized water craft, storage area for non-motorized water craft and a dog swimming beach.

The fence around the off-leash area will be a rail type fence with chain link attached, similar to what is used in Balboa Park.

Committee comments regarding the developed regional parklands:

- All walkway intersections should have radius connections to avoid right angle connections.
- The park shelters should be surrounded by turf because shrub beds will not tolerate foot traffic.
- Avoid all narrow areas of turf that do not provide space for open play and cannot be easily maintained.
- The park shelters should be pulled back away from the shoreline as much as possible.
- The connecting walks to the park shelters should be eliminated by pulling the shelters closer to the main walk and flaring out the walk.
- The comfort stations should not be made a focal point in the developed regional parklands.
- Study walkways and trails and anticipate where people will be walking.
- In the South Central Park it seems that sand volleyball should be closer to the water.
- The revised fencing arrangement works much better now.
- Parking needs should be carefully calculated and the parking lots be under parked to reduce their size. Look for ways to provide overflow parking for those times the undersized parking lots cannot handle the load.
- Study the walkways and trails and attempt to eliminate as many as possible.
- Make a recommendation during the construction document phase on the turf type specification so the current Park & Recreation specification isn't applied to Fiesta Island.
- More gates for entry into and exit from the off-leash area should be added.
- Minor trails should be created to draw park users into the native areas and native landscapes.
- Use turf only where anticipated use will be.
- Use permeable paving wherever possible.
- Take advantage of as many amphitheater areas as possible.
- Address skateboard use and incorporate things for them along the multi-use trail.
- Do not like the small and large dog separation because it adds more fencing to the park.
- Reduce turf in off-leash areas as much as possible because it won't hold up.
- Clarify on the South West Beach Park that the boat ramp is only for non-motorized water craft.

- Reduce the number of large park shelters as much as possible.
- Keep universal play in mind when designing playgrounds.

Harmon Nelson of Nelson Design presented two revised schemes for the signage to be used at Fiesta Island. The intent was to get away from the pier looking poles and pick up on the patterns in nature found on the island. The signs from each scheme take on a more rustic, organic form and are to be constructed of sustainable materials.

Committee comments regarding the revised signage:

- Use scheme B (agreed by all members)
- I love it.
- Think about moving the Fiesta Island monument sign to the other side of the road (outside of the road curve) and move the word "Fiesta" forward and the word "Island" back.
- How will the dot over the i in Fiesta be addressed.

Upon completion of the presentations and discussions by the Committee, motions were made regarding the various components of the GDP. These motions and votes were:

Motion 1 (Andrews, second by Blecksmith) - Supports the basic concepts of the Park Precise Plan in terms of proposed land uses that represent a preservation of the current uses and the accommodation of new recreational uses. The plan appears to be mostly consistent with the previously adopted Mission Bay Park Master Plan (1994/2002) while lowering the overall intensity, preserving more of the undeveloped character of the island and lessening costs associated with the plan.

Discussion: The question was raised why the bridge at the north end of the island was omitted from the plan. Answer: The 1978 Mission Bay Master Plan deleted the bridge. It would be very difficult to install a bridge at this end of the island because of the span required and the height of the bridge would have to be such to allow sail boats to fit under it, thus requiring extensive grading at both ends of the bridge and the costs associated with its construction.

Vote: Motion unanimously approved

Motion 2 (Andrews, second by Blecksmith) - The Park Precise Plan recognizes the balance of creating a new sense of place while preserving the unique rustic characteristics of the island. By providing equal amounts of natural habitat, natural parkland, rustic shoreline parkland and developed regional park, the plan strikes the appropriate balance and maximizes the attraction of the general public to the island.

Discussion: None

Vote: Motion unanimously approved

Motion 3 (Marum, second by Blecksmith) - The proposed circulation system recognizes the importance of non-vehicular circulation on the island by providing multi-use trails that are grade separated with vehicular traffic where possible. The system has a hierarchy of trails from small nature trails, to developed parkland trails, to paved trails. The plan also recognizes the desire of many cyclists to maintain a one-way looped system without stop signs and facilities that allow the cyclist to be on even par with motorized vehicles.

Discussion: The roadways should allow 2-way crossover traffic at the southern and middle roadways while preserving the free flow of traffic on the primary loop.

Vote: Motion unanimously approved

Motion 4 (Otsuji, second White) - The proposed Park Precise Plan recognizes the need to maintain shoreline parking (except in areas of new habitat) and to keep the large parking capacities of the western Fiesta Bay shoreline available. The new parking shown has been centrally located and appropriately distributed based on future uses and has not created excessive quantities of paved areas. Parking areas are to be minimized with opportunities for overflow parking considered.

Discussion: The entrances into the parking areas should sweep and avoid right angle turns. This would also apply to trails, fences, etc. so that everything has a gentle, sweeping appearance.

Vote: Motion unanimously approved

Motion 5 (Blecksmith, second by Andrews) - The proposed Park Precise Plan has provided too much space available for leash free dog use to the point where the general public is being displaced and / or the comfort and safety of the visiting public has been compromised. The committee recommends less special use leash free dog areas than currently shown on the plan.

Discussion: None

Vote: 6 in favor, 1 opposed

Motion 6 (Andrews, second by Blecksmith) - The proposed signage shown in the handouts and presentations are acceptable as they were presented. The committee has a preference to have the signage simplified and the major entry point be once you have passed over the causeway instead of at the entry parking area to the island. Scheme B is the preferred direction the signage should take.

Discussion: None

Vote: Motion unanimously approved

Motion 7 (Blecksmith, second by Andrews) - The proposed conceptual design of the restrooms, park ranger building, shelters and storage areas are acceptable as presented. The design should reinforce the rustic nature of the island and build upon the character set by the two existing buildings found at the Youth Campground and Aquatic Center. The small park shelters are to be eliminated and the possibility of using a few medium park shelters substituted for the small park shelters. The park structures are to be moved away from the shoreline. The preferred bridge option is the straight design with some sweeping arch.

Discussion: None

Vote: Motion unanimously approved

Motion 8 (Blecksmith, second by Andrews) - The proposed mounding, public viewing plazas, seating walls, trails and interpretive elements will be a good focal point for the island and the expense of the bridges and mounding appear to be warranted based on public views, place creation and safety / convenience for the multi-use and dog use trail systems. The interpretive elements of the Patterns in Nature should be used throughout the island.

Discussion: None

Vote: Motion unanimously approved

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Due to the recommended changes to the developed regional parkland presentation (see above); the Committee requested that particular portion of the GDP be brought back to the Committee for review at the February 2008 meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS: None

WORKSHOP ITEMS: None

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 am.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday February 13, 2008 at 8:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Winter
Staff Representative, Park & Recreation Department