

# Minutes of the Midcoast Community Council Parks and Recreation Committee

Monday, December 9, 2002

Attending:

Sandy Emerson, Chair  
Gael Erickson (for Chuck Kozak)  
Jim Washington (for Ric Lohman)  
Carl May (for April Vargas)  
Bern Smith (for Paul Perkovic)  
Mary Kate Meyerhoffer

Jim Lombard, Peninsula Velo Club  
April Vargas  
Chuck Kozak  
Ric Lohman  
Lars Huschke (cyclist)  
John Hernandez

Skip Sowko  
Mohammad Sahibzadah  
Bijan Ahmadzadeh  
Chris Powell

The meeting was called to order at 7:45.

1. Consent Agenda. The minutes of September 9 and October 14 were approved as distributed.
2. GGNRA. Chris Powell, the Legislative lobbyist for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, briefly described the scope of GGNRA's territory and responsibilities of GGNRA. The territory is large and diverse, covering several California counties and many different terrains. The General Management Plan (GMP) for the GGNRA has not been updated since 1980. This year begins a 3-year effort to update the plan. To prepare the update, GGNRA has been authorized to add 6 new staff, and much of the general plan update funds are being dedicated to planning for San Mateo County. GGNRA's expansion in San Mateo County is pending passage of the Lantos-Feinstein-Boxer legislation, which did not make it out of committee in the 2002 session. Certainly with the addition of the Martini Creek bypass right-of-way, the Corral di Tierra acreage, and the trail connections to Devils Slide, GGNRA will have significant influence over our local open space and recreational opportunities. To a question about the future of dogs on GGNRA property, Chris Powell replied that the current policy permits dogs on leash only, but that other options are possible. Until the legislation expanding GGNRA's boundaries is passed, the County is the interim manager for all the new properties. The GGNRA General Management Plan

update is managed out of Denver, but surveys and outreach activities will all be managed and performed locally.

### 3. Bike and Pedestrian Connections to the Devil's Slide Tunnel

Skip Sowko presented the trail connections to the South portal, pointing out a couple of new features:

- (1) the proposed additional parking area north of Gray Whale Cove, which would put cyclists and pedestrians much closer to the proposed cross walk
- (2) the cross walk is now proposed to have a traffic light, which will provide an additional measure of safety for cyclists and pedestrians. However, several people (Ric Lohman) voiced concerns about traffic backing up into the tunnel because of the signal.

Skip detailed the present proposal for access from the south to the abandoned highway. The first new proposal was for a multi-use trail.

- Multi-Use Trail

Chuck Kozak presented the alignment of a pedestrian trail that would connect to the McNee Ranch State Park trail to the Gray Whale Cove parking lot, and extend through Green Valley, over the tunnel and continue north along the east embankment. There are several possible connections to the abandoned roadbed.

Skip reported that Sid, the topologist, had walked the proposed hiking trail and found that there would be major constraints due to sensitive habitat areas in its route. Another constraint is that all the property north of the state park is currently in private ownership.

Chuck proposed this as a "multi-use trail", which could be 8-10 feet wide, or wide enough for two wheelchairs to pass each other.

Practically speaking, this trail would be used primarily by hikers and mountain bikers. A determined or risk-averse northbound road cyclist could use this trail as an alternative to hugging the rock face along Highway 1. Fortunately, the grade is not excessive. Later in the meeting, Jim Washington asked whether this trail would be open for equestrian use. Since this trail (as well as the abandoned roadway) will likely be under the management of GGNRA in the long term, Chris Powell took an action item to look into the question of equestrian use.

Skip pointed out that the multi-use recreational trail project would need strong, dedicated support from community members to become part of the tunnel project plan. There was a question of using mitigation money for part of this project, for example to bridge Green Valley creek where the railroad trestle bridge used to be. The mitigation debit and credit accounting would need to be done first: does it make sense to use mitigation money in this area? What are the overall benefits to the community?

- Issues with the South end cul de sac:

Several people (John Hernandez, Mary Kate Meyerhoffer), pointed out that people would likely park in the cul de sac whether or not parking is permitted. April guessed that this practice would cease if the Sheriff's department started writing hefty tickets.

Jim Washington said visitors and other users of the cul de sac would behave better if law enforcement would do regular patrols in the area.

There was general approval for providing a way for people to turn around. However, there was concern about better separating recreational cyclists and pedestrians from the vehicular traffic.

- Suggestions for better separation of vehicle from bikes and peds at the south:
  - (1) Undercrossing at the crosswalk (Dani Weber, Peninsula Bicycle Coalition, via email).
  - (2) Overcrossing, south of the proposed crosswalk at the OMC road, where there is sufficient berm height to support a modest bridge. (Chuck Kozak and others).
  - (3) Ped and bike crossing at grade level, south of the proposed crosswalk, at the earliest point of access to the abandoned roadway (Sandy Emerson)

The issue of pedestrian and bike safety with a grade-level crossing stimulated a great deal of discussion. Mary Kate Meyerhoffer pointed out that on sunny weekends people would likely be walking on the west side of the highway, as they do now at various vista points. We hope that Caltrans will take a look at an alternative such as an overcrossing. There is a need for clear signage, and for policing. Mary Kate felt there should be a pedestrian island at the grade-level crossing.

- Questions re: the abandoned roadway

The County will manage the abandoned roadway initially, then likely turn it over to GGNRA. The paved surface will not be maintained, but the rate of wear and tear will be less without car and truck traffic.

- Recreational Access from the North:

Skip briefly presented the trail access from the north, as developed jointly with Scott Holmes and the City of Pacifica. At the north end, access through Devil's Slide is part of a network of trails sponsored by Pacifica.

The trail to the tunnel from the north will be a full 10' wide trail like the new trail at Linda Mar.

John Hernandez and Carl May stated that the trail network could be designated as part of the California Coastal Trail. This would provide access to a pool of money (through the Coastal Conservancy) for maintenance.

- Timeline:

The final Phase 2 report should be presented in January, for review by the Midcoast Council, Pacifica, and other stakeholders. The plan will then go to the Coastal Commission for a Coastal Development Permit. The Commission could hear the report as early as July, 2003.

4. Revised Park Development Fee Proposal.

Sandy presented the County's revised park development fee proposal, which focuses on projects at Quarry Park and Mirada Surf. The BOS will hear a first reading of this proposal on December 19 [it was actually read January 7 - se]. This Committee strongly urged the County (via Bern Smith) to add Montara and Moss Beach projects to the list, so that projects would be funded for the entire Midcoast, not just El Granada.

5. Updates. Mary Kate Meyerhoffer reported that the Moss Beach Park improvements were continuing. She asked for donations to pay for sand and retaining wall materials.