



ALAMEDA RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSION MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING

DATE: Thursday, October 12, 2023
TIME: 7:00 p.m. Called to Order
PLACE: City Hall Council Chambers

A video recording of the meeting may be viewed at <https://alameda.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>
The following are action minutes in keeping with the Sunshine Ordinance 2-91.17.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Vice Chair Alexander, Commissioner Burney, Commissioner Radez, Commissioner Robbins and Commissioner Swartz

Staff: Alameda Recreation and Park Department (ARPD) Director Justin Long and Recreation Services Manager David Leimsieder

2. NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

Speaker Drew Higginson, Alameda Resident: Does not want Pickleball at Krusi Park. Transparency is important. When Krusi was selected for a space to do Pickleball so was Franklin Park and wants to know why Krusi was chosen over Franklin Park for Pickleball Courts. Gave stats on comparing the two parks and said the big difference between the two neighborhoods is property value. Feels like he is being told his opinion doesn't matter because he is not wealthy enough.

Speaker Gary Tillman, Alameda Resident: Does not want Pickleball at Krusi Park due to the noise. Has communicated with the Commission six times since last meeting. The 19th city since 2022 that has chosen to move or ban Pickleball was Wichita, Kansas. They wanted to make sure they were doing the right thing and moved the courts. Two other cities, one in Utah and one in Colorado, just passed Ordinances in the last month with clear guidelines about the distance a court can be placed. There is a map of the United States on Facebook that shows 153 and growing Pickleball hotspots that are controversial about Pickleball courts being placed close to residential communities.

Speaker online, Joe Stack: Thanked the Commissioners for all the time they put in making all the good things happen. Reminded everyone of the Enterprise Campground which is a lower priority project but is such a great opportunity and could happen with relative ease. Just needs a request for proposal from an outside agency to run the campground. Would like to see it be an agenda item to discuss further.

Speaker online, Shelby Sheehan: Submitted comment regarding the Alameda Food Bank Parcel and was following up to see if it was received. Concerned about the transparency regarding the City Council approval of a non-confirming use lease for a different vendor called All Good Living on the abandoned Alameda Food Bank parcel. The Rec Park Commission should have been conferred with before this lease was approved and there was no public process and the presentation by the City staff was full of errors regarding zoning and was hoping the Rec Park Commission would be made aware of this to comment to the City Council. Also thinks Pickleball would be great at Alameda Point especially where the old tennis courts are.

3. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Recreation and Park Director Justin Long gave the Director report.

4. COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATION

- Commissioner Burney: There is an annular eclipse of the moon this weekend; do not look directly at the moon or take precaution as looking directly at it can injure your eyes and cause blindness.
- Commissioner Radez: Gave appreciation to all the ARPD afterschool programs that keep our children active and safe. Visited the De-Pave site. Planning to attend the ARPD movie Top Gun Maverick with his family.
- Commissioner Robbins: Will be hosting a Gay-Lesbian Tennis event in Oakland. His students from Wood Middle School Science class were asked to give feedback regarding De-Pave Park three options and he is reviewing the options. The ARPD Teen Underground Center is heavily populated by Wood Middle School students as they have heavily advertised the program.
- Commissioner Swartz: Introduced himself and was welcomed by the Commission. Visited Seaplane Lagoon to see the Blue Angels fly by. Excited about the De-Pave Park area. Noticed the new mulching at the Krusi playground and noticed the afterschool program was opened all day with the school closure for Columbus Day and as a working parent appreciates seeing the kids have somewhere to go to play and have fun. Plans on attending the Alameda High School meeting on October 25 regarding the pool update.
- Vice Chair Alexander: Visited Krusi Park and it was nice to see Little League playing again and the Krusi Tennis Courts are full. Leydecker Park looks amazing; complimented Park Manager Matt Nowlen and staff for a job well done. Ritler Park is one of the busiest parks in town with soccer games of all ages.

5. MINUTES

Commissioner Robbins moved to accept the minutes of September 14, 2023 Regular Meeting as presented.

M/S Commissioner Robbins / Commissioner Radez. All who were present at the September 14, 2023 meeting were in favor with 4 ayes via roll call vote.

6. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

6-A Review De-Pave Park Design Options, Including Proposed Removal of Building 29 Discussion on Whether to Keep or Remove Building 25, and Provide Direction

ARPD Director Long gave report which included background, the public outreach summary, ecological design goals and questions and answers. Kevin Conger, Founding Partner and President of CMG Landscape Architecture presented the three design options.

Public Comments

Speaker Erika Castillo, Alameda County Mosquito Abatement District: Has been monitoring the mosquitos at Alameda Point and will continue to service the wetland area throughout the project and is supportive in the increase of natural habitat and public recreation opportunities, however, would like to ensure the wetlands do not lead to an increase in mosquitos in the surrounding areas. It is essential that the tidal water is able to flow in and out without leaving pockets of water behind as that would be

where mosquitos habitats would form and to follow the guidelines of the California Department of Public Health for storm water retention.

Speaker Irene Dieter: Encouraged Commission to choose option 3 to remove building 25 in thinking of long term goals and the environment.

Speaker Rick Lewis: Supports option 3 as it will expand a wildlife corridor which enhances humanity and is a long term solution.

Speaker Richard Bangert: Supports option 3 and removing building 25 out of the footprint as there are no guarantee that the business will remain there.

Speaker Marjorie Powell, Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge: Has spent a lot of time in De-Pave Park and there are presently 100 different species of birds and the concept of De-Pave park is marvelous as it will create a marshland in the City of Alameda which will be important to the birds and marine mammals. Supports option 3 to remove building 25 as it is not good for the environment and many predators perch on building 25.

Speaker Sharol Nelson-Embry, retired naturalist at Crab Cove: We are making decisions for the future and in keeping the wildlife which are vital to our well-being. Supports option 3 and to remove building 25.

Director Long included that a letter was received late and was not able to be included in the packet from Community Action for Sustainable Alameda and they are in support of option 3. See Exhibit 1.

Commissioner Comments

- Commissioner Burney: In agreement that the City helps finds another place for the present business' in building 25 but the tenants and the City might be looking at two different things and it is important to first consider what would is best place for the tenants and their business. Before going to the council, it would be good to know how much it costs to maintain the building 25 as an overall factor.
- Commissioner Radez: Commends the design and the prospects for a world class space are incredible. Having a large commercial building at the edge of an ecological park seems to be at odds with the intent and purpose of the park. It comes down to the financial impact and would recommend to include within the budget proposal a full accounting of the long term financial impact of removing the building so that both the initial investment of the removal is in that but also the net profitability for investment of the site for the long term benefit of the community.
- Commissioner Robbins: City of Alameda also has the Elsie Ramer Bird Sanctuary here which is known nationally as one of the most important bird sanctuary on the western coast as it is beacon for the migration of birds from Costa Rica up through Alaska. Wood Middle School 6th grade has a birding program to educate about the importance of wetlands. In favor with option 3 and removing building 25 and assisting the tenants in finding another place of business. Important to look at the long term ecological impact; 85% of the wetlands in the Bay Area have

disappeared over the years and now we have a chance to bring back wetlands and create a healthy environment for generations to come.

- Commissioner Swartz: In thinking of the timeline impact it seems like it would be quicker to keep building 25 as it would get the project done faster. There are pros and cons to all the options but feels option 3 is the best long term option.
- Vice Chair Alexander: Are we as a Commission all in agreement that the City finds a place for the tenants in building 25 if the building is removed and would like to have that as part of the direction to Council? Also concerned about how will be maintaining the park as more staff will be needed and that cost should be factored into the final plan. The design is great.

6-B Nominate and Vote on Recreation and Park Chair and Vice-Chair

Commissioner Comments

- Commissioner Burney: What is the time commitment for Vice Chair? Vice Chair Alexander you would meet with Director Long for about an hour prior to meetings and stop by the office usually once a month and keep in contact with ARPD. Commissioner Robbins added that you would be looked at to chair sub committees. Concerned about the time commitment and therefore not interested in the Vice-Chair position at this time.
- Commissioner Radez: Asked Commissioner Robbins if he is no longer interested in being Chair or Vice Chair. Commissioner Robbins said he thought it would be good to let someone else be Vice-Chair. Commissioner Radez said he is pleased to be a Commissioner and not the Vice-Chair.
- Commissioner Robbins: Proposed that Vice-Chair Alexander becomes Chair and one of the new members become Vice-Chair.
- Commissioner Swartz: Asked for clarification what the expected role is for the Chair and Vice-Chair vs a Commission member? ARPD Director Long responded: The Chair's role is to conduct the meeting and keep the overall process going, also be a liaison to the community, works directly with myself in discussing agendas and stay informed to what ARPD is doing The Vice-Chair's role is to be a back up to the Chair in an absence and also chair sub-committees. Would be interested in being Vice-Chair and learn from now Vice Chair Alexander.
- Vice Chair Alexander: Proposed that she be the Chair until July 2024 to maintain the continuity as she has been the Chair before and there are 3 new members and that Commissioner Robbins becomes Vice-Chair. In September 2024, Commissioner Robbins could move to the Chair position and one of the new members could become Vice-Chair.

6-B Motion

Commissioner Robbins motioned to nominate Vice Chair Alexander to be the RPC Chair person and Commissioner Swartz to be the Vice-Chair for this coming year.

M/S Commissioner Robbins / Commissioner Radez
All present in favor with 5 ayes via roll call vote.

7. NEXT MEETING

7-A Next Regular meeting is November 9, 2023

7-B Possible Agenda Items for the Next Meeting:

- Status of the Recreation Van
- 2024 User fee schedule
- Park tour including potential tennis and pickleball courts
- Campground proposal

8. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft, who attended the meeting, thanked the Commissioners for serving and said she enjoyed the meeting.

Commissioner Radez motioned to adjourn the meeting.

M/S Commissioner Radez / Commissioner Swartz
All present in favor with 4 ayes via roll call vote.

Chair Alexander adjourned the meeting at 8:55 PM.

October 12, 2023

RE: Agenda Item 6-A – Buildings at DePave Park

Dear Members of the Recreation and Park Commission:

Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda (CASA) supports the removal of Building 29 and 25 at DePave Park.

We encourage the City to find space at Spirit Alley for the tenants at Building 25 and other space at Alameda Point for the tenants at Building 29.

DePave Park has the potential to be a demonstration site for climate adaptation, “welcoming the water” and transforming the concrete at the west end of the Sea Plane Lagoon into a wetland, waterfront park.

Buildings at this site are inconsistent with the long-term use of the site.

Alameda must prepare for climate change and raise awareness for adaptation and mitigation. Projects like DePave Park not only provide educational opportunities for Alameda residents and school children, but also demonstrate the City’s leadership in addressing climate change.

Sincerely,



Ruth Abbe, Steering Committee
Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda
415-235-1356