

CALL TO ORDER - PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - ROLL CALL

Mayor Rob Schroder called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with all members present except Councilmember DeLaney and Vice Mayor Ross. Councilmember DeLaney arrived right after roll call.

PRESENT: AnaMarie Avila Farias, Councilmember, Lara DeLaney, Councilmember, Debbie McKillop, Councilmember, Mark Ross, Vice Mayor, and Rob Schroder, Mayor.

EXCUSED: None.

ABSENT: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT (COMPLETE SPEAKER CARD AND PRESENT IT TO THE CLERK) Comments are limited only to items listed on the agenda.

WORKSHOP

A. Discussion of the Waterfront Park Renovation Project.

City Engineer Tim Tucker provided a PowerPoint presentation reviewing the current park layout, proposed changes/improvements, project elements, financial summary (costs), potential additional funding sources, and balance remaining in the Measure H fund. He concluded with the staff recommendation, which is to 1) construct all project elements as shown on schematic plan; and 2) plan for future enhancements; as well as next steps in the process.

Mayor Schroder asked whether the ballfield lights include the soccer field. Mr. Tucker said no, it was briefly discussed, but ultimately not part of the proposal. He noted there are adjacent light standards for the parking area; however, he was doubtful that they would provide enough light to meet safety standards for the soccer field. He also confirmed that AYSO had been involved in the process, but that field does not get much use. He noted that there are other parks that will have new, artificial turf soccer fields that will be paid for with Measure H funding, and they will likely get much more use.

**Vice Mayor Ross arrived at 6:50 p.m.*

Councilmember DeLaney asked about the improvements to the group picnic area, and Mr. Tucker discussed the extensive renovation plans that will include new tables/benches, new barbecues, new landscaping, raising up of the area to make it more visible/more secure, and resurfacing.

Mayor Schroder responded to a comment from the Parks, Recreation, Marina & Cultural Commission (PRMCC) member John Fuller regarding the need for a Master Plan for the Waterfront as a whole, but Mayor Schroder said he did not think that was the right way to go. He acknowledged the importance of the park to the City overall; and he would support other funding to be added to ensure that the result is a high quality asset. He was appreciative of the ballfield lights and the recommendation for a phased approach to the project.

Councilmember DeLaney commented on the amount of money being spent on parking. She asked whether additional parking was being added or just re-striping and re-paving. Mr. Tucker stated that 40-50 additional spaces would be included; and he discussed areas that were being improved and the accommodations that are made for special events.

Councilmember DeLaney also asked whether security cameras are being added. Mr. Tucker said yes, and he reviewed park locations throughout the City that will have security cameras. Councilmember DeLaney commented on signage for the Joe DiMaggio fields and the possibility of adding a sculpture if public art funding can be found.

Councilmember Avila Farias thanked staff and the Council for taking the time to have the presentation for the public. She indicated she supports the recommendations and additional funding to be allocated as plans move forward. She also agreed it was not necessary to have one Master Plan, but she cautioned that the City should not wait to make improvements while the Marina Master Plan is being considered. She noted that the park improvements will bring new vitality to the City, and she expressed support for additional amenities, such as a mini rail.

Councilmember McKillop thanked staff for taking extra time to show her the plans and explain the background history. She expressed appreciation for the improvements to such a key feature in the City. She echoed Councilmember DeLaney's questions and concerns about the parking enhancements and security cameras. She agreed with Mayor Schroder that the park plans and Master Plan should be integrated, and she wouldn't want the park improvements delayed for development of the Master Plan. She hoped that additional amenities can be included as funding is identified.

Vice Mayor Ross apologized for arriving late to the meeting. He acknowledged the funding gap mentioned by staff and was supportive of efforts to find additional funds. He commented on the need for an improved intersection at the railroad crossing, while ensuring maximum safety including the use of wayside horns. He also agreed that the Master Plan for the marina should be separate from the park plan. Mr. Tucker indicated that the wayside horn could be considered as part of the next CIP budget.

Mayor Schroder asked whether the Berrellesa Bridge crossing was part of the next CIP phase. Mr. Tucker confirmed and noted that the environmental review and other enhancements will be done in the future.

Mayor Schroder opened public comment on the item.

Dylan Radke, Chair of the PRMCC, discussed the recommendations made by the Commission that will bring the residents the same high level of amenities that have been realized at other parks throughout the City. He thanked Mr. Tucker, Mr. Enke and former PRMCC Chair Richard Patchin for their diligence in developing the plans, and he expressed appreciation to the Council for deciding not to delay this project until a Master Plan can be finalized. He asked for clarification regarding the extent of the project elements, which Mr. Tucker provided.

Kate Cox questioned the addition of the light poles that will only be used a few hours a day for only a few months of the year. She did not think it suits the "jewel" that everyone wants the park to be.

Paul Craig commented on the impact the giant poles will have on the ambiance of neighboring homes that are less than half the height. He also urged the Council to consider the whole picture - the amount of money going into the ballfields would be better spent on the marina.

Seeing no further speakers, Mayor Schroder closed public comment on the item.

Councilmember DeLaney asked Mr. Tucker whether the ballfields would only be used by children or by adult ballplayers too. City Engineer Tim Tucker confirmed that the primary use will be adult ballplayers, during evening hours after work.

Senior Civil Engineer Joe Enke added that weekend users are mostly youth, but weekdays are used by adult leagues. Councilmember DeLaney asked how many light poles were proposed, and staff said about twenty.

Councilmember DeLaney expressed doubt that Measure H money could be used for marina improvements. She noted that an enhanced infrastructure finance district is being considered for the marina and would be a better option than additional taxes.

Councilmember Avila Farias asked, and Mr. Tucker confirmed, that the placement and angle of the light fixtures would be designed to minimize impacts on neighboring residents.

The Council concurred with staff's recommendation to approve the schematic plan, approve the budget plan and directed staff to place the item for approval on the next Council agenda.

CITY COUNCIL

1. Discussion of, consideration of and possible action regarding Muir Land Trust request for \$262,500 from the City towards the acquisition of 44 acres known as West Hills Farm.

Acting City Manager Alan Shear provided the staff report, noting that this was a follow-up to the January 13th Council meeting. He explained that if, the Council decides to fund all or part of the \$262,500, staff recommends the use of Measure WW funds. He added that the project manager at East Bay Parks has confirmed that would be an appropriate use of those funds, and the deadline for application for those funds is March 31st.

Mayor Schroder asked about the offer from DeNova Homes to advance the City the \$262,500 from park mitigation funds. Acting City Manager Shear explained that the delay in applying for Measure WW funds while investigating the possible use of Park Mitigation funds could cause the City to miss the application deadline. He indicated that the City Attorney confirmed that Park Mitigation funds cannot be used outside City limits.

Vice Mayor Ross said he thought using WW funds was the best way to cover the cost, although he was appreciative of the offer of Park Mitigation funds.

Mayor Schroder opened public comment on the item.

Chuck Lewis, Chair of the Muir Heritage Land Trust Board of Directors, noted that one of the first actions of the Land Trust was the purchase of Mt. Wanda and donation to the National Parks Service. He thought this was another good opportunity for the Trust to increase open space and enhance recreational uses in the City through the acquisition of this property.

Ted Rojasavich agreed this was an important opportunity for the City to participate in the purchase of this property at a very good price, as well as a great use of WW funds (approved by the voters in 2008), which thus far have had no projects submitted by Martinez. He noted there would still be plenty of WW funding left that could be used at the marina.

Marie Olson, Secretary of the Alhambra Valley Improvement Association, commented on the importance of this property to the eventual annexation of the Alhambra Valley by the City. She urged the Council to think like visionaries and support the purchase.

Seeing no further speakers, Mayor Schroder closed public comment on the item.

Mayor Schroder stated that he supported the purchase and he recommends the use of Measure WW funds, but he would like to backfill with Park Mitigation funds from the Pine Meadow development.

Councilmember Avila Farias expressed her support and said she agreed with the Mayor to use Measure WW funds and backfill with Park Mitigation funds. She added, however, that she trusts that the Council will be more strategic in considering areas for purchase within the City limits in the future.

Councilmember McKillop was supportive of the property acquisition especially as it would provide better access to the Mt. Wanda site.

Councilmember DeLaney said she supported the use of WW funds for the acquisition as she had expressed in the past. She indicated she looks forward to visiting the site.

Vice Mayor Ross stated he would make a motion in support of the acquisition and the use of WW funds. He also commented that the future annexation of the Valley is not intended to change its character; hopefully, the residents there will see this as a token of good will.

On motion by Mark Ross, Vice Mayor, seconded by Lara DeLaney, Councilmember, to approve the appropriation of \$262,500 to the Muir Land Trust towards the acquisition of 44 acres known as West Hills Farm; and the use of Measure WW funding for the purchase. Motion unanimously passed 5 - 0. Yes: AnaMarie Avila Farias, Councilmember; Lara DeLaney, Councilmember; Debbie McKillop, Councilmember; Mark Ross, Vice Mayor; Rob Schroder, Mayor.

2. City Council Comments.

Councilmember DeLaney reported that she attended the League of California Cities Policy Committee on Employee Relations.

Councilmember Avila Farias expressed that she and Councilmember McKillop also attended League of California Cities programs and would report more fully at the next Council meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 7:28 p.m. to a Regular City Council Meeting on February 4, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 525 Henrietta Street, Martinez, California.

Approved by the City Council,



Rob Schroder, Mayor

Mercy G. Cabral, Deputy City Clerk – 3/4/15