

CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

**Parks, Beaches & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting
December 4, 2012 – 6pm**

1) CALL MEETING TO ORDER – 6:06 p.m.

2) ROLL CALL

Present: Kathy Hamilton, Chair
Tom Anderson, Vice Chair
Ron Cole
Roy Englebrecht
Phillip Lugar
Marie Marston

Absent: Jack Tingley

Staff: Laura Detweiler, Recreation and Senior Services Director
Mark Harmon, Municipal Operations Director
Teri Craig, Administrative Assistant

3) NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

4) CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Minutes of the October 2, 2012 regular meeting.

Recommendation: Waive reading of subject minutes, approve and order filed.

B. Removed by Director Harmon

C. Recreation & Seniors Services Activity Report.

Recommendation: Receive/file monthly Activity Report for activities and upcoming projects.

D. Removed by Director Harmon

Motion by Commissioner Marston to approve Consent Calendar items 4A and 4C. Motion carried by acclamation.

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

B. Parks & Operations Division Activity Report.

Recommendation: Receive/file monthly Activity Report for activities and upcoming projects.

Director Harmon reported that the second page of the report shows the Irvine Avenue median, that the subject has been discussed extensively in the past and that the median is now completed and re-landscaped in conjunction with the City of Costa Mesa. He commended the Public Works Department and noted that numerous compliments had been received on the landscaping of the median. He discussed the reasoning for tying the canopy of the palm trees.

Chair Hamilton opened the public discussion

Jim Mosher requested clarification regarding the current status of Sunset Ridge and Marina Park projects.

Chair Hamilton closed the public discussion

D. Reforestation Request – Harbor View Hills South HOA

Recommendation: Approve request to remove and replace one City Carrotwood tree at 3719 Park Green Drive.

Director Harmon clarified that there are three reforestation requests on the agenda; the reason that this request is listed on the Consent Calendar is that it is part of an ongoing reforestation and addressed previous actions and approvals that the Commission has taken.

Chair Hamilton opened the public discussion; seeing none the public discussion was closed.

Motion by Commissioner Marston, to approve Consent Calendar items 4B and 4D. Motion carried by acclamation.

5) CURRENT BUSINESS

A. Special Tree Removal – Groves Bike Trail

Recommendation: Recommend removal of 54 Special City Trees – Blue Gum located along the Groves Bike Trail. These trees are listed under Landmark Trees.

Director Harmon presented details of the report including a brief history of the Blue Gum Eucalyptus. He stated that there had been a determination that these 54 trees are diseased and have been rated a high risk for failure. He addressed the notification to residents within 500 feet of the area as well as the HOA's in proximity. He stated that not all of the existing trees will be removed.

Director Harmon addressed the timeline for removal and replacement and noted that the estimated completion should be summer 2013. He added that the remaining healthy Blue Gum Eucalyptus trees will remain. He went on to say that that there will not be a one-for-one replacements but rather determined once the phasing begins.

Discussion followed regarding the number of diseased and healthy trees, and the different variety of trees in the area.

Chair Hamilton opened the public discussion

Jim Mosher commented that this is a major decision affecting a City landmark and felt that the notification may have been inadequate. He stated that he believes that many of the trees seem healthy in appearance and suggested a more measured approach to confirm that the arborist's assessments are correct.

Director Harmon stated that there is no way to determine the state of a tree just by looking at it and that these trees had been reviewed by three certified arborists who all concluded that they are diseased. He addressed the noticing and that staff has done its due diligence and continued with the recommendations as presented. He also commented that trees are not removed until they have been posted for 30 days after approval has been given to remove.

Bob Adams stated he would be in favor of the recommendations if it was proven that those trees were, in fact, diseased. He wondered if there were other investigations that could be conducted to ensure that they are diseased. He also wondered what measures could be taken to ensure that the remaining trees do not become diseased and asked if healthy trees were removed on Irvine Avenue.

Drew Warmington expressed concerns with the timing of notification, commented on the age of the trees and encouraged the Commission to proceed slowly with consideration of the matter.

Chair Hamilton closed the public discussion

Discussion followed regarding noticing requirements and posting notices on the trees thirty days prior to the work starting, removal of trees on Irvine Avenue and the possibility of alternate options.

Director Harmon noted that certified arborists know what to look for in assessing the health of trees. In addition, he reported that the majority of trees removed from Irvine Avenue were diseased with many having roots missing and the same thing occurred on Holiday. He indicated that there may come a time when the remaining healthy trees will need to be removed. He noted that staff will continue with the maintenance process and mitigate as much as possible.

Discussion followed regarding the intertwining of roots and the availability of growth space for the remaining fifty trees. It was noted that this type of tree is not appropriate for that area and discussion followed regarding providing notification.

Director Harmon reported that he had received comments from residents in the neighborhoods who supported the removals.

Motion by Commissioner Englebrecht, to approve the removal of 54 Blue Gum Special City Trees located along the Groves Bike Trail. Motion carried by acclamation.

B. Reforestation Request – Cliff Drive Park

Recommendation: Recommend approval of reforestation request of the applicants of the Cliff Drive Park area and San Bernardino Avenue to remove and replace four City trees of various species within Cliff Drive Park.

Director Harmon presented details of the report noting a request was received for reforestation of trees located in a City Park, and that it involves a view issue for several residents. The applicant obtained support from twenty-five neighbors indicating support for the removal of the trees. He stated that the residents will pay for the removal and the replacement with four new 36" box Water Gum trees.

Discussion followed regarding type of tree and if it is part of the Eucalyptus family, the appropriateness of the recommended tree for the area, the number of residents who initiated the request and related provisions in City Council Policy G-1.

Chair Hamilton opened the public discussion; seeing none the public discussion was closed.

Motion by Commissioner Englebrecht, to approve the reforestation request of the applicants of the Cliff Drive Park area and San Bernardino Avenue to remove and replace four City trees of various species within Cliff Drive Park. Motion carried by acclamation.

C. Reforestation Request – Port Theater

Recommendation: Recommend the reforestation request from the Port Theater to remove and replace a City Hong Kong Orchid tree at 2905 East Coast Highway.

Director Harmon introduced the item and presented details of the report. He addressed the location of the subject tree, consideration and approval of the issue by the BID and noted that the applicant will pay for the removal and replacement of the subject tree. He addressed the proposed replacement tree (King Palm), which will provide a view to the marquee.

Discussion followed regarding over-trimming of the existing tree and other King Palms in the area.

Chair Hamilton opened the public discussion

Jessica Prause representing the Port Theater noted that the only types of trees in the area are Orchid and King Palm trees. She stated that the proposed tree would be consistent with what exists in the area. She asked if the location could be moved to the other side of the theater so that the marquee is not obstructed. She presented pictures of the proposed location.

Director Harmon indicated that staff can work with the applicant to determine an alternate location for the proposed King Palm.

Chair Hamilton closed the public discussion

Motion by Commissioner Lugar, to approve the reforestation request from the Port Theater to remove and replace a City Hong Kong Orchid tree at 2905 East Coast Highway. Motion carried by acclamation.

6) PARKS, BEACHES & RECREATION COMMISSION / STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS, UPDATES OR MATTERS WHICH MEMBERS WOULD LIKE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION, ACTION OR REPORT (NON-DISCUSSION ITEM)

Director Detweiler provided an update on Sunset Ridge and Marina Parks noting that staff is still waiting for the permit from the Coastal Commission and staff is continuing to work with them to resolve any questions. She stated that the permits should be issued in the near future and that work should begin by April 2013.

She reported completion of the Flag Football season thanked the coaches, staff and participants for their efforts.

She reported that the first Council meeting at the new Civic Center will be next Tuesday but that the Commission will continue to meet at its current venue until the project is complete.

Chair Hamilton commented on the increase in graffiti through the City. Director Harmon explained that staff works closely with the Police Department on this issue. He addressed the process for enforcement.

7) PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Jim Mosher commented that Council Policy G1 is confusing and outdated. He suggested that the Commission place an item on a future agenda to discuss the review the policy.

8) ADJOURNMENT – 7:25pm

Submitted by:

Approved by:

Teri Craig, Admin Asst

Kathy Hamilton, Chair