

CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

Parks, Beaches & Recreation Commission Special Meeting – via Zoom January 25, 2021 – 5:00 PM

I. CONVENE MEETING OF THE PARKS BEACHES & RECREATION COMMISSION TO ORDER – 5:00 PM

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Heather Ignatin, Chair
Diane Daruty, Vice Chair
Hassan Archer, Commissioner
David Granoff, Commissioner
Laird Hayes, Commissioner
Walt Howald, Commissioner
Kate Malouf, Commissioner

Staff: Laura Detweiler, Recreation & Senior Services Director
Sean Levin, Recreation & Senior Deputy Director
Micah Martin, Deputy Public Works Director
Kevin Pekar, Parks and Trees Superintendent
Mariah Stinson, Administrative Support Specialist
Ros Ung – Principal Planner

III. NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CONSENT CALENDAR-None.

V. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Minutes of the Parks, Beaches & Recreation Commissioner Meeting of December 1, 2020.

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

B. Reforestation Requests - Harbor View Hills South Homeowners Association - 1505 Sandcastle Drive and 3614 and 3630 Surfview Lane

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Parks, Beaches & Recreation (PB&R) Commission approve the reforestation requests of two Lemon-Scented Gums located at 1505 Sandcastle Drive and two Brazilian Pepper trees, one at both 3614 and 3630 Surfview Lane. The applicant has met the procedural requirements for reforestation established in City Council Policy G-1. At Harbor View Hills South Homeowners Association's costs, a total of four 48-inch box Little Gem Magnolia trees will be installed as replacement trees

Chair Ignatin opened public comment.

Jim Ludlow objected to having the two pepper trees removed because the City's arborist has determined that the trees are healthy.

Chair Ignatin closed public comment.

Chair Ignatin pulled Item V-B from the Consent Calendar.

Motion by Chair Ignatin; second by Vice Chair Daruty to accept item V-A of the Consent Calendar. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Superintendent Pekar shared that staff has met with the HOA and discussed their safety and fire concerns regarding two Eucalyptus trees and two Brazilian Pepper trees. The trees were inspected and all four were found to be healthy. Staff suggested reforestation. The community has agreed to pay for 48-inch box Little Gem Magnolias as replacement trees. Brazilian Pepper trees are listed on the City's problem tree list and can be removed if views are encroached upon.

In response to Chair Ignatin's questions regarding the health of the trees, fire safety, opposition of the removals, and if there has been any reported problems with the Brazilian Pepper trees, Superintendent Pekar confirmed all the trees are healthy, after consultation with the Fire Marshall the trees were determined to not be a fire hazard, staff has received only one email regarding opposition, and besides the view infringement, there have been no problems with the Brazilian Pepper trees requested for removal.

Vice Chair Daruty agreed with the staff's recommendation.

Commissioner Hayes also agreed that the Brazilian Pepper trees should be removed.

Commissioner Howald concurred with the removal of the Brazilian Peppers. He asked if the replacement trees have any insect issues and Superintendent Pekar answered that there have been no issues with Tuliptree Scale in this Association.

Chair Ignatin opened public comment.

Jim Mosher clarified that Council did not approve the G-1 Policy at their January 12, 2021 meeting and instead sent it back to staff for further consideration.

Jim Ludlow argued that the aesthetics of the street will look odd if only one Brazilian Pepper tree remains. He concluded that he enjoyed the Brazilian Pepper trees and they provided habitat for insects and birds.

Chair Ignatin closed public comment.

Superintendent Pekar noted that the reason the Brazilian Pepper trees are on the Problem Tree list is that they are root invasive, cause view obstructions, and create sewer damage.

Commissioner Howald asked if the City is planning to plant more Brazilian Pepper trees and how many remain in the topic area. Superintendent Pekar answered no and estimated that there are 20 Brazilian Peppers trees in Harbor View Hills South.

Commissioner Archer wanted to know if, after removal, there would only be one Brazilian Pepper tree left on the street. Superintendent Pekar confirmed there will be eight Brazilian Pepper trees on Surfview after the removal of the two trees in question.

Motion by Chair Ignatin, seconded by Vice Chair Daruty moved to do a one for one replacement with the 48-inch box Magnolia Little Gem trees at 1505 Sandcastle and 3630 Surfview, but to deny the request for the removal at 3614 Surfview. Motion passed with unanimous vote.

VI. CURRENT BUSINESS

A. Residences at 4400 Von Karman Project- Review of Public Park

Staff recommends that the Parks, Beaches and Recreation (PB&R) Commission consider the proposed public park amenities that were presented at the December 1, 2020, PB&R meeting.

Rosalinh Ung, Principal Planner, confirmed that the Commission had reviewed the item at the December 2020 PB&R meeting, in which the Commission reviewed the proposed 1-acre park for the Residences at 4400 Von Karman residential project; and found the proposed amenities to be appropriate and recommended approval to the City Council. The project with its park was scheduled for the City Council consideration at their January 12th meeting. It has been continued to the January 26th meeting in order for staff to review public comments and prepare written responses to the comments received. Among the comments received, there was an alleged violation of the Brown Act by an individual who was not able to attend the December meeting in person and felt that the lack of a call-in option violated their rights to be involved in the project discussion. The City Attorney's Office concluded that there was no violation but decided to have the item brought back to the Commission so community members could participate remotely. The applicant has updated and incorporated all the amenities that were directed by the Commission into the park plan. The applicant is proposing a minor change to the proposed park to further increase the distance between their apartment building and the existing office building at 4910 Birch Street. Ms. Ung stated that staff has received several written comments for this item and forwarded to the Commission for consideration. Ms. Ung then introduced Yolanda Summerhill, Assistant City Attorney and the applicant, Mr. Tim Stanley.

Tim Stanley, President of Picerne Group, gave a brief background of the Picerne Group, the project's community and City process, and amenities that were added as directed by the Commission.

Matt Jackson, MJS Design Group, explained that the newly proposed expanded area between the existing office building and the apartment building is roughly 50-feet from building face to building face. The park will not be fenced, there will be five, timed parking stalls available to the public; a unisex restroom will be located in the center of

the park; and there will be a walking trail looping the entire site. Walking trails will be lit per City code.

Commissioner Archer asked if the Picerne Group expected similar foot traffic numbers compared to their sister park in Uptown Newport. Mr. Stanley did not have a strong understanding of the utilization of the sister park in Uptown Newport.

Commissioner Granoff appreciated that the Picerne Group plans to be long term owners.

Commissioner Hayes asked if there is nearby parking that is within walking distance to the park and if there is signage for plants. Mr. Stanley answered no parking within walking distance other than the five proposed spaces. Mr. Jackson explained that it made more sense to have signage in the garden space instead of the entire park. Commissioner Hayes suggested plant identification signage throughout the park.

Commissioner Howald asked if there is signage at the proposed parking spaces. Mr. Jackson answered that there will be directional signage at the parking spaces.

Commissioner Malouf supported the project.

Chair Ignatin asked if the parking spaces will be available for the public and that they are free of charge. Mr. Stanley confirmed that is correct.

Chair Ignatin opened public comment; seeing none public comment was closed.

Commissioner Hayes asked if staff agreed with the plant and tree selection. Superintendent Pekar shared that the proposed plant list is acceptable and will be refined during plan check.

Chair Ignatin appreciated the amenities and that they are open to the public.

Motion by Commissioner Granoff; seconded by Commissioner Howald to approve the proposed public park amenities that were presented and agreed upon at the December 1, 2020 PB&R meeting including to the increase distance between their apartment building and the existing office building at 4910 Birch Street and forward the recommendation to the City Council. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

PB&R Commission / staff announcements/ Ad Hoc Committee updates or matters which Commissioner members would like placed on future agendas for further discussion (this is a non-discussion item).

Director Detweiler reminded the Commission that community centers continue to be closed as well as City Hall due to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Director Martin announced that trees around the City have fared well through the winds that have been happening in the area.

Chair Ignatin called for public comment.

Kelly Morgan requested that the Commission provide feedback regarding the trash that can be found in the Santa Ana River jetty as well as dogs off-leash in the river. She reported that the county is responsible for the river mouth itself but the City is responsible for the area south of the river.

Chair Ignatin closed public comment.

Commissioner Granoff agreed that there are copious amounts of trash in the river. He recommended that the Commission review the MOU that is with the county and consider if there is a viable place within the City to make a beach area that allows dogs to be off-leash.

Commissioner Hayes agreed with Commissioner Granoff's statements. He suggested Ms. Morgan raise the matter at the next City Council meeting as well as at the Water Quality and Coastal Tidelands Commission.

Commissioner Malouf agreed with Commissioner Hayes and Commissioner Granoff.

Commissioner Howald suggested Ms. Morgan raise the matter with the County Board of Supervisors

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Public comments are invited on non-agenda items generally considered to be within the subject matter jurisdiction of the PB&R Commission. Speakers must limit comments to three (3) minutes. Before speaking, we invite, but do not require, you to state your name for the record. The Commission has the discretion to extend or shorten the speakers' time limit on non-agenda items, provided the time limit adjustment is applied equally to all speakers.

None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT – 6:17 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Mariah Stinson, Administrative Support Specialist

Approved by: _____
Heather Ignatin, Chair