

CREST-DEHESA-GRANITE HILLS-HARBISON CANYON SUBREGIONAL PLANNING GROUP. Minutes of the meeting on 13 September 2021, at Old Ironside Park, Harbison Canyon, El Cajon.

**A. CALL TO ORDER.** Chairman Wally Riggs called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**B. ROLL CALL.** Planning Group members Rich, Ulm, Nehring, Jones, Wessel, Becker, Riggs, Bretz, Manning, Lutz-Partain, Scholl and Lucas were present, forming a quorum of 12. Members Page and Underwood were absent, but not excused. Seat 13 is vacant.

**C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.** Member Cristina Becker moved that the Planning Group approves, as submitted, the minutes of the meeting of 9 August 2021. The motion passed (11 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain: Ulm).

**E. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION.** No one from the public requested to speak.

Planning Group member Darin Wessel described his finding evidence, beneath the bridge over the river on Sloane Canyon Road, of someone burning insulation from wire (presumably to salvage the copper); he expressed his concerns about the wildfire threat this activity creates; and he informed the Sycuan police about its recent occurrence on Tribal lands along Sloane Canyon Road.

Planning Group member Christina Becker spoke about her interest in starting the Planning Group meetings at 6:00 pm, instead of the current practice of starting at 7:00 pm. She requested that the Group consider and discuss this possibility at the October meeting. (Chairman Riggs said her request would be included as an agenda item for that meeting.)

**F. ACTION ITEMS.**

**F1. South Lane Park presentation (County Staff).** Chairman Riggs introduced County Department of Parks and Recreation staff persons, Nick Ceracone and Emily Hubbard, and invited them to give their presentation of an update on the project to plan and implement improvements to the South Lane Community Park in Crest. They explained that the Project is funded by \$650,000 allocated for the development of a Park Master Plan, and also the design of, surveys for, and construction of selected improvements to the existing South Lane Park, following the first part of the Master Plan that is in the process of being created; that County DPR will seek additional funding for completing other parts of the Master Plan, but that the Planning Group also needs to use its own initiative to seek funding for implementation of the other improvement projects included in the Master Plan.

The current status of the Project is that DPR has conducted two virtual public meetings, and a meeting with the Crest Community Association, to gather input from the public about its ideas for park improvements, and about its response to ideas advanced by

County DPR; that a third public meeting will be held to present a revised draft Plan based on input from the Planning Group and public at tonight's meeting.

The presentation tonight describes two separate concepts, both including improved and expanded trails, and increased shade trees and seating:

1) Concept A – more improvements than Concept B, to provide more parking and access at the park's southwest entry; to provide more trails; to replace existing equestrian arenas and provide bleacher seating; to provide a fenced area for unleashed dogs and a gazebo in the southeast corner of the park; to provide a nature play area and improved access on the northwest corner of the park; to retain and maintain all existing rock outcrops, trees and natural drainage; and to use as much native, fire hardy and low water using vegetation as possible.

2) Concept B - compared to Concept A, to provide relatively less parking and access at the park's southwest entry; to leave the current equestrian arenas as they are; to provide an open turf area with maintained grass and a gazebo in the southeast corner of the park; to provide an outdoor classroom area on the northwest corner of the park while protecting all existing rock outcrops and trees.

County DPR has a current survey (South Land Park) on its website (sdparks.org), which is available until Friday evening, 17 September 2021, and everyone is encouraged to complete this survey. DPR will consider all the input it receives from its surveys and meetings to develop a final Master Plan, and also three alternative choices of which improvement projects could be accomplished with the available funds allocated to the Project.

Planning Group members commented that they support the use of native and fire resistant trees for increasing shade; the possible use of structural shade for the equestrian arena bleachers; the establishment of a larger, better trail network for improved circulation throughout the park; the addition of both natural play and outdoor education areas. Group members also questioned whether there will be adequate funding for ongoing maintenance of the park; whether DPR will be responsible for paying the water and electricity bills; whether it would be possible to provide picnic tables and portable toilets;

Kandy Franklin, Crest Fire Safe Council, commented that the Crest Fire Plan identifies the southeast corner of the park as a staging area for large animal evacuation, and that DPR has done a good job listening to the community concerns while working on the South Lane Park Master Plan.

The Planning Group took no action concerning this agenda item.

## **F2. Discussion and possible recommendation of change in Road Improvement**

**Priority List.** Chairman Riggs opened discussion of the Group concerning its need to approve an updated Road Improvement Priority List for the County Department of Public Works.

Planning Group member Mary Manning reviewed some of the history of previous priority lists prepared by the Group, and other communications with County DPW; she emphasized that the Department of Public Works recently encouraged the Group to submit County maintained unpaved roads for evaluation and priority consideration; and she recommended that the following roads in Harbison Canyon be placed on the updated Priority List: 1) pave Harbison Canyon Road from 1600 Harbison Canyon Road north to

8669 Harbison Canyon road, 2) pave Patrick Drive from its bridge to end of Patrick, 3) pave Rosalie Way from its 500 block to the end of the County-maintained public part, 4) pave the entirety of Editha Way and update its drainage, 5) pave Silverbrook from Collier Way south to the end of the road, 6) pave St. George from Ridge Trail to the end of the road, 7) pave Lookout Trail, and 8) pave Lingal Road. She stated the seven currently unpaved roads are public roads maintained by the County.

Planning Group member Christina Becker recommended that Dehesa Road, from the road to Sycuan Casino to Tavern Road, should be included on the updated Priority List for paving.

The Group and Public discussed previous Priority Lists and County DPW responses to them, various safety and fire equipment access concerns for unpaved roads, and other needed improvements besides paving.

Planning Group member Christina Becker moved that the Group approves an updated Priority List with Priorities 1 – 8 being the Harbison Canyon projects in the order recommended by Mary Manning; with Priorities 9 – 18 being the various projects in the order as included in the 2014 Crest-Dehesa Community Planning Group Capital Improvement Project Proposed Priority List: 9) Sage Road from Mountain View - Pave Road & Pathway, 10) Albatross - Fix Steel Plates, 11) Entrance to Condos on Dehesa Road - Road Improvement, 12) Forester Creek at La Crest and Greenfield - Drainage Repair, 13) East Noakes -Drainage Repair, 14) Francis Drive from Almyra to Rosalie Way - Drainage Repair, 15) Lingel Drive Paving -Road Improvement, 16) Patrick Drive Paving -Road Improvement, 17) Crest Dr. - Pave Road due to fire damage - Road Improvement, 18) Highland Trails at Ken - Fix drainage and pave; and with Priority 19 being the Dehesa Road project.

Group discussion of the motion considered the order of projects that would be included on the full updated list, the relative cost of different projects, and the importance of safety improvements compared to items such as drainage and pavement condition.

Planning Group member Ron Nehring proposed revising Becker's motion so that the updated Priority List would have Priority 1 being the installation of three (3) speed-indicating radar signs on westbound La Cresta Road; Priorities 2 – 11 being the ten projects as included in the 2014 Priority List; with Priorities 12 – 19 being the eight Harbison Canyon Projects recommended by Manning; and with Priority 20 being the project to pave Dehesa Road recommended by Becker.

Nehring's proposed revision to Becker's original motion was approved by the Planning Group (12 yes; 0 no; 0 abstain).

**F3. Fire evacuation routes, Crest and Harbison Canyon.** Chairman Riggs asked Planning Group member Ron Nehring to explain and discuss, for possible Group approval, the resolution he has drafted to address the issue of fire evacuation routes for Crest and Harbison Canyon. Group member Nehring described his meeting with other stakeholders concerned about the problems associated with the current fire evacuation routes designated for Crest and Harbison Canyon; and he moved that the Planning Group approves "Resolution Establishing a Wildfire Preparedness Committee to Review and Propose Updates to the Community Plan, and for Other Purposes," a copy of which Chairman Riggs forwarded by email on 10 September 2021 to Planning Group members for their consideration.

Chairman Riggs confirmed that the draft resolution he forwarded by email was intended to be considered by the Group for possible appropriate changes and amendments; and he then expressed his concerns that the proposal to establish a “Standing Committee on Wildfire Preparedness” is not a good idea for the Planning Group to approve, due to certain requirements of the Brown Act that govern how a Standing Committee must be structured and how its business must be conducted. He also pointed out that an Ad Hoc Committee, which can be established to review and propose action on a single specific topic, is not governed by the difficult Brown Act constraints that govern a Standing Committee.

Discussion of the Group included recognition that the entire Subregional Community Plan is in line and due for an update, that there are numerous outside parties and stakeholders (e.g., Calfire, and others) whose inputs need to be included in working on better wildfire preparedness plans; that all parts of the Subregion need to be included in the planning.

Planning Group member David Jones moved that the Planning Group approves an amendment to the draft resolution proposed for approval by Ron Nehring, which: 1) removes the words “AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES” from the title of the resolution, and 2) the replaces the word “Standing” by the words “Ad Hoc” in second line of the fifth paragraph of the resolution; and that the Group approves the amended version of the proposed resolution. Ron Nehring accepted the amendment to his original motion. The Planning Group approved David Jone’s motion to adopt the amended draft resolution to establish an “Ad Hoc Committee on Wildfire Preparedness” as described in paragraph five. The motion passed (12 yes; 0 no; 0 abstain).

Chairman Riggs appointed Group member Ron Nehring to serve as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Wildfire Preparedness.

**G. GROUP BUSINESS.** None

**H. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE.** The next meeting of the Planning Group will be on 11 October 2021, at Olde Ironside Park, Harbison Canyon. The November 9 meeting of the Group will also be at Olde Ironside Park.

Chairman Riggs announced that he had been informed by a letter from Supervisor Anderson that any Planning Group vacancy must be filled within 90 days from the beginning of that vacancy; that if the Group does not take action to fill the vacancy within that 90-day period, the Board of Supervisors will take action to fill it without Planning Group recommendation and nomination of a candidate.

**I. ADJOURNMENT.** Christina Becker moved adjournment at 9:15 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted, William Bretz (Secretary)