

Lower Hesse Park Workshop Minutes

September 14, 2015

Meeting Location: McTaggart Hall, Hesse Park

Meeting Start Time: 7:05 pm

- A. Staff call to order
- B. Agenda overview
- C. Staff gave a history of Hesse Park
- D. Staff explained two plans
 - 1. Proposed plan
 - 2. Enhanced plan

During the meeting, Corey Linder explained that the City's current design focuses on the trails as the "spine" or "backbone" of the plan, with other elements arranged to support use of the trails. For purposes of flexibility, the Recreation & Parks Division currently proposes two possible plans:

- 1) **Basic Improvement Plan**
- 2) **Enhanced Funding Options Improvement Plan**, i.e., Basic Improvement Plan with additional elements and flexible enhancements. If approved, this Plan would require additional funding, above the \$500,000. This plan could be implemented in addition to the Basic Improvement Plan with Council approval, or by using a phased approach, with basic elements implemented first, and enhancements implemented subsequently.

The **Basic Improvement Plan** incorporates elements to provide:

- Safe outdoor exploration and activity space for children
- Stabilization and maintenance of trails and other areas prone to erosion
 - placement of borders
 - standard path widths
- Stabilization of sub-soils and drainage areas to prevent erosion, maintain federal water quality standards, prevent adverse environmental impacts
 - use of rock fill to slow down drainage
- Xeriscaping to improve the aesthetic appearance, achieve 36% water reduction goal, reduce weed invasion, reduce landscaping maintenance, reduce erosion
 - planting of native, drought-tolerant plants and flowers along roadway, hillsides
 - hydro-seeding (projected 50,000 square feet, at cost of approx. \$50,000)
- Establishment of resource conservation technology
 - Solar Power
 - Recycling/composting

- Filtering, reducing, and/or capturing stormwater runoff
- Emplacement of “MS4-Compliant” parking lot for safety, minimization of traffic impacts & dust
 - Open, graded, asphalt or concrete area
 - Provision for approximately 25 cars
 - Gated entry off Locklenna, at Windport

The **Enhanced Funding Option Plan** would incorporate the following optional elements:

- Hydroseeding in broader area (projected 100,000 square feet (see purple areas on attached colored maps)
- Increased planting of native plants
 - greater variation of plants; choices largely dependent on water needs
 - closer placement of plants to provide greater root stability
 - wider area planted
- MS4-Compliant Parking (See above for explanation) with improved drainage to decrease water runoff and prevent “rutting”
 - Construction of a “Bioswale” drainage system (linear, vegetated ditch that replaces the traditional concrete gutter with an earthen one) for area surrounding Lower Hesse parking lot
 - Vegetation (biological material) acts as a natural filtration system; reduces water velocity, allows for collection, conveyance, filtration, and percolation of stormwater
- Additional Fitness Equipment for Cardio and Strength Training
 - May include sit-up bench, abdominal body flexer, leg-lift station, chin and pull-up bar, etc.
- Cleanup of Volleyball Court
 - Established boundaries and perimeter
 - Imported sand
- Open Air Resting Opportunities
 - Locations and Types not yet specified; may include additional picnic tables or benches
- Additional Drainage Stabilization
 - Examples include Rock Fill, in aesthetically pleasing arrangements
 - Enhanced visual aspects; also enhanced invitation for children’s exploration

E. Open discussion, comments from public

1. **The native plants and hydro seed may welcome a potential fire hazard, vermin and/or coyotes to come to Lower Hesse Park

RESPONSE: Staff to increase level of maintenance

**Suggestion to mow grass to prevent this

RESPONSE: Staff suggests that they will choose species that don't require substantial mowing; however, if needed will definitely mow

2. **Native plants and drought tolerant sound like a good idea

**Parking doesn't seem "natural", against asphalt concrete parking.

**A safety concern about kids running through the parking lot. Response: Safety is always a priority; parking lot would be well-designed

**Fitness stations seem like a great idea; however, they may become rusted and an eyesore.

RESPONSE: Staff mentioned there is better technology now when compared to the old wooden ones

3. **Resident remembered enjoying the older wooden ones at Upper Hesse

RESPONSE: The warranties now for exercise equipment are great

4. **Add another trail leading from Upper Hesse to Lower Hesse

RESPONSE: possibility of adding another loop to join to other trails

**Add trees to provide shade

RESPONSE: Staff suggested that we may come back as a group to decide on tree option

**Suggested to add a bird and/or butterfly station

5. **Concerns raised about hydroseeding. The city has planted on the slope before and all of the plants died. When the plants on the slope were watered, the slope eroded

**Suggested that the plants get the correct amount of water through a drip irrigation

**lots of reservations about the use of hydro seed. Was tried twice and did not work

**Suggested a "grow and kill" method to see if plants could be established

**volunteered time and suggested that neighbors help

6. **Entrance to Lower Hesse may not be safe

RESPONSE: Staff suggested the following to help with safety: gate will be locked at night, cameras considered, traffic stop possible—safety concerns will be an implicit part of the design process. Additional sheriff patrols can be requested.

7. **Has noticed graffiti and partying at Lower Hesse

**Agrees that signs and video cameras may help deter this behavior

RESPONSE: a well-designed park will cover this issue

8. **Is the City in the process of getting to more sheriffs?

RESPONSE: The City recently increased its contract with LA County

Sheriff. As well, the city has increased staff size and neighborhood watch involvement may help.

**If native plants are removed they should be replaced on a 3:1 basis

9. **What is your confidence the park will be constructed for that price?

RESPONSE: \$500,000 is not a lot of money, we are staying above ground. Also we are using the approach of a quantity estimate for bids which is predicted using the CCI, "California Construction Index"

**What is your plan for presenting to City Council?

RESPONSE: What we are putting together fits and the estimated budget is flexible and appropriately costed out.

10. **When does the park open?

RESPONSE: The current hours are from dawn to dusk

**Why are we doing this project?

RESPONSE: The Park is not in the best condition, will be more fun and attractive

11. **likes the idea of cleaning up the trails

**likes walking on and over rocks, but paranoid about the drain at the end

**likes exercise equipment

**recommends touring Dills Park in Paramount for its spectacular views, native landscaping and fitness stations

**likes to have park benches with shade

12. **Open air resting is important, can enjoy it with appropriate shading, Upper Hesse would be an example

13. **Not a fan of exercise equipment; however, suggested Dills Park in Paramount. Nicely blends in the active and the passive

14. **People are not currently complaining about trees, so put more in for shade

15. **Likes the idea of picnic tables and open areas

**Suggested to put together a priority list for the Enhanced Plan

RESPONSE: Our priority is the middle section for the proposed plan and we are currently looking for feedback to shape priority

16. **If we decide on an asphalt parking lot, would we need anything special for drainage and are there extra costs associated with it?

RESPONSE: A new parking lot would help set off costs of managing dust control, we would use open graded areas and engineered soil to help water infiltrate

17. **Can we use decomposed granite?

RESPONSE: This would pose a constant maintenance issue much like with gravel

18. **How many parking spaces can the current lot accommodate?

RESPONSE: At most 15 spots

**How many spots with the new proposal?

RESPONSE: Closer to 25 spots

19. **why not just close off the parking lot?

20. **If we improve Lower Hesse more people will want to use it making the parking lot more attractive and useful. RESPONSE: Residents have complained about street parking and the loss of parking availability for residents.

21. **Current lot appears to be DG and has held up well, knows this from parking there daily

**Possibly we should lay it out better and expand it to where the picnic area is

RESPONSE: The whole idea of the parking lot is for safety--to take people off of the street

**concerns were raised with the "Pacific Plan" that street parking was expected to be overrun

**Attendee asked if their concerns were being taken into account.

RESPONSE: Staff assured attendees that all comments were being recorded by a minute taker and would be both considered by staff and included in the final staff report to City Council.

22. **If you are going to cater a park to children you must have a safe parking area for kids to get out of the car, not on the street

23. **Are you taking recommendations from all of the City and how heavy is the weight on local HOAs?

RESPONSE: All opinions are valued but there has been a strong showing of those who live close by and yes, that certainly carries weight. The goal still remains to fit into the City's goal of being safe and well managed for both local residents and the the community.

**There is a concern that "hey, the hill needs more tennis courts, so let's just throw them here"

24. **Where else has open asphalt concrete been used

RESPONSE: various locations, 2 in Northern California, more examples can be found online

25. **5 or 6 years ago emails and surveys were sent out with 866 responses of what the city residents wanted. There was a 96% favor for open space

26. **In July of 2010 there was an outreach study and most responses were for open space and walking trails. Most responses were also against additional active recreation. RESPONSE: Both the basic and enhanced plans would allow for flexibility for changes or active enhancements at a later date based on changed community desires or Council direction. Staff

acknowledges and understands that the community response from adjacent neighbors has been strongly low key, open-space enhancement.

27. **Volunteered the use of Friends of Lower Hesse Park, Sweat Equity, and mentioned 80 people showed up for a volunteer day

**Suggested fundraising from locals. The impact of a nice park on surrounding properties will increase home values

**Volunteered \$1,000

28. **Will you be presenting the Enhanced Plan on October 20th? When will this public group be getting feedback?

RESPONSE: City Council's direction is the next step. The public will have additional opportunities to provide feedback as the project moves forward.

RESPONSE: This project has been given funds for the fiscal year so it is expected to go out to bid this fiscal year

29. **Has two sons that are both Boy Scouts and need to do a project for Eagle Scouts. Is there a way to involve them?

RESPONSE: The City has worked with Boy Scouts before and would welcome their involvement.

30. **The gopher population will have to be dealt with and plants will have to be protected. Recommends the use of chicken wire

31. Pacific View HOA members John Freeman, Les Chapin, Jim Moore, and Noel Park were thanked by staff for their ongoing involvement with this project.

F. Meeting Adjourned

Meeting End Time: 8:30 pm