

and was not potable. Commissioner Wall asked if this was the same waterline that goes to the Community Garden. Public Works Director Shamsapour stated “yes”. Commissioner Wall asked if the backflow was required by code. Mr. Shamsapour stated it was not required for the Community Garden and he was not sure about the requirements for a Dog Park. Ms. Hill stated the proposed drinking fountain would be for the dog owners and the dogs- there is a small dog bowl at the bottom of the fountain. Commissioner Scammell stated dog owners usually bring their own bottled water and she would not be in favor of installing a drinking fountain.

Commissioner Wall stated he was shocked at the figures in the cost estimates. Ms. Hill stated there were some factors that had not been thought through. Some of the fill that was added to the site would need to be removed to ensure proper drainage away from the marsh. Commissioner Wall asked if that would need to be done regardless of the reconstruction of the Dog Park. Public Works Director Shamsapour stated “no” and they would simply remove the tarp and hydroseed the area. There was no problem with erosion into the marsh.

Chair Hauser discussed the possibility of expanding the Dog Park area in Alternative #1. He asked if this would have a dramatic effect on the cost. Ms. Hill stated it would include about \$6,000 more for fencing. A small dog park area would need a couple extra gates.

Chair Hauser referred to the letter from the Audubon Society and their proposal to reconfigure the Dog Park area into a more rectangular shape running parallel to the Multi-Use Field. Ms. Hill stated this would be easy to do and would be a matter of reconfiguring the fencing.

Chair Hauser asked if individuals could walk through the area of native grass. Ms. Hill stated they would use a low-growing mix that was native to Marin County. Commissioner Wall asked if the grass would require a watering system. Ms. Hill said “no”. Commissioner Wall asked about the cost for an irrigation system for that area. Ms. Hill stated it would be about \$20,000. Commissioner Aschwald asked if the maintenance for the natural grass area would be minimal. Ms. Hill stated it would need to be mowed once a year, and this was optional. Public Works Shamsapour stated they could make it as nice as they want- a nicely mowed or a wild grass area.

Chair Hauser asked about the funding source. Recreation Director Wilkinson stated they had \$20,000 budgeted for the project. The City Council would decide whether to use some of the Park funds to complete this project.

Commissioner Wall asked about the concrete service path. Ms. Hill stated the maintenance crew has a problem accessing the area. This could also be used as a walking path. Public Works Director Shamsapour stated it would be a nice, scenic path for walkers and a necessary access route for the maintenance crew. The access is now limited due to the Multi-Use Field.

Commissioner Scammell expressed concern about the cost of the bulletin board and questioned whether it was needed. Recreation Director Wilkinson stated that in the past, the Friends of the Dog Park like to post notices. This could be eliminated and could perhaps be paid for through a fund-raiser.

Commissioner Wall asked about the proposed trash receptacles. Ms. Hill stated they matched the receptacles that are currently in the park. Ms. Hill stated the cost includes the installation.

Commissioner Scammell asked about the number of dogs that use the park and the proportion of small to large dogs. Recreation Director Wilkinson stated he did not have an exact count but it was extensively used. There have been reports about small dogs getting injured while playing with larger dogs. The Marin Humane Society recommends a separate area for the smaller dogs. Public Works Director Shamsapour stated the City recently returned a donation of \$8,000 from a resident who wanted a small dog park. Recreation Director Wilkinson stated the inclusion of an area for small dogs is in the Park Master Plan.

Chair Hauser opened the Public Hearing.

Mr. Chris Schuepbach, Boardwalk One resident and representative of the Arkites Association, stated they appreciated the Commission's opposition to the construction of the Public Works Facility in the area next to the Dog Park. They support the return of the Dog Park, however, neither alternative includes the removal of the new landfill and restoration of the marsh and surrounding environment. They are unable to support either alternative as proposed. Removal of the landfill and restoration of the marsh has been their position from the beginning. During the winter, much of the site is soggy, impassable, and frequently under water. They believe the landfill as it remains is the proverbial "foot in the door" and it would be viewed as buildable land in the future. It poses a serious and negative impact on the environment. He thought the area was designated as a bird sanctuary by the City Council in the 1960's. They prefer the size of Alternative #1 to #2 because it preserves more land and would cost less. They ask the Commission to make three recommendations to the City Council: 1) Remove the landfill, 2) Implement the design for the Dog Park as proposed by Ms. Barbara Salzman, 3) Urge the City Council to adopt a resolution designating the portion of the site not used for the Dog Park, as well as the wetlands and the marsh adjacent to the park, as an area to be preserved as natural wetlands and not to be developed.

Ms. Katrina Raleigh, Boardwalk One resident, stated the proposed service path would infringe upon the marsh. She stated an informal path already exists. She encouraged the Commission to come to the Boardwalk area and look at the mound of dirt and black tarp from their perspective. She stated the mound was quite extensive and brush and trees along the edge had been removed when the landfill was put in. She asked them to consider an alternative that would leave a perimeter that could be restored. She asked the Commission to restore the Dog Park, remove the landfill, and restore the marsh.

Ms. Kay Washburn, Boardwalk One resident, stated she has lived there for 45 years. Approximately 40 years ago the area was declared a marshland and bird sanctuary.

Dr. Ron DeStefano, Boardwalk One resident, stated he supported the Audubon Society's recommended alternative and the restoration of the marsh. He distributed photographs to the Commission. He stated the sandbags on the tarp are breaking apart and adding to the sediment that goes into the marsh. The landfill extends far into the marsh and looks very unnatural. He would like the Dog Park and the marsh restored. He was opposed to the proposed service path and stated the maintenance crew could access the area through the Community Garden using a golf cart. He stated the bioswale was not working and was attracting mosquitoes.

Mr. Herbert Loaner, Boardwalk One resident, stated he would like the mound removed and the Dog Park restored. He supported the alternative recommended by the Audubon Society and the restoration of the marsh. He was opposed to the service path.

Ms. Heidi McGuire, Boardwalk One resident, agreed with everything her neighbors said. She stated a portion of the fill came from the playing field but some was trucked in from elsewhere. She stated this was done without permits and was a mistake that cost the taxpayers. She would like the fill removed and the Dog Park restored as cheaply as possible.

Ms. Joan Brown, Boardwalk One resident, stated she agreed with everything that was said. She distributed photographs of birds to the Commission.

Chair Hauser closed the Public Hearing.

Chair Hauser asked if the mound would be removed. Public Works Director Shamsapour stated the tarp and sandbags were temporary. Ms. Hill explained how the mound would be graded and redistributed.

Chair Hauser asked if the alternative suggested by the Audubon Society would be compatible with restoration efforts. Public Works Director Shamsapour stated it was possible but he was concerned about access to the park by the maintenance crew. Ms. Hill stated there would be costs associated with off-hauling some of the dirt.

Commissioner Wall stated the path could be problematic if they decide to go with the natural grassland habitat. The path would have to be ADA compliant and this type of path would invite dogs and bicycles which would be counterproductive to having a nature preserve. Ms. Hill stated decomposed granite was no longer acceptable and the path would have to be a hard surface. Commissioner Scammell discussed the high tides in the area and stated the path may be under water much of the time. She would rather protect the area and save money.

Commissioner Wall asked staff about possible funding sources. Recreation Director Wilkinson stated the Council could allocate Prop. 12, Prop. 40, or Parkland Funds. Chair

Hauser stated it was a matter of coming up with a practical proposal. Commissioner Wall agreed the Commission should look at a third alternative.

Commissioner Aschwald asked if the wood chips were necessary. Recreation Director Wilkinson stated the wood chips were the best solution they have found and they keep the area from becoming a "mud bowl". Ms. Hill stated the cost of the chips was far less than the cost of turf. Ms. Hill stated they would need a service road area, with a small turn-around radius, that would enable the maintenance crew to dump the chips.

Ms. Hill asked if they would like to include the cost to remove the fill as a part of the plan. Chair Hauser stated the plan should include some aspects of restoration of the marsh. Ms. Hill discussed lowering the fill to the transitional area to create a natural shrub area for nesting. Commissioner Wall asked Ms. Hill to look at both alternatives: 1) grading and redistribution, 2) partial removal of some fill. He would like some of the fill removed if that would help to create a better plan.

Chair Hauser stated there was a clear consensus for an Alternative #3 that would include the following: an improved Dog Park, some form of restoration, some type of maintenance access, and an observation area. He asked Ms. Hill to resubmit a new plan along with the costs.

Recreation Director Wilkinson reiterated the Commissions direction: resubmit Alternative #1 to include a reconfiguration of the Dog Park area similar to the recommendation of the Audubon Society, a small dog area, the native grass area, and the elimination of the concrete path.

2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Chair Hauser stated he would like to table this item to the January, 2005 meeting.

RECREATION DIRECTOR'S ORAL REPORT

Recreation Director Wilkinson reported the Ross Valley Summer School Program will be held at Neil Cummins School in conjunction with the Larkspur School District and several Corte Madera Recreation programs.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

There were no reports.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni DeFrancis, Recording Secretary