

CITY OF ESCONDIDO

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION

December 09, 2013

The special meeting of the Community Services Commission was called to order at 7:03 p.m., Thursday, by Chairman Bologna in the City Council Chambers, 201 North Broadway, Escondido, California.

Members present: Chairman Bologna, Commissioner DuDeck, Commissioner Farwell, Commissioner Fralish, Commissioner Pitcher, Commissioner Russell, and Commissioner Simonson.

Commissioners absent: None.

Staff present: Amy Shipley, Assistant Director of Community Services; Loretta McKinney, Director of Library and Community Services; Clay Phillips, City Manager; and Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk.

MINUTES:

Moved by Commissioner Simonson, seconded by Commissioner Fralish, to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2013, meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE & INFORMATION: None.

CURRENT BUSINESS:

1. BMX Proposal

Ms. McKinney referenced the staff report and noted staff had received an unsolicited proposal by Mr. Vince McCurdy to place a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. Staff recommended the Commission consider the presentation, public comments, and information provided in the staff report, and make a recommendation to locate or to not locate a BMX track in Kit Carson Park, to the Mayor and City Council based on the Proposal.

Vince McCurdy, San Diego, applicant, provided a brief overview of the proposal the Commission had received. He referenced five existing USA BMX tracks that were located in City- and State-owned properties and noted that some had been in place for over 30 years. He stated that BMX provided opportunities for all ages to participate and promoted competition and sportsmanship. He noted that the

majority of individuals were 15 years of age or under. He stated that the proposed location was a vacant lot surrounded by the infrastructure needed, and would be consistent with the Kit Carson Master Plan. He elaborated that they had looked at both Jesmond Dene Park and Mountain View Park, noting these parks had issues with high infrastructure costs and environmental and residential issues. Mr. McCurdy stated that the subject site had no habitat that would be impacted. He also noted that he would be in charge of maintaining the property and provide insurance. He also stated that the use would be a revenue source for the City and its businesses.

Commissioner Pitcher asked Mr. McCurdy if the lease being proposed was \$60,000 for a ten-year lease. Mr. McCurdy replied in the affirmative. He also stated that the proposed \$113,000 was hard costs, feeling that using used equipment and using volunteer labor could significantly reduce this cost.

Commissioner DuDeck asked Mr. McCurdy to clarify what types of events the proposal discussed where 8,000 individuals would participate. Mr. McCurdy noted that the subject reference was for a national event, which was not proposed for the subject site. He also noted that the hours of operation were typically from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Commissioner Fralish asked who the non-profit volunteer association would be that would help maintain the facility. Mr. McCurdy noted that this was typically the parents and kids.

Chairman Bologna and Mr. McCurdy discussed the proposed lighting and possible bleacher placement.

Commissioner Farwell and Mr. McCurdy discussed the proposed access to the facility.

Chairman Bologna asked Mr. McCurdy how insurance was taken care of. Mr. McCurdy noted that they would have a \$5 million insurance policy that would cover everyone who entered the facility.

Chairman Bologna asked Mr. McCurdy if he had requested operating in other jurisdictions in North County. Mr. McCurdy replied in the affirmative and noted that Kit Carson Park had the best demographics.

Chairman Bologna asked what the concession funds would be used for. Mr. McCurdy stated that concession funds would help maintain the BMX track.

Commissioner Farwell asked if the \$60,000 lease was already approved. Mr. McCurdy replied in the negative.

Commissioner Simonson asked Mr. McCurdy if his other five existing tracks were constructed via joint ventures with other jurisdictions including the lease. Mr. McCurdy replied in the affirmative.

Penny Hernandez, Escondido, Representing the Palomar Audubon Society, noted that they had 800 members and were opposed to a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. She stated that wildlife had been lost due to the building of the skateboard park, noting her concern with losing more wildlife with the addition of a BMX track. She expressed her concern with losing more Gnat Catchers and Bell's Vireos. She also expressed her concern with the BMX track creating more traffic and adding to an area that was already burdened with traffic.

Melynnique Seabrook, Escondido, stated that the Del Lago and Sonata area was opposed to allowing a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. She indicated they were opposed to using public funds and land for a private enterprise. She also expressed concern with the BMX track creating issues with dust, traffic, noise, and lighting.

Tom Cowan, Escondido, was opposed to using public lands for a private for-profit venture.

Beau Furr, Escondido, was in favor of the BMX track in Kit Carson Park, feeling it was a good location. He stated that anyone could participate due to it not being a team sport. He stated that BMX was a good sport for the youth.

Grant Taylor, Escondido, President of Friends of Kit Carson Park, noted that they were not opposed to allowing a BMX track in the City but were opposed to allowing it in Kit Carson Park. He stated that they were opposed to the commercialization of activities in Kit Carson Park. He stated that only 6 out of the 43 speakers who spoke at the last meeting lived in Escondido and were in favor of a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. He noted that the proposed site offered the owner a prime location with existing infrastructure and parking while attaching the entire financial burden on Escondido taxpayers.

Paul McNamara, Escondido, was neither for nor against a BMX track in Escondido. He stated that Kit Carson Park should never be turned over to a for-profit entity without conducting extensive research. He indicated that the land of Kit Carson Park was a finite resource that needed to be carefully considered.

Marilyn Turner, Escondido, was not opposed to allowing a BMX track in the City but was opposed to allowing it in Kit Carson Park. She was concerned with adding traffic to an already congested area.

Roberto Gutierrez, Escondido, noted that he worked at the Fire Station in Kit Carson Park and as such the Fire Department was already impacted by the noise from all of the activities occurring in the park and at the mall, noting his concern with

the subject proposal proposing an amplified public address system. He expressed concern with the hours of operation for the BMX track being during heavy peak traffic hours, noting the Fire Department already had issues with traffic in the area. He also expressed concern with the parking areas for the BMX track being far enough away that the kids would ride their bikes through the park to access the BMX track, noting his concern for managing those kids with the heavy volume of traffic.

Roberta Zerda, Escondido, was opposed to allowing a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. She also expressed concern with the BMX track creating issues with dust, traffic, noise, and lighting.

Pat Worret, Escondido, was opposed to allowing a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. She also expressed concern with the BMX track creating issues with dust, traffic, noise, and lighting.

Jose Calzada, Escondido, stated that as a member of the Hispanic community of Escondido he did not support a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. He stated that he wanted to see the entire business plan and contingency plan.

Rich Puder, El Cajon, stated that BMX provided opportunities for any age to participate at whatever level they desired. He expressed his concern with the distance North County residents had to travel to access BMX tracks. He stated that the proposed location was a vacant lot that would generate revenue for the City and give the local youth an opportunity to be outside and participate in an Olympic sport.

Nick Russell, Escondido, supported BMX. He noted that BMX was a good sport for kids to be active. He stated that the BMX track would create no dust.

Quinn Storms, Escondido, was in favor of a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. He stated that BMX provided opportunities for kids to learn new skills, bring families together, and generated revenue for local businesses.

Ron Serafine, Escondido, recommended that the Commission delay any decision until the City could update the 1984 Kit Carson Park Comprehensive Plan. He stated that he was not opposed to a BMX track in Escondido but was opposed to it in Kit Carson Park. He expressed his concern with the City discussing the concept of a BMX track in Kit Carson Park for the last nine months without public input. He also stated that he was opposed to using public lands for a for-profit entity.

Greg Birch, Santee, was opposed to allowing a BMX track in Kit Carson Park.

Randy Cole, Escondido, was in favor of a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. He stated that BMX was outlined as an approved use in the Master Plan for Kit Carson Park.

Melvin Takahara, Escondido, Escondido Futures, stated that the role of the Commission and the function of the public hearings were vital when considering public resources, especially when it involved property donated by community members with specific intent attached to said donation. He questioned whether the City had a policy regarding the private leasing of public parks for for-profit purposes or whether said leasing of Kit Carson Park land would comply with the restrictions and intent of the original request from the L.R. Green estate.

Elyse Sankey Watson, Escondido, noted that her mother was one of the original members of the Escondido Parks and Recreation Commission. She stated that their vision was to keep Kit Carson Park's land for the people and to keep it as natural as possible. She stated that there came a time when we need to take care of our natural resources. She felt that a BMX track would not be good for the Kit Carson Park. She indicated that the original plan was to develop an arboretum, learning center, and vegetable garden that had been put aside since 1988. She suggested revisiting the original plan.

Joe Allen, Escondido, was opposed to allowing a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. He expressed concern with the BMX track creating issues with dust, traffic, noise, lighting, and overburdening the restrooms. He was also opposed to using public lands for a for-profit venture.

Cynthia Morris, Escondido, was opposed to allowing a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. She expressed her concern with the City partnering with an entity that might not have the finances to properly operate the facility. She also expressed concern with the BMX track creating issues with dust, traffic, noise, lighting, and overburdening the restrooms.

Howard Harvey, Escondido, was not opposed to allowing a BMX track in the City but was opposed to allowing it in Kit Carson Park. He felt the park was too congested for a BMX track.

Leni Tignor, Escondido, was not opposed to allowing a BMX track in the City but was opposed to allowing it in Kit Carson Park. She noted that most of the individuals in favor at the last meeting were not from Escondido, feeling the Commission needed to consider how the citizens of Escondido felt. She did not feel there would be a financial benefit from the BMX activities. She also stated that the fields in Kit Carson Park were open to the public when they were not being used for sports.

Chris Nava, Escondido, Member of Escondido Futures, was not opposed to allowing a BMX track in the City but was opposed to allowing it in Kit Carson Park. She questioned why the developer had a large lead-time to promote the BMX track before citizens of Escondido were aware of said proposal. She suggested tabling

this item in order to allow the Commission time to establish another committee to investigate this topic further.

Rick Moore, Escondido, stated that the Commission needed to consider what was good for its citizens. He stated that some other recreational program would be adversely impacted by the use of the proposed \$113,000 for the BMX track. He felt the Master Plan for Kit Carson Park needed to be revisited.

Andrea Seavey, Escondido, was opposed to allowing a BMX track in Kit Carson Park, especially near Bear Valley Parkway. She expressed her concern with the added traffic the BMX track would bring to the area.

Ruth Weber, Escondido, was opposed to allowing a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. She noted that the original Master Plan for Kit Carson Park did not call for a BMX track. She stated the number of acres put aside for development in the park had already been exceeded. She indicated that the 1994 revised Master Plan called for a major landscape buffer zone between the Sports Center and Bear Valley Parkway, which was the proposed location for the BMX track. She stated that the primary objective of the Kit Carson Park Master Plan was to retain, enhance, and protect the park's natural environment while providing recreational and educational activities for the community.

Mark LaBianca, Escondido, was not opposed to allowing a BMX track in the City but was opposed to allowing it in Kit Carson Park. He felt the park should contain a balance of recreational activities and quiet places for people to relax. He expressed his concern with the BMX track creating additional traffic and safety issues for the kids on the bikes. He also was opposed to having to pay for using public lands.

John Weber, Escondido, asked the residents opposed to a BMX track in Kit Carson Park to raise their hands (Whereupon the majority of the audience raised their hands). He stated that recouping the costs for the BMX track would take 18 years.

Maria Richley, Escondido, was not opposed to allowing a BMX track in the City but was opposed to allowing it in Kit Carson Park.

Jeff Hall, Escondido, was not opposed to allowing a BMX track in the City but was opposed to allowing it in Kit Carson Park. He expressed concern with the BMX track creating traffic issues by drivers taking their eyes off the road to watch the BMX riders riding. He also felt the use would add to the already congested parking and restrooms.

Pat Mues, Escondido, 2014.com, noted that on October 14, 2012 the applicant created a Facebook Page where they asked for support to tell the people of Escondido that they needed a BMX track in Kit Carson Park and to email City Council. She questioned why the Commission had not been aware of the BMX

track for over a year.

George Darjania, Escondido, was not opposed to allowing a BMX track in the City but was opposed to allowing it in Kit Carson Park. He stated that the area was already inundated with sound and traffic issues.

Parker Goulart, Oceanside, stated that he was in favor of a BMX facility in Escondido. He noted that BMX taught sportsmanship and created lasting friendships.

Patricia Borchmann, Escondido, was opposed to allowing a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. She felt the Commission needed to consider the input from its citizens. She also expressed her concern that the Commission was not aware of the BMX track proposal for over a year.

Derek Bunch, Escondido, was in favor of having a BMX track in Escondido. He stated that BMX was a very popular Olympic sport that would bring revenue to the City and local businesses by bringing individuals from other jurisdictions.

Mark Skok, Escondido, was opposed to allowing a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. He was opposed to using public lands for a for-profit activity. He suggested that the City spend the \$113,000 bringing the natural habitat and wildlife back to the park.

Margaret Liles, Escondido, was opposed to allowing a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. She recommended planting native species on the subject property.

Nancy Reeder, Escondido, noted that Mr. L.R. Green was a very generous man who specifically wanted to leave the land to the youth and citizens on the condition that no commercial for-profit businesses were allowed unless put to a vote of the Escondido citizens. She asked whether the Commission had read the legal documents that the land was to be preserved for the kids.

Carmen Nava, Escondido, stated that she had numerous questions about the proposal and business plan, which she could not do in the format of this meeting. She did not feel the parking needs and hours of operation were adequately addressed. She expressed her concern with the pattern of private proposals in Kit Carson Park, feeling there was significant support by the community to protect Kit Carson Park.

Wendy Lewis, Escondido, was in favor of a BMX facility in Kit Carson Park, feeling it would help get kids off the street and provide an outlet for kids. She felt that the Hispanic community would benefit from a BMX track. She felt the hours of operation and any other issues could be worked out. She stated that the kids needed more recreational activities.

Ivan Strashoon, San Diego, was opposed to allowing a BMX track in Kit Carson Park, feeling it did not fit within the City's vision. He felt the use would create issues with traffic, parking, dust, pollution, complaints, and reduce property values. He also felt the Commission needed to carefully consider Roberto Gutierrez' comments about the Fire Department.

Gary Collins, Escondido, was in favor of a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. He stated that the proposed location was a vacant lot that was not being used. He stated that BMX was family-oriented sport that was safe and cost very little to participate.

Ron Neibhardt, Escondido, noted that BMX was a family-oriented individual sport that was a great recreational activity.

Chris Burcham, Escondido, was in favor of a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. He stated that BMX was a family-oriented activity. He noted that the proposed lot was vacant and currently had drainage issues. He indicated that the BMX track was watered down regularly and would not create dust. He also noted that the BMX track would bring additional revenue to the City by bringing people from out of town into the City.

Larry Sager, Escondido, was in favor of a BMX track in Escondido. He also noted that the BMX track would bring additional revenue to the City by bringing people from out of town who would visit local businesses.

Dorie Savage, San Diego, noted that the Kit Carson Master Plan had designated the subject area as a sport and recreation area. She stated that BMX was for kids and adults and was a healthy activity. She also noted that the Master Plan had provisions for leasing options.

Adam Watkins, Escondido, was in favor of a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. He stated that the infrastructure was already in place. He stated that the subject location was a vacant dirt lot that was not being used for anything, noting that a BMX track was dirt. He did not feel the traffic generated by the BMX use would create any issues, noting that the Westfield Mall created more traffic with one sale's event.

John Cowan, San Marcos, noted that he was involved with building over 65 bike parks nationally and internationally through partnerships between private entities and cities. He felt the issues being cited could be easily addressed.

Chairman Bologna stated that he was in favor of a BMX facility in Escondido. He then asked if there was anything in the Kit Carson Park Master Plan that would prohibit a BMX track.

Clay Phillips, City Manager, noted that there was nothing in the Master Plan that would prohibit a BMX track without the proper process.

Commissioner Simonson expressed concern with only having two recommendations before the Commission and the potential for voting down a BMX track in the City.

Commissioner DuDeck felt more study was needed before a location was selected.

Commissioner Farwell referenced the comments made regarding the demographics of Kit Carson Park not including the Hispanic population and spending significant funds when there were higher priorities. She stated that she was opposed to locating a BMX track in Kit Carson Park.

ACTION:

Moved by Commissioner Farwell, seconded by Commissioner Fralish, to recommend not locating a BMX track in Kit Carson Park. The motion included considering other locations in the City for a BMX track. Motion carried. Ayes: Bologna, DuDeck, Farwell, Fralish, Pitcher, and Russell. Noes: Simonson. (6-1)

Chairman Bologna recessed the meeting from 9:30 p.m. to 9:37 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Housing and Community Development Grant

Ms. Shipley referenced the staff report and requested input.

Chairman Bologna and Ms. Shipley discussed the status of the Washington Park field.

UPDATE ON CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS: None.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None.

COMMISSION MEMBERS COMMENTS:

Chairman Bologna asked when the junior commissioner would be replaced. Ms. McKinney asked the Commission to forward any recommendations on to her.

Ms. McKinney noted that Commissioner Burrows had resigned.

Commissioner Simonson noted that he voted no on the BMX proposal due to

specifically excluding Kit Carson Park without further study.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled for January 23, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.

Loretta McKinney, Director of
Library and Community Services

Ty Paulson, Minutes Clerk