



**CITY OF CUPERTINO
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN COMMISSION
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
Teleconference Joint Special Meeting
Thursday, September 8, 2022
6:30 PM
MINUTES**

Chair Xu called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. via remote teleconference.

ROLL CALL

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| Parks and Recreation Commissioners: | Xiangchen (Minna) Xu, Sashikala Begur, Gopal Kumarappan, Carol Stanek, Seema Swamy |
| Bicycle Pedestrian Commissioners: | Ilango Ganga, Jack Carter, Erik Lindskog, Grace John, Gerhard Eschelbeck |
| Sustainability Commissioners: | Anna Weber, Meera Ramanathan, Sonali Padgaonkar, Steve Poon |
| Commissioners absent: | Vignesh Swaminathan (Sustainability) |
| Staff present: | Rachelle Sander, Jessica Javier, Jenny Koverman, Lisa Cameli, Susan Michael, Matt Morley, Chad Mosley, Kimberly Lunt, Gilee Corral, Andre Duurvoort |
| Guest speakers: | Alicia Fennell, Jeff Danner, Forrest Richardson, Taylor Peterson |

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Rhoda Fry expressed concerns regarding the Blackberry Farm slide removal.

Peggy Griffin expressed concerns regarding the Blackberry Farm slide removal. Also requested consideration of restroom renovations for all parks due to accessibility issues.

Lisa Warren expressed concerns regarding the Blackberry Farm slide removal.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Subject: Consider an update on Fiscal Year 2021-22 City Work Program item regarding the Blackberry Farm Golf Course Needs Assessment

Recommended Action: Receive the public survey and Outreach Summary Report for the Blackberry Farm Golf Course Feasibility Study and provide input and feedback on next steps regarding alternatives for future use of the golf course.

Written Communications for this item included emails to the Parks and Recreation, Bicycle Pedestrian, and Sustainability Commissions.

Matt Morley, Director of Public Works, introduced Alicia Fennell, Cascadia Consultant, to introduce the item. Alicia introduced the item and provided an overview of the staff and consultants working on the project. Alicia introduced Lisa Cameli, Project Manager, who presented an overview of the project background and the two alternatives. Alicia then presented on the community engagement process and survey results.

Commissioners asked clarifying questions.

Chair Xu opened the public comment period and the following people spoke.

Connie Cunningham, Cupertino resident, supported restoration to natural habitat and emphasized there should be no removal of existing trees.

Muni Madhhipatla, Cupertino resident and Cupertino Planning Commission Vice Chair, supported keeping the golf course.

Annie Yang, Cupertino resident, supported restoration to natural habitat. If the City decided to keep the golf course, recommended adding wildlife habitat as an improvement such as complex native vegetation structures at the edges of the golf course, restoration of the ponds, trees, and avoiding additional netting.

Richard Lowenthal supported keeping the golf course, watering only the greens to help reduce the water use, and potentially closing the golf course one day a week to allow for public use of picnicking.

Peggy Griffin supported keeping the golf course, picnicking on Sundays, replacing the trees that have been removed, restoring the ponds with natural vegetation and water, adding habitat islands, and raising the fees at the golf course.

Lisa Warren supported keeping the golf course.

Carol Ovelman commented that the City should consider using reclaimed water.

Keith Kreft, supported keeping the golf course, increasing the number of rounds, and increasing fees at the golf course.

Nick Bailey supported keeping the golf course and investing in a feasibility study to look at using recycled water.

Rose Grymes, Cupertino resident, supported restoration to natural habitat, providing an environment for aquatic life, birds, and insects, and water sustainability.

Andi, Cupertino resident, supported restoration to natural habitat.

Peggy Plato supported keeping the golf course and raised concerns regarding golf course revenue considering fees have not been increased.

Daniel Wong supported keeping the golf course and recommended looking into native grasses to make it more drought friendly.

Wing Law, Cupertino resident, supported keeping the golf course.

John Ennals, Cupertino resident, supported keeping the golf course, changing the irrigation, and changing the greens to ones that use less water.

Maria Gatto, Cupertino resident, supported keeping the golf course and looking into using recycled water or adding in turf.

Elaine, Cupertino resident, supported keeping the golf course, opening it one day a week for people to walk and picnic, and using recycled water.

Rhoda Fry, Cupertino resident, supported keeping the golf course, adding in natural habitat to the golf course, and raising fees.

Bob, Cupertino resident, supported restoration to natural habitat.

Emmy Moore-Minister, supported keeping the golf course.

Don Halsey, supported keeping the golf course and presented on slides that are included in the written communications.

Keith Wandry raised concerns about the chemicals used on the golf course.

Alan Takahashi, Cupertino resident, supported keeping the golf course and using reclaimed water.

Vice Chair Weber left the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Chair Xu closed the public comment period and called for a five-minute break at 9:06 p.m. Chair Xu resumed the meeting at 9:12 p.m. and commissioners made comments.

Commissioner Stanek commented that if Council decides to keep the golf course, then she strongly recommended reclaimed or recycled water, not watering between the tees and the greens, and opening the golf course two to three days a week to the public to utilize the space in an alternative way. If Council decides to convert the golf course to natural habitat, then she recommended working with Sunken Gardens and Deep Cliff to offer Cupertino seniors discounted rates to play golf and consider using part of the site as a healing garden.

Vice Chair Begur commented that there needs to be data surrounding utilization of recycled water, alternative options for grass, and allowing the grass to go brown. Recommended looking at statistics for the next 10 years versus the next 25 years. Regarding restoration of natural habitat, raised concerns about the fire study and preventing housing in the future. Recommended there be more information provided to the Commission(s) before a decision can be made.

Commissioner Kumarappan raised concerns regarding the data presented and utilization of recycled water. Strongly recommended that the data be updated and presented back to the Parks and Recreation Commission. Commented that there could be merging of the two options to allow for a potential third option that keeps both the golf course and adds in natural habitat.

Commissioner Poon supported keeping the golf course. Recommended finding ways to reduce water usage and bring recycled water in regardless of how long it will take.

Chair Ganga commented that increasing revenue needs to be looked at so that any improvements will pay for itself and more. Raised concerns regarding capital costs for the natural habitat. Supported using the existing golf course in a more efficient way and protecting the current investment. Recommended more data be presented and there be a recommendation from the joint commissions to the Council.

Commissioner Swamy supported comments made by Commissioner Kumarappan and Vice Chair Begur and strongly recommended there be more information provided

before taking it to Council. Commented that there needs to be an understanding of artificial turf and the potential implications to the environment, and whether the City keeps control of the land if it remains a golf course or restoration to natural habitat. Raised concerns regarding re-zoning of the land.

Commissioner Padgaonkar supported comments made by Commissioner Kumarappan and agreed that more information be provided. Recommended contacting other cities to research and understand how they implement water sustainability.

Vice Chair Carter commented that there is a need to look at whether this is going to enhance Cupertino in terms of its recreational value verses the cost. Recommended there be a decision amongst the options, once a decision is made to either keep the golf course or have open space, then looking at the financial implications. Raised concerns regarding traffic on the road to Blackberry Farm if the parking lot is expanded.

Commissioner Eschelbeck supported Vice Chair Carter's comment regarding deciding first between the options and then working towards a plan. Raised concerns regarding conversion to natural habitat and expressed that it is a one-way option and that should be considered.

Chair Xu shared information on the history of the item. Recommended revisiting the option to expand the club house, decreasing areas where water is needed, and changing another place to natural habitat.

Director Morley thanked the commissions and staff will work on consolidating the information and determining next steps.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Xu adjourned the meeting at 9:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,



Jessica Javier, Administrative Assistant
Parks and Recreation Department

Minutes approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission at their 10.06.22 meeting

Minutes approved by the Sustainability Commission at their 10.20.22 meeting

Minutes approved by the Bicycle Pedestrian Commission at their 11.16.22 meeting