



Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes

Zoom Webinar – Pleasanton, CA November 10, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Deckert.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited.

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Bryan Bowers, Joanie Fields, Brad Hottle, Deborah Wahl, and Chairperson Chuck Deckert. (Commissioner Mary Hekl joined the meeting at 7:02 p.m.).

Commissioners Absent: Sadie Brown.

Staff Present: Heidi Murphy, Library & Recreation Director; Michele Crose, Assistant Library & Recreation Director; Matt Gruber, Landscape Architect; Tim Annear, Parks Maintenance Supervisor; Joelle Glushenko, Recreation Supervisor, Zack Silva, Recreation Supervisor; Brian Fiorio, Parks Maintenance Supervisor; Terry Snyder, Office Manager; and Edith Caponigro, Recording Secretary.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS

None.

MINUTES

1. Approve regular meeting minutes of September 10, 2020.

A motion was made by Chairperson Fields, seconded by Commissioner Wahl, to approve the regular meeting minutes of September 10, 2020 meeting. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

2. Introductions/Awards/Recognitions/Presentations

Ms. Murphy introduced all staff members.

3. Public Comment from the audience regarding items not listed on the agenda.

None

MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMISSION

4. Review Staff Research and Recommend a Location for New Skatepark

Ms. Crose informed Commissioners that the 2014 Parks and Recreation Master Plan identified that to meet the current demand of the community there was a need for an additional skatepark of approximately ½-acre in size. The Plan also noted there would be a need for an additional 1-acre skatepark once the City of Pleasanton's population reached 78,000 people.

Additionally, at the February 14, 2019 commission meeting, the Commission identified a new skatepark as their number two project priority for the City Council 2019-2020 Two-Year Work Plan and City Council adopted the skatepark as priority B for the 2019-2020 workplan with funding designated for 2021-2023. Ms. Crose noted that the funding has been budgeted for the current fiscal year for design services.

Ms. Crose reviewed with Commissioners a PowerPoint presentation that provided information on skatepark facilities in other cities that staff has visited and the City of Pleasanton sites that staff has researched for a new skatepark. She advised that skatepark attributes considered during the research process included:

- Parking
- Lights
- Natural Landscape and grass
- Shade from trees
- Skatepark location in an area where noise will not be a factor
- Should have easy access to food/restaurants
- Include bike racks
- Restroom accessibility

Additional attributes desired by community advocates include:

- Flat bar
- Transitional Street Plaza
- Flow Bowl
- Mini Ramp

Commissioners were advised by Ms. Crose that the two sites staff has considered as being most suitable for a new skatepark are Ken Mercer Sports Park and Bernal Community Park, with the Ken Mercer Sports Park being the number one choice recommended by staff. She noted there is a current skatepark at this location and a 'next level' skatepark could be placed next to it, also this location meets many of the attributes desired.

Ms. Crose provided information on the proposed construction cost for this new skatepark and compared this with cost obtained from other cities on the building of their skateparks. She informed Commissioners that these range from \$1-\$3M and depending on the final size of a new skatepark. The cost for a new skatepark at Ken Mercer Sports Park will likely be in the middle of this range because much infrastructure is already in place.

Commissioners were informed by Ms. Crose that after receiving a recommendation from the Commission at this meeting, the next step will be to take the recommendation to City Council for consideration at their December 1, 2020 meeting.

Commissioner Bowers commented on the aerial view in the PowerPoint presentation of the 1-acre skatepark in Fremont and questioned if this commission should be considering a 1-acre skatepark for Pleasanton. Ms. Crose noted that the Master Plan recommends a 1-acre size when reaching a population of 78,000, which she believes is a number that Pleasanton has now reached. Mr. Gruber added additional information on how the skatepark size was projected based on population numbers.

Commissioner Bowers discussed the existing lighting at the Ken Mercer Sports Park and wondered if any additional lighting would be required. Mr. Gruber advised that staff would need to review what lighting is going to be required.

Commissioner Bowers discussed with staff details about already in place infrastructure at the Ken Mercer Sports Park and possible changes that may be required when adding another skatepark. He also asked about requirements that would be needed if the Bernal Community Park was to be considering because of what had been adopted by the community vote. Commissioner Bowers questioned if there was a limitation on the 1-acre size and if more space was available could something larger be considered.

Commissioner Fields agreed with all the questions and concerns raised by Commissioner Bowers. She thought that with the addition of new skatepark and the already approved all-inclusive park additional parking would need to be included.

Ms. Crose noted that after visiting other city skateparks and talking with their officials, they had not noticed any uptick in parking needs. She also advised that staff is currently talking with the All-Inclusive park designer on what extra infrastructure items may be needed.

Commissioner Fields asked about the proximity of the proposed skatepark to the schools at the Bernal Community Park and whether there would be a conflict with the proposed Civic Center Master Plan. Mr. Gruber reviewed the planned location and indicated there would be no conflicts with the schools.

Commissioner Wahl talked about the timeline factor that could be an issue if the commission considers the Bernal Community Park. Ms. Murphy advised that staff was recommending the Ken Mercer Sports Park because of the hurdles that would need to be met for the Bernal location.

Commissioner Wahl felt the cost for putting the skatepark at the Bernal site could also be double that of the Ken Mercer Sports Park. She questioned if it would be possible to do another skatepark at the Bernal Park at a later time when the population has grown more. Ms. Murphy agreed this was something that could be considered as the population grows.

Commissioner Wahl asked if the commission should be envisioning a ½-acre or 1-acre skatepark for the Ken Mercer Sports Park. Ms. Crose noted that skateboard advocates would like to get a new park as big as possible. Mr. Gruber advised that ¾-acre was possible and 1-acre could be possible.

Commissioner Hottle indicated that he liked the design of the Fremont Park and thought the Ken Mercer Sports Park made more sense as the location for another skatepark because it was so central. He also liked the idea of having intermediate and advanced skateparks at the same location and thought they could be well integrated together. Mr. Gruber confirmed that having a ¾-acre to 1-acre skatepark at the Ken Mercer location would still allow for having a buffer zone between the park and Hopyard Road.

Commissioner Hottle confirmed that with the growing Pleasanton population he felt the Ken Mercer Sports Park would be the most suitable location for the skatepark.

Commissioner Hekl questioned what the current use of the proposed Ken Mercer location is, whether that would be taken away for the new skatepark and how many people currently use the area. Ms. Crose advised it is used passively and for some city contract classes that would need to be relocated. She also noted there is a strong attendance of people who use the current skatepark. Mr. Gruber advised that there are picnic tables in the area.

Commissioner Hekl commented on parking for the area and the risks of the shopping center putting restrictions on people from the skatepark using their area for parking. Mr. Gruber advised that the city currently has a good relationship with the shopping center personnel and felt something could be worked out with them to maintain this relationship. Ms. Crose noted that staff would be talking with the shopping center business owners, residents, and skaters to try and accommodate things that work for everyone.

Commissioner Hekl expressed her concerns about so many things being included at the Ken Mercer Sports Park and hoped nothing else would be considered for this park in the near future. Staff advised that there were no plans for any other active areas at this location. Commissioner Hekl also discussed with staff accessibility to the skatepark.

Chairperson Deckert discussed with Mr. Gruber the number of trees that may need to be removed for this new skatepark. Mr. Gruber indicated he would need to check on this during the design phase.

Chairperson Deckert opened the meeting for public comment.

Andrew Lambert – commented on the location, size, and lighting. He advised that he originally thought the Bernal Community Park would be the best location, but he does not want this to have to go through a voting process and agrees the Ken Mercer Sports Park would be a good location. He noted skateboarders are undecided about keeping the small skatepark, want to have independent lighting, and would like for the park to be able to remain open till 11:00 p.m. so people can skate after work. Mr. Lambert felt the park should be 1-acre in size because skateboarding is the fastest growing sport in the nation and making an Olympian debut. He felt parking could be an issue and additional parking should be considered.

Tasashi Yamaoda – felt the Ken Mercer Sports Park would be a great location because it is centrally located. He felt lights would be a great addition to the park especially for older skateboarders who go out to the park after work. Mr. Yamaoda thought a 1-acre size would be good because the sport has grown and it would be good to have Olympians come to Pleasanton for training. He agreed with Andrew's comments.

Ethan Chih – agreed that the Ken Mercer Sports Park would be a good location for a new facility because the sport has grown and a new park will help bring more skaters to the park. Lights till 11:00 p.m. would be great, added park users will be good for economics, and the sport is a good pastime for kids. Mr. Chih thought expanding and upgrading the Ken Mercer skatepark would be good.

Andrei Horea Nica – agreed that the Ken Mercer Sports Park would be a good place to have a new skatepark especially with the proximity of food places in the area. He felt that a 1-acre or more skatepark is needed and would be good for people who want to visit the park. Mr. Nica also noted that lighting is needed especially during the winter months.

Matthew MacKirdy – liked the location at the Ken Mercer Sports Park across from the current skatepark and thought it allowed for more skating space. Adding lights would allow for people to skate late after work. He felt the skatepark should be at least 1-acre so it wouldn't get so crowded, allow for more obstacles, and provide economic benefits by attracting more people.

Sam Isola – was pleased to see so much focus being put on a new skatepark. Noted that the Fremont Park created a strong community of skaters and has given kids a good outlet at a good park that is well monitored. He felt a new skatepark would be good for Pleasanton especially with extended lighting hours that would allow people to skate after work.

Ben Morgan – congratulated Andrew Lambert for working so hard on this with city staff. He thought the Ken Mercer Sports Park would be a good place for the new skatepark especially with the closeness of the shopping center. A 1-acre park would be great and thought the city should ‘go big’. Mr. Morgan stated that he skates at the Fremont Park and there are always lots of kids there. He also felt lighting was important and late light should be allowed for the many people who like to skate after work.

Caswell Berry – Reiterated what others had said about the Ken Mercer Sports Park being a good location for a new skatepark, that lights are important, and the 1-acre size was needed to avoid overcrowding. He also liked the idea of incorporating the new park with the existing skatepark.

Pete Koff – thanked Andrew Lambert for all his hard work on this project. He commented on the smallness of the current skatepark and thought incorporating a larger skatepark at this location would be great. Mr. Koff indicated he has gone to many skateparks in his travels and they are great places for kids to go after school, help build communities and a new park can help draw Olympians to Pleasanton. He is looking forward to this project moving forward.

Tyler Gilliland – thanked the commission and staff for working on this and indicated he liked the Ken Mercer Sport Park location and thinks this will offer opportunities to expand support of local businesses. He agreed that lights till late evening are needed for people who work late and having dim lighting could be risky for skaters. He commented on updates and repairs needed to the existing skatepark.

Chairperson Deckert closed the meeting for public comment.

Chairperson Deckert noted that the consensus of the public speakers was favorable to the Ken Mercer Sports Park location, having a 1-acre skatepark, needing lighting, and being able to skate late after working.

Commissioner Hekl stated she was impressed with the unanimous voice of everyone who had spoken.

Commissioner Hottle had no further comments and thought the public comments were valuable.

Commissioner Wahl felt the public comments were positive and wants to be sure accessibility to the existing skatepark is included in a motion.

Commissioner Field commented on the time limit for light at the softball fields and felt this was something that would need to be addressed. She asked for information on the size of the skatepark in Fremont and what the cost would be to refurbish the existing skatepark. Ms. Crose advised that the Fremont Park is 1-acre and Mr. Annear indicated that the existing Pleasanton skatepark is usable but has some wear and tear and some consideration would need to be given to making improvements to it.

Commissioner Fields discussed with Mr. Annear the costs of repairing worn curbing and other items at the current skatepark and what funding was available. He advised that funding is not currently available. Mr. Gruber advised that staff would get more feedback when they conduct public outreach and are able to determine if the existing park can be repaired or should be replaced.

Commissioner Fields agreed with Commissioner Hekl's earlier comment about so many activities being put into the Ken Mercer Sports Park but felt after hearing the comments of the skateboard advocates agrees with placing a new skatepark at the Ken Mercer Sports Park.

Commissioner Bowers liked the staff presentation and thought all the speakers had done a good job supporting the Ken Mercer Sports Park location and wanting a 1-acre park. He supported all their comments and would like for as much of the available area be used to provide as large a skatepark as possible. He thought it may make sense to have one big new park and remove the existing old skatepark but should include a beginner area in a new park and have a larger advanced area. Commissioner Bowers noted that Andrew Lambert had commented on having competitions at the skatepark and he would like to encourage this too.

Chairperson Deckert asked staff about the formation of the motion needed and Ms. Murphy indicated that staff only requires the commission recommend approval of a location and other items can be included once a designer is on board.

A motion was made by Commissioner Fields, seconded by Commissioner Bower, recommending moving forward to City Council with the recommendation of the Ken Mercer Sports Park as the location for a new City of Pleasanton skatepark to be at least 1-acre in size and with additional lighting.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Commissioners Bowers, Fields, Hekl, Hottle, Wahl, and Chairperson Deckert.
NOES: None
ABSENT: Commissioners Brown
ABSTAIN: None

MATTERS INITIATED BY THE COMMISSION

- A. Commissioner Fields thanked Mr. Gruber for the new outstanding bocce courts.
- B. Chairperson Deckert provided details about the plans for the virtual tree lighting ceremony to be held December 5 at 7:00 p.m.
- C. Ms. Murphy reminded everyone about the Mayors virtual celebration planned for November 12.
- D. Commissioner Fields gave thanks for the \$25 gift cards for the Mayor's awards celebration.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.