



Public Works Commission

Regular Meeting
PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION
Minutes
Thursday, July 10, 2008
North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Avenue

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Francis, Henry, Holland, Nelson, Prevo, Wolfe
Absent: Commissioners Alward (Leave of Absence), Schueler, Shumer

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Barbara Allen spoke about criteria for future Rule 20A undergrounding districts and giving priority to the north Berkeley hills. She also agrees that Ashby Avenue/Tunnel Road is important for emergency access and would support the undergrounding of that particular route.

Pam Doolan also stressed the importance of recognizing the need to promote and include as a high priority the undergrounding of utilities within the north Berkeley hills as indicated by Ms. Allen. Ms. Doolan also handed out a letter addressed to Mayor Bates dated May 20, 2008 that was intended for the Council Workshop (she provided the Secretary a copy which will be included in the next commission packet). Ms. Doolan emphasized that she too is in favor of giving a high priority to Ashby Avenue/Tunnel Road and commended the commission's suggestion that the City search for other funding for utility undergrounding in general. She also indicated that she had received figures from PG&E, different from the City of Berkeley, as to the unspent amount of the Berkeley 20A allocation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 5, 2008 were approved as submitted (MSC Nelson/Wolfe, with a vote of 6-0-0).

CHAIR REPORT: The PWC's letter with comments on the Southside Plan EIR has been

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Please refrain from wearing scented products to this meeting.

signed and delivered.

STAFF REPORT: The Secretary provided an update on Aquatic Park maintenance activities. At the June 24, 2008 Council meeting, Public Works staff asked for authorization to increase the construction contract amount to dispose of the contaminated soil. At the same meeting the Parks Department presented the Aquatic Park Improvement Plan. Council asked staff to come back after exploring ways to use the soil on site, as part of the Plan, and potentially save on disposal costs. Meanwhile, further tests are being performed on the spoils and a “JARPA” permit is being processed. The report back to Council is expected in September 2008.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Future Rule 20A Undergrounding – Summary and Follow-up to May 20, 2008 Council Work Session; Recommendation to Council: The draft statement from the Work Group was discussed, in particular a proposal to include a “strategic plan” in the second part of the statement. It was concluded that the Secretary is requested to transform the statement as submitted into Council report format for signature by the Chair (MSC Nelson/Prevo, with a vote of 5-1-0, Wolfe opposing). Further discussion revealed that a particular area that is already undergrounded is not accurately reflected on the map, which is the Claremont/Belrose/Derby area. Interest was expressed to have further discussion of the undergrounding policy, and the Work Group was asked to consider further review. This proposal was referred to the Work Group for consideration and to report back to the full commission in September 2008.

2. Improvements to Union Pacific Railroad – Recommendations from Berkeley Design Advocates: After discussion, it was concluded that it is premature to respond in detail to BDA at this time. Commissioner Wolfe has performed substantial research on the matter in order to reach the above conclusion. It was referred to the Work Group (Commissioners Francis and Wolfe) to prepare a preliminary letter to that effect, that would be sent to BDA, with the suggestion that if they knew additional information that was counter to the above conclusion, to please feel free to alert us to such information (MSC Francis/Nelson, with a vote of 6-0-0).

INFORMATION ITEMS:

1. Update on Possible Additional Stormwater Funding: Ballot Measure or Assessment District (Carried over from June 5, 2008): The Secretary indicated that the City Manager is still in the process of evaluating whether to put forth any options for increased funding for storm water facilities. The Secretary was asked to report back in September 2008 for an update.

2. Private Sewer Lateral Program (Carried over from June 5, 2008): The statistics for the second year of the program were noted, particularly that there has been no drop-off in applications to date. The issue regarding family transfers was deferred to a future meeting.

3. Additional Materials on Permeable Pavers: The Commission acknowledged the material on permeable paver installations in the packet. It was decided that the next step would be to evaluate various locations in Berkeley for a proposed trial, realizing that there are multiple considerations. Given all the current issues surrounding Aquatic Park, perhaps this should be a site to be considered. The Work Group would like to meet with staff to explore these issues, with a report back to the full Commission in September 2008. Subsequent discussions, by groups of two or three Commissioners, with individual Councilmembers were also considered as a possible

FUTURE AGENDAS: In September, discussions should start taking place regarding a retreat to develop a Workplan for 2009. The 2008 Workplan should be included in the next packet for this purpose. This should also allow an opportunity for more public comment on upcoming topics.

CONTINUED PUBLIC COMMENT:

Barbara Allen continued her comments on future directions for the Rule 20A undergrounding program. She indicated that she would like to be notified of Work Group meetings on this topic. On the topic of Ashby Avenue/Tunnel Road, she also suggested that the City of Oakland should be added into the process.

Pam Doolan also continued her comments, in particular that an improved public process is needed. She suggested that an overall strategic plan would greatly aid in the public acceptance of the future program.

ADJOURNMENT: 9:22 p.m.