



NATURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES

MAY 7, 2014

Co-Chair Todd Van Rysselberghe called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 380 A Avenue.

Present: Co-Chairs Heidi Schrimsher and Todd Van Rysselberghe, Nick Berardi, Frank Junga, James Kandell, Gregory McMurray and Craig Stephens. Kavya Sreedhar (Youth Member) was not present. Council Liaison Lauren Hughes was present.

Staff: Andrea Christenson, Natural Resources Planner/Staff Liaison; and Ryan Stee, Parks and Recreation Department.

CITIZEN COMMENT

Carolyn Jones – asking the NRAB to pay close attention to the impact of BES wastewater treatment plant improvements on Tryon Creek.

Ms. Jones related her concern that the plan and the project's advisory committee minutes did not recognize the extent of natural resources/sensitive lands to be protected. She held Lake Oswego protections should apply there even though Portland owned the property. Board members suggested she talk with City water quality staff, who might be able to answer her questions. They talked about flooding and heard a suggestion to fix the sewer at that end of town to reduce the amount of infiltration and thus the need to expand the plant.

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

Councilor Hughes provided the update, which included that the Council had sold a property on McVey, approved the final order related to isolated tree groves, and heard a presentation on Arbor Day/25th Anniversary as Tree City USA.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Presentation of the Iron Mountain Restoration Plan

Mr. Stee related that Parks staff had sought guidance from the neighborhood association and Friends of Iron Mountain. The goal was to restore the park to a predominantly healthy, balanced, state. The balance was between making it a pure native forest and tolerating some non-native species that would not be harmful to the park. He pointed out a section of guidelines to be used for prioritizing projects in each subarea. He clarified the wetland area was not part of the plan and should be addressed in a separate effort. The timeline went out to 2035. The results would be tracked and the plan would be reviewed and updated annually.

The group discussed various non-native and toxic plants; applying for Metro grants; the condition of and possibilities in the wetland/stream area; why access to certain subareas was limited; an educational program; signage; and how the areas being used by the utility project would be addressed.

Citizen Comment: Mike Buck, Friends of Iron Mountain, indicated they appreciated Mr. Stee's efforts.

Update on proposed revisions to the Sensitive Lands program

Ms. Christenson outlined the history of the program. Councilor Hughes explained the reasons for the public pushback and that the issue was in regard to a relatively small amount (3%) of city land that was peoples' backyards. She and Ms. Christenson explained the regulatory and voluntary components of the proposed new program and how they related to Metro Titles 3 and 13. The most highly-regulated land would be Title 3 water quality-related areas. The voluntary, incentives-based components could actually expand the areas of habitat resources that would be protected. They related they had met with a group of builders/developers/architects to identify what would or would not incentivize them. They clarified that private open space tracts and public lands would be subject to Sensitive Lands-like regulations for both water and trees; and, 'open space tracts' meant privately-owned open space tracts typically protected at the time of development approval. They would use Metro maps because the mapping techniques were more accurate. They proposed to apply Sensitive Lands-like regulations to areas of streams and wetlands that both Title 3 and Sensitive Lands defined as significant. They were looking into whether Clean Water Act requirements meant the City could not have more flexibility there. Whether or not to add potentially qualifying resources that did not currently have Sensitive Lands designation could be a topic for a policy discussion by the City Council. They clarified the difference between Habitat Protection Area (HPA) and the voluntary Habitat Benefit Area (HBA) code-based incentives approach. The latter encouraged developers who could build under the general community development code to develop in a more environmentally sensitive way. That could protect hundreds more acres.

Councilor Hughes offered an example of flexibility that an existing, developed, lot with a house on it since 1940 and was not dividable would have more flexibility in regard to the setback than development on a new infill lot. She and Ms. Christenson pointed out additional aspects in the alternative approach included an acquisition program, educational outreach, conservation easements; technical assistance, stewardship recognition and tax and fee reductions. The Budget Committee was about to consider allocating \$250,000 seed money for an ongoing habitat conservation fund. An NRAB member commented that the [regulatory and voluntary] layering concept and the open space aspects of it made sense.

Healthy Ecosystems Chapter of Comprehensive Plan

Ms. Christenson presented the draft goals and policies the Planning Commission was about to consider for the Healthy Ecosystems chapter. They would be moved forward together with the proposed revised Sensitive Lands program.

The ensuing discussion touched on whether, when and where incentive programs could be used for off-site mitigation; the Council guidelines that differentiated policies from RAMS; that RAM I. Should call for the city to 'Identify areas for mitigation banks' (for example at Woodmont Park, Stevens Meadows or Luscher Farm) instead of 'Explore options for creating' them; that the state had a mitigation bank program; that RAM K. was a good one to encourage schools and local organizations to provide public education opportunities regarding preservation and improvement of wildlife habit; that a Bryant Road area hillside might not have been stripped if the incentive program was in place; that natural resource-related RAMs had a better chance of being funded because that would help convince Metro that an alternative program was a good alternative to regulations; and that RAMs could be made components of plans and approved with the plans.

Board comments included that they liked the pyramid graphic staff had provided; there were people in the community who did not yet know the background and context; they were interested in learning more about the incentive programs; that the first impression was they were making an effort to focus on the best for the environment; and, they wanted to know about opportunities to provide feedback to the Planning Commission and City Council. Ms. Christenson and Councilor Hughes assured them there

was going to be a long public involvement process and several work sessions before the hearing in the fall; and, that there would be related maps.

Information from Board members and staff

Co-Chair Van Rysselberghe commended Mr. Berardi and Councilor Hughes for a fine job at the meeting where the City Council had voted not to sell the Sunningdale property. Carol Ockert and staff were looking into the cost of an engraved stone there. They had not yet discussed removing the hedge. The board touched on potential agenda items for a joint meeting with PRAB. Councilor Hughes related that the Budget Committee was going to consider the \$250,000 Decision Package the next night. Mr. Stephens questioned why staff was permitting trees on State Street to be removed. In regard to the WEB property staff reported there was a new proposal by a new developer that included selling city owned open space west of the building. Mr. Berardi reported learning that Friends of Woodmont Park could become a city-recognized group by July.

Actions: The Co-Chairs were to arrange a date for the joint NRAB/PRAB meeting. Mr. Berardi volunteered to attend the upcoming Budget Committee meeting to advocate for the \$250,000 decision package. Ms. Christenson was going to find out why the trees on State Street were allowed to be removed. She was going to email the group with more information about the new WEB proposal.

ADJOURNMENT

The next regular meeting was scheduled on June 4, 2014. Co-Chair Van Rysselberghe adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannan Lenke Stoll
Assistant Natural Resources Planner

Link to audio recording of meeting: http://www.ci.oswego.or.us/boc_nrab/natural-resources-advisory-board-15