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PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING OF: November 10, 2020

APPROVED MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
MINUTES OF November 10, 2020, Regular Meeting

PLANNING COMMISSION:

The notice of the meeting was posted on November 05, 2020.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Fernandez called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Douch, Kelley, Lindenbusch, Oetinger, and Haug
Absent: Commissioner Wilson (excused)
Staff: Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Chair Fernandez read an opening statement.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 13, 2020 & October 27, 2020 (Special Meeting)

October 13, 2020

Commissioner Lindenbusch amended the minutes.

Commissioner Lindenbusch made a motion to approve the minutes as amended.

Vice Chair Fritz seconded the motion.

VOTE:

AYES: Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Douch, Kelley, Lindenbusch, Oetinger, and Haug

NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: Commissioner Wilson

October 27, 2020 (Special Meeting)

Vice Chair Fritz made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted.

Commissioner Lindenbusch seconded the motion.

VOTE:

AYES: Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Douch, Kelley, Lindenbusch, Oetinger, and Haug

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Wilson

4. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA: None.

5. STATEMENTS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: None.

6. REGULAR AGENDA:

A. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT/TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP/VARIANCE – Project #2019-027 – This is an application from Mark Reece, requesting approval of a Conditional Use Permit, to operate an automated car wash at 6809 Sebastopol Avenue, a Tentative Parcel Map to subdivide an existing 1.51 acre lot into three commercial parcels, and a Variance to allow a reduction in the minimum floor area ratio below the requirement of the municipal code, and a proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act). The Planning Commission is advisory on this application, and its recommendation will be forwarded to the City Council for final action. This item was continued from the Planning Commission meeting on September 22, 2020 and recommended for denial by the Planning Commission on October 13, 2020. Staff has prepared a resolution recommending denial for the Planning Commission to review and approve.

Director Svanstrom provided a brief introduction and introduced Contract Planner, Dave Hogan.

Mr. Hogan presented the staff report.

Zac Douch, Commissioner

No questions, just one comment. I support referencing the preliminary hearing that the Commission held on this item. I note that at that time, the Commission was, I think, other than Commissioner Kelley, were all in support of this application in principle, and asked that the various noise and traffic issues be addressed. I think it is worth noting.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

I have a couple questions/comments/clarifications. On page 4 of the resolution, the very first whereas in the first paragraph and the very last whereas on that page, this is kind of a fine point, but it references a mixed-use development. I do not necessarily think that the project needed to be a mixed-use development, I just think it needed to be developed more intensely. I do not know if it is worth clarifying that language. I do not think every

project that goes downtown needs to be mixed-use project. I do not think that is the intention of a higher floor area ratio, and it certainly was not my opposition to the project. I just think it needs to be developed more intensely, that was the intent of the higher floor area ratio and the discussions we had when we were updating the general plan, and the zoning code. I do not know if it is worth changing that language to just saying higher intensity development or something like that, rather than referring to a mixed-use project, because I wasn't opposed to it because they weren't proposing mixed-use. They could have done all residential, or all commercial, or whatever. I was opposed to the lack of intensity of development. I would say.

Dave Hogan, Contract Planner

If the Commission agrees, that is an easy change to make.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

You mentioned recommendations for this when it goes to Council. We talked about the hours of operation, is that something that needs to be included for consideration?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

We did not include the conditions of approval in this document, because the Commission is not recommending a conditional approval. However, staff will incorporate that should Council direct staff to draft conditions of approval for the project. Staff will make sure that the COA is adjusted and that that is discussed in the staff report as well, if that is the case.

Chair Fernandez asked if members of the public wished to comment on this item.

There were none.

The Commission was in consensus on the revisions (changing mixed-use to higher intensity in two locations in the resolution) as suggested by Vice Chair Fritz.

Commissioner Lindenbusch made a motion to approve the recommendation for denial with the amendments as stated.

Commissioner Oetinger seconded the motion.

VOTE:

AYES: Chair Fernandez, Vice Chair Fritz, and Commissioners Kelley, Lindenbusch, Oetinger, and Haug

NOES: Commissioner Douch

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Wilson

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Thank you very much, and thank you, Mr. Hogan, for your hard work on this. For the Commission's reference, and if there are other folks from the project in attendance, we will need to confirm the day, but it looks like this will probably be going to Council at their second meeting in December (December 15). It will be publicly noticed in newspapers as required.

7. DISCUSSION:

A. IVES PARK IMPROVEMENTS/MAINTENANCE DISCUSSION – This item is a continued discussion item from the special Planning Commission meeting on October 27, 2020 which began at 6:00 p.m.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

We received one public comment from Lynn Deedler, and that was passed on to you all. If you did not get it, let me know, and I will send it to you directly.

Director Svanstrom provided an overview of this item.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

One thing I want to circle back around to is that Commissioner Lindenbusch was not able to share his comments from the last meeting because we were running out of time. I want to hear what he has to say. Also, Commissioner Oetinger submitted written comments, but I do not believe she attended that meeting. If she has any further comments, we would obviously love to hear those. My original intent from this was to generate a priorities list. I still feel like there are certain things like the crosswalk at Jewell, the issue of fencing, painting the building at Ives Pool, and other items that I would like to continue to work on in terms of the park. Hoping to see where the Commission is in consensus and to then generate a priorities list to see if there is a way to move forward with identified items by working with staff. I am interested in a Parks Subcommittee if there is a way that the subcommittee could help facilitate and support the Commission in their efforts. I agree with Director Svanstrom about the subcommittee being very goal oriented as that is a very efficient way to work. Interested in having the Commission generate a priorities list and to then have a Parks Subcommittee work towards those priorities. My priorities would be: 1) the crosswalk at Jewell, 2) if there is an alternative to the chain-link fence, particularly around the children's playground, 3) see if we can work with the Public Arts Committee to create a mural on the backside of the Ives Pool building, above the restroom, and 4) I'm really interested in this idea, since we are redoing the asphalt, is there any way that we could do some kind of interesting design near where those stages are at the same time that we redo the asphalt since we are going to be taking up the asphalt and re-laying it down? It seems like we might have some opportunity to add some interest to the park at that moment because that labor is already being done. The garbage cans sound like they are being addressed because of the grant that Superintendent Del Prete was able to receive. Interested in hearing what other needs and priorities Commissioner's see present.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

For the crosswalk at Jewell, are you talking about closing that? The Master Plan has the little island that is at that corner at Jewell being combined and that whole roadway going away. Is that what you are talking about when you say crosswalks?

Kate Haug, Commissioner

No, when I walk from the southeast corner of Jewel and Willow, you can see how a crosswalk could be made right there, there is enough space at the end of that panted meridian. I am talking about literally striping it and maybe putting in a yield sign or something on the other side. There is a yield sign on the south side of the meridian, but there is no signage whatsoever on the north side of the meridian. At the very least, there should be a yield sign there because people are always crossing right there. I am suggesting that we get some yellow paint and make that into a crosswalk. I am not sure if there's ADA compliancy, where you'd have to bump down the curb there.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

As soon as you put a crosswalk in, you are required to have the crosswalk comply with ADA.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

I am not familiar with making crosswalks, that's not my area of expertise. I am not sure if that's Caltrans, or the City, or who oversees that. But I think at the very least, we need something to address that there's a park here and that there are people going back and forth because every time I go to the park, there is always someone using that crossing. I do not know what the least expensive or least bureaucratic way there is to signify that there are human beings crossing the road at the park juncture. I know that there's extremely limited funds and I am not fully informed on the cost, so I am looking at the need for pedestrian safety and the easiest way to get there.

Luke Lindenbusch, Commissioner

Thank you, I think this has been useful. I did bring up a bit of my comments last time. I think the prioritization of numbers 25, and 27, as noted in the Ives Park Master Plan, are where I would prioritize, which centers around the curve at Willow and Jewell. I think from a pedestrian standpoint, that needs work, and could also generate a lot of interest about the park. If I were planning all this single handedly, I think that is where I would start. That speaks to a broader question about how we are going to consider parks improvement, because this conversation started as a question of whether Sebastopol had the bandwidth or the interest to start a Parks Foundation. Now it seems that our conversation is a bit more about parks improvement. Those of course go together hand in hand, but a subcommittee could either be dealing with generating community interest in establishing a Parks Foundation, or serving the community in determining what the community interests are, and we've gotten some of that from public comment. In order for it to be a comprehensive process of public input, the subcommittee could beneficially be doing some community outreach in determining where the priorities are coming up in the community, and also where the energy is needed to help make some of this happen with the funding situation that we know that we are dealing with. Those are my main questions. I think I got to that in the last meeting. I could go on and on about improvements for Ives Park, but I do generally think that a lot of those are underway. I completely agree with the vast majority of the comments that have been brought up by fellow Commissioners. I will leave it at that for now. I am interested in thoughts from the Commission at large about what a beneficial subcommittee would look like. Who would be interested in what kind of subcommittee for parks improvement or a Parks Foundation, whether it would be specific? Echoed Director Svanstrom in urging that any potential subcommittee that is formed is very specific about its intent and how it is of greater benefit to the broader Parks Commission as a whole.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

What do you think about a community workday, do you think that's something a subcommittee might also look into?

Luke Lindenbusch, Commissioner

Yes, absolutely. Especially because so many of the suggestions that have been brought up are ones that might not be brought about in terms of staff time, or they might not be on the Planning Departments radar, or the Public Works Department radar, and that's where we need that additional community ask. That would be in line with what I could see a functioning subcommittee doing.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

I do want to be sensitive to staff's availability as well as they have got a lot of stuff going on. When thinking about priorities, we will have to look to see what's doable from that standpoint as well.

Luke Lindenbusch, Commissioner

Certainly.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

To elaborate on my thoughts on the ugly fence around the pool. I've heard people talking about murals, and what I'm envisioning is that the existing fence could maybe be spray painted into a very soft mural, with the top as the sky, and the imagery below is the view either mirrored or the view to the west or mirrored from the east, at each side so that wall would be sort of blended into the environment that you are already in. That is an idea, it would be very soft, because it is broken up into different colors, it would pull the pool down into the park a little bit more. My other thought overall was that I really feel that the best thing about the Master Plan is the restoration of the creek. I would hope that we would spend a lot of energy and save money to make sure that all the components of that are moving forward. Overall, I felt frustrated because there are so many ideas I was reading in your notes and in the printed material, and I am thinking that there are really three components to what we are talking about. One is that we really started out looking for ways to begin to spend some money on low hanging fruit at the park, and I felt like the best use of a subcommittee would be to work on that effort alone. I am really talking about the lower hanging fruit. The money that we have available to make major improvements for how the park is used now, and there are a lot of things that I could bring up, but I want to let that committee look at the total comments and pull ideas forward and discuss them and maybe try to get some estimates for what those might mean, and how long it might take to accomplish some of them. Then there is this whole other area of the ball field, which is a little frustrating because I know that there's a lot of energy on that already expended and a lot of interest in this space in the park. Perhaps another small subcommittee could work on just that one area, and not only determine whether it is just the unlocking of the gates and how the maintenance is taken over by the City, or some of it is, versus the complete relinquishing of the field by the Little League. Then ultimately, to look at the vision for what that area would become if it were not a ball field. I think you have to look at the plan and the no plan alternative before we start unlocking gates and taking on responsibility, to look at the whole picture of what we might accomplish there. I think some people might be interested in doing that, so we should maybe let them go with that. The third area is little updates to the Master Plan. Some people have talked about major projects that are part of the Master Plan, and we have noted that when we read the document now, item number 1, or item number 11 might be out of date. Maybe just can do an overlay to indicate some changes that might be made that I guess the Council would need to approve, so that when we are moving forward, we are not just going over old material. Those are the three areas, if we wanted to look at one or two, or maybe all three of those, different people could work on those over a period of time. Right now, the side of the fence on Willow that goes to the pool has a lot of directional signage, which could be designed into a design that is more friendly oriented. It could be incorporated with signage that says where the pool entrance is. Right now, we have a lot of COVID signs, and those could be affixed to it as well. It seems like that could be more welcoming and the mural itself could be the direction down to the pool.

Zac Douch, Commissioner

If we are talking about priorities, I sort of listed those last time. I think there are some inexpensive ways to address removing some of the asphalt, there are areas that simply could be removed. It could be cut in such a way as to form a reduced pathway.

Maintenance of the asphalt is an important need as well. I would consider low hanging fruit, after we are talking about routine maintenance, I think the next order of magnitude for me is asphalt pathway improvements. Also, as I discussed last time, fencing, possibly a post and rail fence at the creek. As we know, one of the complicating factors is that we discuss these issues as something we are going to be able to act on in a fairly short period of time. The reality is, it is going to take time, unless we do get a grant and we do move into some major work and improvements on the park, it is likely that it is going to take a number of years to realize the big picture, the big plan. I think it is choosing some items that are manageable, perhaps with some fundraising, I really appreciate the sentiment around work days, volunteerism, and things like painting the fence, and other things that will offer real improvement and can continue to be worked on which are more in the maintenance realm. In terms of actual improvements, I think looking at pathways and fencing is the place to focus. That could be realized probably in a year or two, versus 10, 12, or 15 years for other more major improvements. To speak to some of the other thoughts, for the crosswalk, I appreciate the sentiment for that improvement, and I agree with it, but the red tape if you like, or the amount of planning and effort that would be required to get what appears to be such a simple improvement done is huge, and could easily suck up all of the effort for the next number of years to get that single improvement done. It is a balance for me about where and what we can accomplish in a feasible manner.

Zac Douch, Commissioner

My priorities would be, let's make a plan that we can implement on pathway improvement and come up with the sections of fence, or all of the fence to be replaced, either with new chain link or preferably with some post and rail or something a bit more aesthetically pleasing. That would also satisfy, I think, the concerns the City has around liability with the steep sides, concrete alignment, and access issues, especially in the wintertime when that is a pretty significant hazard.

Linda Kelley, Planning Commissioner

I am very happy to have Commissioner Oetinger's comments now in the discussion and I agree with them very much. My concern is still the ball field and what we can do around making it more accessible to other park users. This park is such an opportunity for public art, and we should make sure that that is included as we move forward.

Zac Douch, Commissioner

Regarding a subcommittee, I strongly support a motivated subcommittee to work on this park, and potentially others. Commissioner Lindenbusch's ideas around a subcommittee, and committee that could really look at, and help the City get their arms around costs and fundraising, or other elements once one or two items are perhaps chosen to work on. I strongly support a motivated subcommittee working on this wonderful thing, if we can pull that together.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

I know we reviewed the pathway plan a couple months ago, is that an actual project that is funded, or what is the status of that?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

That is or will be funded. There is a State grant, prop 68, and the City will be applying for a \$200,000 grant. \$100,000 of that was used at the Libby Park, the new super playground, that was becoming a safety issue with the old playground where they couldn't actually get parts anymore, if you'll recall, because of not necessarily how old it was, but because the company went out of business. That has now been replaced with a new,

beautiful playground. We are trying to figure out how we can do at least a small opening during COVID time. The playground is open and has been for a few weeks thanks to changed restrictions. The other half of the grant money would be used, with some required matching funds from the City, which will come from Measure M parks funds to do as much as we can of the pathway. That is an actual project. It will start in the southwest corner and continue up as far as it can. If we get too dense, we will be able to do more of it than less of it. The construction documents are done. Once we have the grant funds contracted for, we can do the work. I anticipate the work will be done in early spring because doing work during the winter for pathways is much more difficult. We are looking at bidding it this winter and doing the work in the spring. The sculpture garden, the pads and other work for it, is also a real project. The Public Arts Committee has had a subcommittee working on the draft call for a number months and is looking to finalize the call at their meeting in December so that will be ready to be sent out as well.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

One of my priorities would be the asphalt because there is way too much of it, and what is there is in pretty horrid condition. That is an important piece for me. Happy that the pathway project will be moving forward. I am also very concerned about the intersection at Willow and Jewell. I used to walk through there a lot with my dog, and it is horrible, especially with an old dog that does not move very quickly. While the Master Plan document has a beautifully rendered corner there, there could potentially be some sort of interim solution, even if only done on a trial basis. I have K-rails on my mind with the parklet projects, there could be a way to get some K-rails and block off that weird swoop of Willow and then a crosswalk across Jewell could easily be made at that point. As to what happens in that area, I think we need to figure that out, maybe there are some game tables, or different things that we could do somewhat inexpensively, the asphalt there could be brought into the park, we could get some K-rails and block it off and program something that would be relatively affordable to do. This could be done little by little to see if it is worth doing. Maybe we could get some planters and create a community garden, or chess or checkers or different kinds of games like that. Without biting off the whole thing, those are some possible ways we could do it, and that is something I would be interested in because that intersection is horrible. A lot of people do make that crossing, people that live up Jewell, First Street, and Leland, if they're coming to the park that is how they have to get there and it is not safe at all so that is really a priority for me. Concurred with Commissioner Douch on the fencing. The fencing and the asphalt are what makes the park a bit of an eyesore. As much as those can be improved upon, either by replacing the fencing or just repairing the parts of it that are in bad condition, and maybe incrementally over time taking sections down and putting up something that's more attractive, I would be in favor of that kind of approach.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Concurred with comments on the blacktop. Could we add in a striped line, like you have on the road, that could maybe make a trail through the park to soften the look a little bit? We have talked about games. Perhaps we could take part of it and paint in hopscotch numbers or something like that to take away from large amount of blacktop area. I agree that the Jewell Avenue crosswalk is something that needs to be looked at. I am not sure what would be involved, it may be difficult, in the meantime we could put a sign there to direct people to the nearest crosswalk. That would be something inexpensive to do while we are trying to figure out those areas. I would like to see some public artwork in the middle near the fenced in area of water. Some type of recycled art could be good in that center area. Concurred with Commissioner Oetinger's suggestion about the mural on the slats of the fence at Ives Pool, that would be an easy, or at least an inexpensive project. There are several areas where bushes or shrubbery need to be planted, that should be

looked at. This would point people towards the entrances more, rather than people just cutting through anywhere. Some signage would be good too. Not sure that there is signage that reads, 'Ives Park' anywhere currently. Suggested a sign that says, 'Ives Park' be placed on the corner at Jewell by the fence that is there. There are some areas where the bark should be redone. That could be something for a community workday, volunteers could help spread out the wood chips in the areas it is needed. As far as the ball field, I agree that we need to do something, we need to look at it. In the meantime, if it is possible, I know they have sponsors and such, but I would like to remove some of the signs so that there are a few areas where people can look into the field. There is also a lot of electrical along the retaining wall between the path and the ball field, there are a lot of electrical boxes and items there. They need to be looked at and either covered, made safer, and/or painted. As far as the committee, it would probably be helpful to come up with a step 1 that might include some of these maintenance items because we have the funding so we can do that. From there, the overall best use would be to see if we can do a Parks Foundation, to start to explore that. I think that would be the best thing that we could do for the long term to get the Master Plan realized, otherwise that is never going to happen. We may have to revisit the Master Plan because things may have changed or become outdated.

Chair Fernandez asked if members of the public wished to comment on this item.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Thank you Chair. We do have, as I noted, one written public comment that you have received.

Kyle Falbo

If you direct your attention to my virtual background, you will see a photo from 1961 of Ives Park. This is my great grandfather; he is feeding the ducks. This is looking east. You will see in the north; the top left corner of the photo is the baseball field, and you can see the creek on the righthand side. This just gives you a little bit of perspective about the history of Ives Park and where it has been. Hopefully, this can be considered in the future when you are making decisions about Ives Park. A couple of things I just wanted to mention, please do not just go out with yellow paint, and paint a crosswalk in the center of probably one of the most complicated vehicular intersections in the city. Even more so with the increase of the amount of traffic that that intersection is seeing because of our lack of control of traffic on Bodega Avenue. It is now the major thoroughfare dropping down at the post office and making a right onto Main Street. I encourage this body to find opportunities to reduce fences, gates, and vertical visual blocks to access. Libby Park comes to mind as well. I encourage this body to consider material studies, specifically comparing gravel, asphalt, and concrete. I think you might find, specifically for trails, that concrete might be a better long term solution even if it is more expensive on the initial side of things in terms of maintenance, long term use, and ADA compliance. The reason why we are dealing with such an issue with the asphalt at Ives Park right now is because it is asphalt, not concrete. In terms of vegetation, I would consider maybe using pineapple guava. It is an amazing ground cover; it is meant to be a shrub. If you want to see a good use of it, it can be seen in front of Ceres, next to the fire station on Bodega. They are using pineapple guava right at the edge in a unique way.

Kyle Falbo

The one thing about pineapple guava is that even as it grows and becomes more of a tree, it still provides amazing ground cover, it is got great structure. I have got some larger in my yard, and there is no real soil run off or degradation of the area. It is an amazing plant for purposes like this. Thank you so much for your dedicated time.

Hearing nothing further, Chair Fernandez he closed public comment.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I will comment on a couple of things in terms of what I think may or may not be low hanging fruit. One of the comments was removal of asphalt and I believe Commissioner Douch had talked about the asphalt at the rose garden area east of the ball field that is basically gone. I did my own walking tour; I saw the same thing. Replacing things with ADA takes a lot of work. If you simply remove that and let it be more of a dirt trail, which it almost is anyway in most parts, that may be something that, yes, it costs money to have a contractor do that, but it is because it is in the shape it is and we are going to be doing the demo of the rest of the pathway that they're rebuilding so it may be cost effective to add it on as a potential alternate depending on the cost when we do the pathway project. I would agree with the Commission on that having a big impact over what is existing. With regards to the comments about the Jewell and Willow intersection, yes, a crosswalk is much more complicated. We all saw how long the installation of the ADA curb ramps took Caltrans this summer even though there was not a lot of traffic. That is a fairly expensive initiative, however, what Vice Chair Fritz talked about in terms of potentially using barricades to temporarily close the area to see how it works. Doing so would block off that second intersection while still allowing right and left turns there and could potentially become additional gathering space. Even though that seems like a big move, if it is temporary, and it is not Caltrans, the City Council could authorize it. We may have some extra concrete barricades from the parklet project. There was a question about signage. The City did do a wayfinding sign project before I was on board. There were three phases of it. The phase having to do with the ped line and pedestrian wayfinding signage has been implemented and can be seen around town. The second part of that is wayfinding for the city's parking lots. I have heard from business owners that we have parking, but people do not know where it is. The third phase of it is for signage for public buildings. I do not recall if there is something in the package for parks. I do not know if there is something along the southwest corner, or the crosswalk that cuts across right by Ives Pool. I agree there is not a lot of signage on that side of Ives Park that announces it as a city park. I can look into that. The other two phases have not yet been funded. We will be looking at how they can be funded. Lastly, regarding the ball fields, I did find a copy of the lease for that and sent it to the City Manager's office with the Commission's concerns regarding it being a locked field. The lease notes that they can schedule and coordinate other groups, but that is also their responsibility as well. Not necessarily unlock the gate and have it be an open field all the time, but to at least intensify the use. I am looking into whether they are doing that part of it. Perhaps they could have signage on the field saying, if you'd like to rent or use this field, please contact us, so that would be a little more understandable and would likely get a little more utilization.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Consideration should be given for items, maintenance, and events. Right now, we are not having any, and it kind of maybe slipped our mind that there was a day we could, and maybe there will be one in the future. Are there benches that need to be moved, or sitting places, those kinds of things to take into consideration? We talked about the stage there. There is a sign. Before you get to the bathrooms, there is an overhang empty area and there is a directional sign, I do not know if that is from Cittaslow, I am not sure. It is kind of like a directional sign, if you happen to be walking through there you see it, but it is not real obvious. That sign would be better served to have in other areas.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I think that is one of the first phase pedestrian wayfinding signs.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

It is a nice sign, if you happen to be walking in you'll find it, but otherwise, if you come in at any other entrance, it is not really something that is easily locatable. I also want to poll the Commission as to who may be interested in serving on this subcommittee. It sounds like initially it would be to come up with the priorities and maybe do a little bit of research as far as maintenance goes. Beyond that, the next phase would be to look at park funding. Other than that, the subcommittee could come back to the Commission, or to himself as the Chair and Director Svanstrom.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

I am interested in serving on that. I have been listening to people's comments and I do think that particularly in Ives Park, it would be wonderful to strengthen our relationship with the Public Arts Committee. In terms of signage, with the sculpture garden there, would it be possible to work with the Public Arts Committee on getting some sort of archway or signage at that High Street entrance near the creek, perhaps an artist could make some sort of signage? I like Commissioner Oetinger's idea about the mural on the slats at Ives Pool and how she thought of doing wayfinding in the mural. There seems to be ample opportunities for perhaps collaboration with the Public Arts Committee to really think about Ives as a city park that showcases a connection to art in some way because it is close to downtown. Vice Chair Fritz's idea of a parklet at Willow and Jewell could tie into that in some way. I think Chair Fernandez suggested doing something fun and playful with the asphalt. Perhaps public art could be incorporated into the asphalt to bring some fun to it as we do these improvements. Since the asphalt is a project that is going to be moving forward, maybe we can bring our ideas to it as it is being processed so that we can incorporate more into that process. Asphalt removal is a good idea. What are some of the other adjustments that we can make since we are already spending the money so we can get more value for the money that we spend? I am curious about the pricing for the fencing. I feel that we are at a disadvantage because some of the chain link obviously needs to be repaired. What is the price differential of repairing it with chain link versus post and rail like Commissioner Douch was suggesting or what they have at Libby Park which is wood with small wire mesh behind it?

Evert Fernandez, Chair

I think it may be good to contact the Sebastopol Center for the Arts to see if there is someone there that may want to participate or give input. Maybe they could be a liaison to the art community on the subcommittee.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

On that one, Planning also handles the Public Arts Committee. The December agenda for the Public Arts Committee is full. If there was a subcommittee member, or a liaison from the Planning Commission who is interested in reaching out, that is something we can probably agendaize discussion of, I can talk to the Chair of the Public Arts Committee. That could potentially be on their agenda in January or February as we try to move some of these projects forward. I know at least one member of the City Council has mentioned the fencing at Ives. The Public Arts Committee is also trying to do commissioned art pieces, not just beautification, the sculpture garden would be a combination of the two. Opportunities can be discussed.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Mr. Falbo's comments regarding looking at some different types of material. He said it would be more cost up front, but if it is something that will look better and last longer, it may be worth considering. Commissioner Haug is interested in working on the subcommittee, anybody else?

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Expressed interest in working on the subcommittee.

Luke Lindenbusch, Commissioner

I would also be interested. If Chair Fernandez wants to be on the subcommittee, I would be happy to yield as I am on the Climate Action Subcommittee which will be getting going soon as well.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

I think it would be good if we could get on to the Public Arts Committee agenda to see what the feasibility of collaboration is, and what their interest is. I think that would be important to know, because if we are able to get a mural, we could work with them to put out a call, to see if there's any funding overlap, or what the process for that would be. Coming back to something that Commissioner Lindenbusch brought up earlier, I'm also interested in developing a survey for the public, to see what their primary uses of Ives are and what kind of improvements would increase their enjoyment and use of the park. I think it would be good to develop that and maybe release it sometime in February or March, if that is a realistic timeline.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

I could be an alternate to the subcommittee, if needed. I can certainly help however I can. Should we have the subcommittee come back with recommendations, and what their purpose is? How long do we want to wait before we hear back from the subcommittee?

Kate Haug, Commissioner

Also, if Director Svanstrom feels like we can do a parklet, we should probably investigate that.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

The last two seem more like staff questions, not subcommittee questions. For the potential parklet, first I will discuss with the department heads because I would want to make sure that we have our traffic consultant can look at. Since we are looking at doing it as a temporary measure, and there's no rerouting of traffic, per se, since everyone can still just go straight on the west and then make a right or left turn, but I do want to check with him. Usually, when you are making major road changes, if they're permanent, you get into CEQA and you need to do the environmental review on that. If it is a temporary closure like this, then it would be exempt, because it is not a permanent action. That is an easy way around that to kind of see how to do that. A temporary parklet would allow us to see if it has a lot of impact on traffic, on the park, or other positives or negatives.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

I think this may have been before your time, Director Svanstrom, but W-trans did look at that intersection. I think it may have been during the general plan update, I remember there was a conversation at one point. Because Mr. Weinberger analyzed this intersection already, it should be a fairly easy conversation for him to have.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Maybe that was done as part of the Master Plan before being put into an adopted Master Plan?

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

I know I have definitely seen him give a presentation about reconfiguring that intersection, although I can't remember who he presented to. Mr. Weinberger should have that information readily available. My recollection is that it was possible to do.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

Yes, and it was expensive. I think it went to the Council and they looked at it. I think the expense was the main concern versus what we gain in that space.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

Yes, I think it was doing the whole thing, so a trial/temporary thing might be easier to do right now.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I think that is a small enough piece, even though it is not in direct relation to the Master Plan. I am happy to look into that, and then bring that back to the Commission, or work with the subcommittee to see if this this something they want to bring back to the full Commission.

Kathy Oetinger, Commissioner

I think we are three alternatives that they looked at. One of them included a temporary or a partial closing, rather than a completely engineered structure.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

The parklets are temporary themselves. Maybe when the parklets go away, we can take those K-rails and use them at Ives to try this temporary project.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

That is quite possible. The City purchased them, instead of renting them so they could be available for other uses.

Paul Fritz, Vice Chair

Yes. Maybe next summer when COVID is over and the parklets go away, we could repurpose those K-rails for another project.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

I would like to see us try to accomplish those maintenance items that the Commission wants prioritized, so that we do not get caught up reviewing the crosswalk issue, which could delay other things. If the subcommittee can prioritize these items, come back with additional information, and make a recommendation on which to proceed with, we could potentially proceed more quickly.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Are you thinking that that would be a budget request?

Evert Fernandez, Chair

It would just be doing the legwork so that staff might not have to do as much, like talking to Superintendent Del Prete on the list of things the Commission has been discussing, and connected with the Public Arts Committee as well. The goal would be to try to identify as many as we can as realistic accomplishments and to possibly have a second pass through on items that may take a little bit longer.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

The concern I am seeing is that a lot of the things that were mentioned have dollars attached to them. If you are talking about replacing fencing, removing, or changing asphalt, or putting up new signage, those all take money and time.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Some of the budgeting that Superintendent Del Prete got for maintenance, say the garbage cans as an example, that is one of the things we wanted to do, and it sounds like he has funding for that. Maybe we could add some artwork to those garbage cans, or something like that. So again, it would not take a lot funding, but communication with the Public Arts Committee would need to happen, and the same thing could be true for painting the fence. Yes, it will take some funding but for those types of things we may be able to use some of the Measure M funding initially. I just think it would be nice to be able to move forward on those and get some of these accomplished as soon as possible.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I think that's where it might be helpful to have the subcommittee look at those and see if there are some things that can be done with volunteers, through a volunteer day push, versus needing to be done by Public Works staff, or a contractor.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

The maintenance items that you are referring to, is that from the list that Superintendent Del Prete went over at our last meeting? Do we need to regenerate a maintenance list after Superintendent Del Prete's presentation last time?

Evert Fernandez, Chair

I am wondering if some of the items we spoke about are on Superintendent Del Prete's maintenance list, if yes, we may be able to check them off. Otherwise, some of the projects have more to do with improvement over maintenance, so maybe we need more information from Superintendent Del Prete? Painting and fencing are probably considered improvements versus maintenance. I think it would be good to touch base with Superintendent Del Prete to talk about the list that we came up and what they are doing maintenance wise to see how things match up initially.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

Coordinating from Superintendent Del Prete's presentation, the original document from 2017, and our current input as well.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Yes, I think that would be the quickest thing. Other items that are going to take a little bit longer can be worked on as well as the park funding would be great, because that's the one thing that's just been holding this up, as far as doing anything with the Master Plan. The surveying is good, too. Some of the maintenance, painting, and that kind of stuff can be taken care of. There may be other things that we might not have thought of, that the public might want to talk about that we may be able to incorporate into the Master Plan versus maybe something that could be a quick fix.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

Yes, I agree.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Hearing nothing further, Chair Fernandez concluded discussion of this item.

Kate Haug, Commissioner

Are our Measure M funds for this year already spent?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

They are allocated, yes. Part of it is the match for the pathway project and then there's a couple other items, the restroom project at Burbank Farm is the other big chunk of it.

8. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Svanstrom updated the Commission on the following:

- Election
- Openings on the Planning Commission and Design Review Board
- Temporary parklet installations
- Upcoming Design Review Board items
- Changes to the Façade Improvement Program

Evert Fernandez, Chair

Before I adjourn, I want to thank everyone for all the different participation, Vice Chair Fritz, Commissioners Haug, Lindenbusch and Oetinger.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

One of my goals this year was to try to get more participation from the Planning Commission, to help out, to take some of the pressure off of the City Council and try to do more as a Commission. I just want to say thank you for stepping up and for allowing us to accomplish more than we normally would. Thank you very much for that.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

The Planning Commission meeting of November 24 will be canceled due the holiday if the Commission is amenable to that.

Evert Fernandez, Chair

November 24 is the Tuesday before Thanksgiving and we normally take a break on that one, so that will be the case this year as well.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

The other meeting that is generally canceled, although we are not going to cancel it now in case it is needed, will be on December 22 which is the week of Christmas.

9. ADJOURNMENT: Chair Fernandez adjourned the meeting at 8:28 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting will take place on Tuesday, November 24, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Kari Svanstrom
Planning Director