

**CITY OF SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES FROM TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2024**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** 7:00 p.m.
A regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission of the City of South San Francisco was held on Tuesday, September 17, 2024, in the Council Chambers at the Library | Parks and Recreation Center.
- II. **ROLL CALL:**
Present: Commissioners Battaglia, Burgo, Camacho, DeNardi, Lock and Uy
Absent: Commissioner Rey
- Staff: Greg Mediati, Director of Parks and Recreation
Angela Duldulao, Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation
Laura Armanino, Recreation Manager
Joshua Richardson, Parks Manager
Erin O'Brien, Business Manager
Jeanette Yoshida, Administrative Assistant II
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Completed.
- IV. **AGENDA REVIEW:** Item five on agenda moved to item two.
- V. **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:** Public Comment was received electronically on September 16, 2024, at 6:46 p.m.

"As a follow-up to last month's meeting.

Now, that I have confirmed being maliciously deceived into being complicit of supporting Linden/Pine park, which would place my own life, my family, my community and SSF residents in direct and immediate danger, I am in complete disbelief at the lengths that the City took in withholding crucial information and deceiving an entire community and city.

For the good of all humanity, this planned park project at Linden and Pine must be placed at a complete halt immediately. This rash decision and unconscionable lack of moral compass, places human lives at risk. This injustice should not be allowed, nor tolerated by any individual, regardless of the powers it holds. As a society, we all have the responsibility and obligation to protect our most innocent and precious babies. It is cruel to take advantage of a defenseless community with known barriers and challenges for their defense.

As I recall then Mayor Garbarino's unnecessary flattery of Old Town "deserves a bigger and better park," we did not expect the insulting suggestions and disregard for human life in meeting the long overdue and dire need of parks documented in the City's archives dating back to 1990 and 2015, starting with the hurried attempt by Council Flor Nicolas of a park at the Irish Greens, nor at the toxic sites of 616 and 700 Linden. The contaminated history of 616 Linden was never disclosed when receiving that fateful call, nor have the full soils reports been made public.

I'll repeat our concerns of constructing a park on contaminated soil, where even toxic vapors are being emitted from the ground, via information from the one Summary environmental report that was only published as a result of my email to Council on 8/28/24. I must ask from all of you on this Commission, if omitting crucial information about the hazardous history and alarming findings of the toxicity and dangers it poses to human health; and only after being prompted to then receive only one summary, would you as

residents of this City and as Commissioners, find it acceptable for yourself and your families? It's definitely not acceptable for my family and I, then why should it be acceptable for a defenseless and disadvantaged community of Old Town?

Mr. Flores, our District 5 representative, then further manipulates residents by offering assurances to the public that we will be safe with closing of Pine Avenue at Linden, as long as Fire apparatus and the Scavenger trucks are able to exit and enter. The Q&A with Mr. Philip Vitale only further accomplished that the ultimate goal is to place human lives at risk by closing of a street and by constructing a park on highly toxic soil and also further demonstrate that Mr. Flores and Mr. Vitale and all involved are complicit in deceiving an entire community and city of residents. Mr. Flores is a contributor of further confirming and participating in the City's views and treatments of Old Town, of considering my family, my community and my People as unworthy and unimportant, so much so, that an innocent life of a child in Old Town means nothing to the City, nor to Mayor Coleman, Council members Addiego, Flores, Nicolas, and Nagales, nor to some member of this Commission. There is still time to do right for Old Town, a community that continues to be marginalized by our City leaders, where we have yet to receive an acceptable explanation for the deplorable conditions of our only playground at Cypress Park and for the City to commit to forever maintaining this playground for future generations of children. The City has failed us tremendously and I will not list all of the failures, that started with that fateful call and throughout the different phases of this planned park, that was discussed behind closed doors and planned years ago. I am highly offended of the City Manager's cruel actions into deceiving an innocent advocate and a Mother to not only endanger her life, but in so betraying her own children and community that she so much defends from tyranny. Do the tears of mothers and family members in 2010 mean nothing to the City? I should have known better, not to expect and instill that respect and kindness is the way to go in this short life time of ours.

I trust that this Commission of real human lives, many with families, themselves separate themselves from the organization and do what is right to ensure human safety and health in HALTING THIS PROJECT.

I also wish to call on Chair Ruth DiNardi, Commissioner Brittany Burgo and Commissioner William Lok to immediately step down for your direct involvement in placing human lives at risk and in failing the Spanish-speaking Latinx disadvantaged community of Old Town. We trust what we are told and presented with at in-person outreach events hosted by Council, City staff and representatives. Spanish-speaking immigrant communities rely on this more heavily. Mr. Lok, I'll repeat what I have recalled before during a Commission meeting where you expressed much joy while walking with your grandchild at Orange Park. I too expect to do the same with my children and future grandchildren; however, we have not received dignified parks as your family has. Ms. DiNardi reached out to me and I mistakenly believed that as the Chair, she would have accepted my offer of somewhat walking in my shoes as we stroll through nature, starting at Cypress Park, heading to Irish Greens and the closed Boys & Girls Club at PV. Ms. DiNardi and Ms Burgo, you both have identified as either speaking fluent Spanish and identifying as Latinx for Old Town's vote. We hold higher standards for individuals who claim to represent us, as we are an underserved and under-represented community. The time has arrived for individuals to respectfully step down and accept when they fail to protect and defend our children and people who are continued to be taken advantage of.

Thank you,

From: Olga Perez, a Human Being, a Mother, a Child, an Aunt, a Cousin, a Godmother, a future Grandmother AND on Behalf of Old Town residents, All Human Beings”

VI. PRESENTATIONS

1. Concert in the Park: Family Fun Fest Update

Manager Armanino provides an update on Concert in the Park. She shares that Blessid Union of Souls is performing at 1:00 p.m. and Dazz Band at 3:30 p.m. The jazz band from El Camino High School is performing at 12:30 p.m. and Ballet Folklorico at 3:00 p.m. The family fun zone will have a skating rink, several inflatable games and carnival games. Snack and drink concessions will be in the picnic shelter. Food trucks will be parked adjacent to the shelter and include Brazuca, Red Sauce Meatballs, Dominics, Silvas, Mozzarella and Phil's. There will be 48 exhibitor booths in the tent area that also includes an Age-Friendly senior rest area in case the seating in the picnic areas are full. The free South City Shuttle will have a two special concert routes. Routes and times will be posted on our website. The Commission is provided with the concert event map, the vendor booth map, the event flyer, and the attendee guidelines and policies and procedures for the tent and canopy area. Manager Armanino shares that there will be two areas to sign waivers. Waiver information is posted on the website and will also be posted for parents.

Secretary Camacho asked if the shuttle's schedule will be posted. Manager Armanino responded that the schedule is posted on our social media, website and in the kiosks within the park.

Chair DeNardi thanks staff for having the shuttle available for the community.

Secretary Camacho asks what time they want the Commissioners to be there. Deputy Director Duldulao responds that the mayor will be including in his talking points an introduction of Commissioners, and if they would like to be recognized, to report to the stage by 12:50 p.m.

2. Fiscal Year 2024-25 Co-Sponsorship Renewals

Manager O'Brien presents the final co-sponsorship applicant, San Mateo Athletic Club South San Francisco Chapter, to the Commission for approval. She shared that they promote affordable, accessible and quality sports and recreational services to youth through competitive soccer. Out of the 154 members, 63% are South San Francisco residents.

President Brian Mansell shares details about the club which includes free soccer to the youngest girls age groups, scholarships, fundraising for tournaments and provide coaching for the rec program.

Commissioner Uy commends the club on what they have done in the community by keeping the cost so low as compared to other clubs. By providing professional staff who train kids, they have developed many players in South San Francisco and these programs are creating stars from the community.

Secretary Camacho thanks Patty and Brian for running the programs so well and all that they do for the community. She then asks if they have any feedback on the new field and scheduling. Patty Gomez responds that for the recreational program each

year it is growing. She started with 16 teams and now has 34 and each season is growing but she has gotten to the point where she's had to say no and tell people to wait until next season to register because of the field space and sharing the turf field is too hard with too many kids. She also asked, if possible, to have more maintenance at the Terrabay Field because people are using it more like a dog park and not picking up after their pets. Secretary Camacho thanks them again and shares that she believes that teams sports are one of the best teachers for life lessons for our youth.

Commissioner Lock shares that he would like to applaud and congratulate their leadership and talks about their tremendous success. He hopes that staff can figure out ways to not just accommodate them now but later too.

Commissioner Battaglia comments that she's witnessed over the years that children that play team sports tend to form friendships that last a lifetime and thanks Patty and Brian for all they do.

During public comment, parent, Kevin Green, shares that he appreciates everything the club does. He asks if there is a plan in place to address the concerns over the cleanliness of the bathrooms at Orange Memorial Park. Director Mediati responds that they are aware of the situation and that Manager Richardson lobbied for additional funding from City Council to rehab those restrooms. They met with an architect to help develop plans. Kevin Green asks if in the interim they can have 2 stalls in the new bathrooms opened during practice for a couple of hours. Brian Mansell also suggests maybe having a key so that they can let players in when needed and lock back up after.

Parent Christina, shares her child's positive experiences with the league. She shares that the restrooms have been a concern of hers too and recommends having the restroom checked more often, especially when children are playing. Chair DeNardi thanks Christina for her comments.

Commissioner Uy comments that the large amount of people involved in the soccer program sometimes exceeds the field allocation and believes that there should be a lot of priority placed on this program. There are some programs that don't have the large numbers but are still taking up large amounts of space and kids should be prioritized for the earlier hours.

Director Mediati responds that they do have a sports field policy that does address priority uses. A broader conversation can be had at some point, not specific to one group because we do have to look at equity and provision of services for all interests. There's a lot of priorities and unmet demand for these fields. Director Mediati then comments on the maintenance of the restrooms. Staff services them regularly throughout the day and odors are embedded in and cannot be stripped away by chemical means.

Commissioner Uy asks if the discussion related to the field usage could be had sooner rather than later.

Secretary Camacho comments that she thinks it is part of a larger discussion related to the budget and it's going to be hard to have that conversation about field usage when we're down a full field until the pool is finished.

Parent Natalia shares that her girls fell in love with soccer and thanks Brian and Patty. Through these sports the girls learn how to communicate, leadership skills and how to become team players and gain so much more. The field is important to the group, and she believes it is important to keep something in the community for girls.

Motion to approve Co-Sponsorship Agreement: Approved by motion.

Motion: Secretary Camacho / Seconded: Commissioner Uy.

Unanimously approved.

3. Calendar of Events

Director Mediati gives a brief update on the Calendar of Events.

4. Administrative Updates

Secretary Camacho was thrilled to read update on Youth Enrichment Services and Summer Camp and was happy that field trips were kept in the program.

VII. FRIENDS OF PARKS AND RECREATION

No updates.

VIII. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

1. Motion to approve meeting minutes from August 20, 2024.

Approved by motion.

Motion: Commissioner Camacho / Seconded: Commissioner Battaglia.

Vice Chair Burgo and Commissioner Lock abstained due to absence last meeting.

2. Centennial Way Trail Master Plan Update

Director Mediati gives an update on the Centennial Way Trail Master Plan. In 2021 and 2022, the master plan process was started to study potential improvements along Centennial Way Trail. Much of the site is owned by BART, but the City agreed to accept maintenance of their property along the trail in exchange for the right to develop park land. A series of public meetings, outreach events, public surveys and hearings before the Commission were held. In late 2022, the Commission adopted the plan and City Council adopted then plan in early 2023. Some preliminary concepts were done that included a long portion of the trail between Orange Ave and Spruce Ave but were not included in the plan because San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) owns part of that property and there was concern that there are some conflicts with future interests on that site.

Nate Ritchie from Callander Associates shares that they reengaged SFPUC in June and came up with a revised plan regarding just the segment between Spruce Ave and Orange Ave. The plan was then presented to their team, staff received comments from them resulting in a revised plan. Nate Ritchie shares slides that outline property ownership, what the previous plan looked like and what the revised plan looks like. The improvements on the SFPUC property are limited to surface improvements and will allow things like bench seating, fitness stations and planting. The skate park in the original plan was made a bit smaller and relocated on BART property. There was also an outdoor classroom that was planned to be adjacent to Los Cerritos Elementary School that also needed to be moved across the trail on the BART property. Some fitness stations that SFPUC will allow will be added toward the edge of the property. There will be some interpretive features on the secondary pathway along BART property which will be the learning path which and will also include intricate features and extra bollard lights. They are not allowing trees or connections to the schools so those were removed from the plan.

Secretary Camacho asked if there are no connections to the school does that mean there is no longer a secondary entrance to the school. Nate Ritchie responded that there is currently a fence, and the previous concept was to open a connection for students to enter the campus. Secretary Camacho would prefer, if possible, to make the outdoor classroom bigger, and asks if that area would also be available to the public to which Director Mediati responded yes.

Commissioner Uy asks if the large green space could be a flat grass field that could be used for practice space. Manager Richardson responds that it would have to be informal, it would not be a formal play field.

Commissioner Lock asks if children will have to go out onto Orange Ave and walk the trail to get to the outdoor classroom to which Nate Ritchie responded yes. Commissioner Lock comment that he is disappointed that the skate park had to be downsized. He is disappointed in SFPUC and their position on limiting use.

Vice Chair Burgo comments that changing the fitness stations to the end of the trails makes more sense. She asks if it would be possible to switch the skate space and outdoor classroom to have the classroom closer to the end of the trail and within closer proximity to the school. Nate Ritchie responded that they can study this. Commissioner Lock asks if they plan to widen this section of the trail. Nate Ritchie responded yes, the plan includes trail widening.

Motion to approve the revised master plan for this section: Motion approved.
Motion: Secretary / Seconded: Vice Chair Burgo

3. Cancellation of November or December Commission Meeting

Director Mediati shares that if they so choose, the Commission can cancel one or both meetings in November and December.

Motion to cancel the December meeting and to keep the November meeting.

Motion: Secretary Camacho / Seconded: Commissioner Uy. All in favor.

IX. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION

Chair DeNardi shares that today's trip with Grandfriends was wonderful. She then shares input from the community, noting that they are enjoying the added classes at LPR and Fernekes because there is ample parking and the times of the classes and has also heard good things about the programs for the young ones too. Chair DeNardi requests that the benches at Orange Park be power washed to clean bird droppings off so people can sit and lean back.

Commissioner Uy asks that when there is free play at the field to have at least four goals unlocked so at least two groups can play at any point. He then shares that there are continuing problems with tennis and other instructors and suggests charging them to use the court for lessons like San Francisco does. Commissioner Uy then shares that volleyball open gym and beach volleyball is gaining interest.

Commissioner Lock shares that he's heard compliments from members of the Lions Club regarding the LPR building. He asks if tree trimming is still being done, specifically Old Town and along Hillside Boulevard. Manager Richardson responds that the tree crew is trimming trees every day. The trees on Hillside are either establishing or have been long established so they are only done as needed. Commissioner Lock then shares that he attended a City project meeting at the LPR a couple of months ago, where some concepts of bike and pedestrian improvements on Westborough Boulevard and Junipero Serra Boulevard were presented.

Secretary Camacho suggests at some point bringing in an expert to present the environmental reports and who can educate the community regarding concerns about Linden Park at a City Council meeting or a Commission meeting, whichever is more appropriate for that presentation. Director Mediati responds that they did get a proposal from the scientists that drafted the report, to complete a Spanish translation of the report and are scheduling a follow-up presentation as noted. Chair DeNardi adds that having an expert present and explain at a City Council meeting would help with explaining the scientific report. Director Mediati agrees and adds the idea of including staff from the San Mateo County Environmental Health Department as well. Vice Chair Burgo shares that taking those steps will help rebuild the relationship between the City and Old Town showing that the City is being transparent and giving information and communicating with the community to avoid any misunderstandings. Chair DeNardi adds that having a town hall in District 5 for people with concerns about coming to a City Council meeting might be a good idea. Commissioner Uy comments that having a town hall with experts there might be more effective than a City Council meeting. Commissioners agree that the more action steps the better and having both would be ideal.

ITEMS FROM STAFF

Manager Richardson shares information on the Brentwood Tree Planting event which will most likely be October 5 or 12. He also shares that he is working with the Aquatic Center design team, who will be refreshing the field at the new pool site, in order to create a soccer field where the playing area is. Manager Richardson then addresses Chair DeNardi's request

about cleaning the benches at Orange Memorial Park, and noted pressure washing will be completed prior to Concert in the Park.

Manager O'Brien share that they have an upcoming Cultural Arts show opening October 11 and 12. There will be Ballet Folklorico dancing on Saturday, along with Day of the Dead shrine craft projects, and possibly mask making.

Director Mediati thanks Commission for all their feedback.

- X. **ADJOURNMENT:** 8:32 p.m.
Respectfully submitted by Jeanette Yoshida, Administrative Assistant II
Next Meeting: October 15, 2024.