

BALDWIN HILLS CONSERVANCY

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**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING
of the
BALDWIN HILLS CONSERVANCY
FEBRUARY 1, 2002**

CALL TO ORDER

I. Roll Call

The public meeting of the Baldwin Hills Conservancy was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on February 1, 2002, at Kenneth Hahn State Recreational Area, 4100 South La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90056.

The Conservancy roll was called, and the following voting members were present: Ta-Lecia Ann Arbor, Kenneth, Bentley, Clare Bronowski, Mike Smith, Mary Ann Greene, Steve Treanor, and Albert Vera (Interim Chair), Mary Nichols, and Annette Porini. Absent: Rusty Areias.

The following non-voting members were present: Sara Amir. Don Rogers arrived after roll was taken. Absent: Joe Edmiston, Neal Fishman, and Paul Mount, II.

The following staff members were present: David McNeill and Gloria Dangerfield.

Representing the Office of the Attorney General was John Saurenman.

II. Public Comment on Agenda Items

III. Approval of Minutes

Motion made by the Chair to approve minutes. Motion carried.

IV. Interim Chair Report - Albert Vera

The Chair at this time thanked everyone for their cooperation and decided to wait to give his report and to start with Agenda Item V, Election of Officers.

V. Election of Officers per Public Resources Code Section 32558

The Chair made motion to nominate Mary Ann Greene as Chair and Clare Bronowski as Vice-Chair. Motion carried. Newly elected Chair Greene thanked the Conservancy members for their vote of confidence and promised to do her best to facilitate the discussions and movements towards the vision of a world-class park. The Chair and Vice-Chair thanked Mr. Albert Vera, for his leadership thus far.

Member Vera took this moment to acknowledge Member Nichols for her vision and outstanding work.

Member Nichols stated this was a momentous occasion with the changing of officers, bringing together a diverse board that can achieve consensus and move forward, and thanked Member Vera for his past leadership.

VI. Receive and File all Correspondence

The Chair made motion to receive and file all correspondence. Motion carried.

VII. Deputy Attorney General's Report – John Saurenman, Deputy Attorney General

Mr. Saurenman stated his office has received a request from Mr. McNeill for their opinion on CEQA compliance in the context of the Department of Parks and Recreation review of the master plan. He reported that their office is working on it.

Mr. Saurenman went over the procedures for requesting opinions from their offices. They give two types of opinions -- formal and informal. Formal opinions are usually requested by legislators and go through an extensive office-wide effort and takes six months to a year to be issued. The informal letter of advice, which Mr. McNeill requested, is usually directed towards a specific item and doesn't take nearly as long, but is not something that can go out from their offices within a few days. Once the draft letter of advice has been prepared, it has to go through several levels of reviews; including, for example, this letter will have to go through the Senior Assistant Attorney General (who is in charge of his office) then the Senior Attorney General's supervisor, and finally, the Chief Assistant Attorney General. These letters often take a minimum of a few weeks or longer to be completed. Mr. Saurenman is hopeful this letter will not take as long; he anticipates that it may take at least a couple weeks.

The Chair called at this time for any public comments on agenda items.

Carol Gross, Vice Mayor of Culver City, thanked Mary Nichols, Sara Amir, the State, and everyone who was involved in last Friday's celebration of the removal of the oil wells in Culver City Park. Ms. Gross spoke about the piece of land along Jefferson Blvd. and Hetzler Road that is owned by State Parks. She noted they have been in discussions with State Parks about

Member Arbor asked if the property adjacent to this land was available for purchase. Member Nichols feels the idea of a dog park will have tremendous support, and asked Member Treanor as to what land State Parks actually owns, what were the boundaries, and parking.

Member Treanor responded that looking at this proposal, they obviously have lots of pressure for this type of facility throughout the state as well as looking into some long-term parking. They will be happy to talk to the city to see what competing uses are envisions and to come up with some type of proposal as soon as possible.

The Chair responded that since the item is being discussed now, suggested that a report, detailing to whatever extent possible, includes the ownership and amount of the land, the timeline for development, parking, and amount of dogs. The Chair also thought an estimate as to the size of the dog park should be included in the report.

Member Bronowski stated that when we have the report on this, what kind of alternate plans might be suitable based on State Parks objectives.

VIII. Executive Director Report - David McNeill

a. Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area Preliminary Plan Update

Mr. McNeill stated that Mr. Wayne Woodroof of DPR has sent copies of any related CEQA information to Culver City for them to review in an effort to assist them in their analysis of the environmental review section of the plan. Mr. McNeill stated he gave them a copy of the Chino Hills state plan as an example. To date, he has not heard about any park commission hearing date being scheduled.

b. Legislation Update

SB 259 was passed and signed by the governor, but will not be officially law until January 2003. Relative to further revisions on the Baldwin Hills statue, we requested that technical amendments be added to AB 966. After a review of those suggested amendments by the Board, they will be forwarded to the Assemblyman's office.

Member Amir asked what was the difference between the Brown Act and the Bagley Keene Act.

Mr. McNeill stated that the difference is the meeting notification.

Mr. Saurenman stated further differences are in how notice of the meetings are affected under the Bagley-Keene Act, and in how closed sessions must be noticed. As a state agency, it would seem preferable to be governed by the statute that applies to state agencies, rather than the statute that applies to different entities.

The Chair asked how could this happen and if it would be our call?

Mr. Saurenman stated the current statute expressly provides that this board would conduct their procedure according to the Brown Act. In order to make a change and have this agency be subject to Bagley-Keene, the statute must be amended; so, this would be a suggested amendment that would be presented to the legislature.

Member Nichols stated the comments suggested were consistent from comments coming from her agency and added that all the other state conservancies are governed by Bagley-Keene.

Member Bronowski asked if a motion should be made to make this a recommendation of the board.

Mr. McNeill stated he had not written a formal resolution, but thought it would be great to have a motion he could submit.

The Chair called for a motion to accept the third recommendation and that it be in the form of a resolution to amend the legislation.

Member Rogers wanted to know if the board would want to adopt all of them as recommendations.

The Chair thought it was a good point, as they are individual recommendations.

Member Bronowski suggested the Board accept the recommendations of Mr. McNeill's memo of January 30, 2002.

Motion made that all recommendations made by Mr. Neill's memo be accepted and implemented. Motion carried.

Member Nichols commented that none of these new provisions would be effective until next January. She suggested that the board consider implementing one a crucial bit early. The amendment added Supervisor Yvonne Burke as a member of the board, and Member Nichols felt if Supervisor Burke was invited to attend the meetings prior to her formally being authorized to do so under the statute, that Member Burke would love the opportunity to do so.

Member Bronowski suggested since the other appointees would be governor appointees, they can be lined up to take their positions in January as opposed to April.

Member Rogers stated he had a question on legislation, he remembered somewhere, that this body was going to have to adopt a general plan for Baldwin Hills Park by May 1.

Mr. McNeill stated the statute does ask that the plan be approved by May 2002, but discussions with the Senator have yielded that there is no true penalty if we move past that target date.

Mr. Saurenman brought up the point that although the statute requires/states this board shall approve the master plan in May of 2002, as a general matter of statutory construction, there is no penalty for this, especially in regards to failing to meet the date. Mr. Saurenman went on to say it's not mandatory, but discretionary, which means the failure to act by that date doesn't carry any consequence for the actions of the board.

The Chair asked if a report was still due by May. Mr. Saurenman stated that the statute provides that the Resources Secretary and the Department of Parks and Recreation would submit the master plan to the legislature by January 2002, and then this board should adopt this plan by May of 2002.

Member Rogers stated his understanding was that December 31 or January 1 was for the Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area General Plan, but the May 1, 2002 was for the Baldwin Hills Park Plan. He asked if this was correct.

Mr. McNeill responded that the statute talks about a master plan and the master plan that Member Rogers referred to in the statute will be the same as the Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area Preliminary General Plan.

Mr. Saurenman stated that under SB1048, which was adopted in 1999, the Department of Parks and Recreation under the direction of the Secretary, submit to the legislature, a master plan for the expansion and development of the Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area by January 1, 2002. The preliminary general plan encompasses the master plan. His understanding, based upon discussions in the December meeting, was that State Parks was considering separating the master plan from the general plan.

Member Nichols stated her understanding is that was not what they were planning and that they have not formally communicated that in writing. She believes his question indicates it might be a good idea if they would prepare a letter explaining the facts.

Member Bronowski stated that if there were going to be technical amendments made to the statute, would it make sense to change the dates, to make them more realistic.

Mr. McNeill stated he would check with Greg Campbell of Assemblyman Herb Wesson's office and see if that is something they might be able to do.

c. Projects Update

Mr. McNeill reported on the Stocker Corridor, the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) ordered title reports for the five parcels along Stocker (Presidio up to Overhill) and there are no apparent issues on record that would prohibit moving forward. DPR was instructed to order appraisals on all parcels as well. The process is moving forward at the anticipated pace. Regarding mapping of all parcels in the Baldwin Hills area, Mr. McNeill stated he is happy to have assistance from Streve Treanor's office on compiling the information. They will be making a final map of what the County and State owns and the parcels that remain in private ownership. It will be an updated GIS map, showing acreage, boundaries, and fee ownership.

Mr. McNeill reported, in keeping Prop 40 on the front burner, he's seeking support from the Friends of Baldwin Hills Inc, relative to an information campaign targeting surrounding communities of Westchester, Culver City, View Park, Windsor Hills and Ladera Heights, and is trying to get information to newsletters and community groups in those areas by March 5. Website - - he's looking into adding graphics and improving the amount of information available online, making minutes as well as resolutions available. He will also be adding a slide presentation on the Baldwin Hills Conservancy, KHSRA, and priorities for next year. Earth Day -- he has had the opportunity to work with the County and State planning earth day at KHSRA.

The event will be held April 20 from 9:00 – 4:00, inside Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area. The event will draw from Los Angeles, Culver City, Inglewood Unified School Districts, and families and seniors from surrounding communities. They are also working to have education and interpretation kiosks sponsored by the L.A. Conservation Corps, Ballona Watershed Task Force, the Coastal Conservancy, as well as Boy Scouts from the area. A celebration with food, activities and entertainment will take place after the clean up.

IX. Consent Calendar – No Items

X. California Department of Parks & Recreation Report

District Superintendent Guiney reported that DPR are continuing to work with a couple homeowners who have concern on boundary and landslide issues adjacent to the Vista Pacifica property. DPR has done some clean up of a tree that's dropping limbs onto a neighbor's property, and think they've resolved that issue for them. DPR is also working with the City on the clean up along Jefferson Blvd., which was mentioned earlier. DPR is pleased to report that the recent rainstorms have not created any new erosion problems. They have monitored the sandbags that were in place and are continuing to work on similar issues. The questions that came up in regards to Councilwoman Gross's proposal will be looked into and a report will be given at the next meeting. DPR knows there's been concern about parking at the site, and they are receiving more general public interest in the Vista Pacifica property. Unfortunately, all the roads that lead to that property go through neighborhoods, so DPR is being very sensitive to that fact and don't want to invite people to come and use this park and create a burden or a hazard for neighbors.

Superintendent Guiney went on to report that they were looking into providing some kind of interim trailer/parking in the area. One of the major concerns is that they don't have an area where they can invite the public to park and then hike the trails to the hilltop. Next month, DPR will discuss these ideas with City staff and will come back and talk about at the BHC meeting.

Ranger Raducanu reported the next meeting on the pilot program at Vista Pacifica for the high school students, will be on February 5. He added the parcel on Jefferson Blvd. should be cleaned up by the end of the week.

Someone from the audience voiced her concern about the area on Jefferson Blvd., and wondered if something could be done about the trash being dumped there and cars parked. She also asked if there could be "no dumping signs" posted and whose jurisdiction does it fall under?

Superintendent Guiney stated that once DPR cleans up this area, they don't want to have to go back and clean again, so the idea is to fence it. With regards to the ownership of the other property, he was not sure if it's state property.

The Chair agreed that this is of quite some concern, along Jefferson Blvd., as ownership is a problem because part of it is the city of Los Angeles, Culver City, and the State of California; so, it is unsure who owns what. She requested that when maps are made, they include an address, to help everyone know specifically, who owns what. Blair Hills has a beautification project going, part of which includes Jefferson Blvd. The Chair requested that in terms of the report on

the dog park, on a comment made that it would be temporary, she would like to have examined what temporary means on the report, especially since the issue of parking has come up.

XI. County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation Report

Jim Park gave his report on the Finley Fee; they've been working with Laigne Homes (who have been very cooperative) within the last couple weeks, and have finished final grading on the Finley Fee and will be hydro-seeding on Monday to finish the vegetation component.

The Chair asked if the huge berm located on the Finley Fee project that was created on the concrete area. Is there any idea what the capacity is, say if there is 4" of rain, or if any other issues were foreseeable?

Mr. Park answered it is safe with 4" of rain over long a period of time.

Park Superintendent Lori Bennett passed out their calendar of events and stated she and Ranger Raducanu are hoping by next month to have a joint agency newsletter. They are excited about the event on February 27, Los Angeles Unified School District's site magnet program, which will have 95 school students teaching about 600 elementary school students in the park throughout the day. She also stated they are excited about the earth day event in April.

XII. Board Member Comments

Member Bentley stated he was looking forward to working with the newly elected chair.

Member Nichols stated while listening to a radio talk show, the host, while interviewing the author of a new book, a Sierra Club picture book, featuring beautiful natural spots, people called in to nominate the places they think are special and wonderful in Southern California. A caller nominated Baldwin Hills, saying it was the most special place for the views. Member Nichols stated that both the author and the host of the show agreed. She suggested we try to obtain a copy of the tape.

The Chair wanted to capitalize on what had been said and stated the Board should take up the various invitations and take a field trip of the park sites. The Chair asked Mr. McNeill if he could put together a site tour. Mr. McNeill suggested March 1.

Member Bronowski thought it would be a great idea to do a tour that is narrated with the master plan. Last Friday, she attended a planning conference in which one of the panels was of the stewardship of open space. Member Bronowski said that this is a very timely theme right now, especially in Southern California, where you read about different places in the State where land is being dedicated or close to dedication. It's a very fragmented process to actually make sure this land is taken care of. What she got from the panel is how great it is that the Baldwin Hills had already planned for it this way. There are lots of areas at stake that don't have that connectivity.

Member Porini stated that she took a sub private tour at the last meeting, and it was very spectacular. She likes the idea of having someone who can overlay the plan that can help us understand where things are going. It also helps identify the appraised pieces of property that

are being discussed. Member Porini then congratulated the newly elected chair and vice-chair on their appointment.

Member Treanor stated that in dealing with multiple agencies, feel it's important or appropriate to say there are lots of people involved in the operations here and are working together. The appropriate statement to make is the state of this union is good and he is really proud to say that people in that union are working hard to understand each other and are working with all the different priorities.

Member Amir congratulated the newly elected chair and vice-chair on their appointments and wanted to offer to an educational kiosk or booth to provide information on earth day. Suggested that maybe other agencies could provide some educational items too.

The Chair asked if she was suggesting the conservancy have a kiosk.

Member Amir answered yes, if it was possible.

Mr. McNeill responded he would work with her on having one jointly with a display set up.

The Chair suggested that it would be a good idea to have it set up with information, which reflects the inter-agency cooperation, which Member Treanor spoke about.

Member Rogers spoke earlier on the comment made about stewardship, which loosely means entrusting of something that doesn't belong to you. He agreed with the concept he believed Member Amir is offering, that we really need to teach our kids that we are stewards; this doesn't belong to us, but to everyone.

XIII. Public Comments on Items Not on The Agenda:

Carrie Chassin wanted to know how were the budget cuts now affecting the involvement of park personnel.

Member Treanor responded their agency have been dealing with being under funded for years, and know how to do it really well. As an example, when they first started here in Baldwin Hills, there had been no staffing assigned for this new acquisition, they patched it in and are now a little better off, as they had funds in position for this location. There may be some consequences in the larger picture in terms of services they are able to provide throughout their department. His goal is to spread those so that they are not seen. Member Treanor hoped, in this location, they can take advantage of the partnership, to make any shortages less visible.

Steve Leon, Ladera Heights Civic Association and homeowner, extended an invitation to the board to see the views of the west side of the park, which are outstanding, from his backyard.

Mim Shapiro, Ballona Creek Renaissance Program, stated their group would like space to participate in the earth day event. She invited the board to the Ballona Creek Watershed Task Force meetings, held the second Wednesday of each month at 1:30. The next meeting is February 13.

Kent Fisher gave some recommendations about the golf course being built on the dam site.

At this time, the Chair excused the public for the closed meeting.

XIV. Closed Session:

Motion made to close meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The regular meeting reopened at 12:10 p.m. The Chair advised that in the closed session to discuss acquisition status, a motion was made to change the time and date of the next scheduled public from **March 1, 2002 at 10:00 a.m.**, to **March 8, 2002 @ 8:30 a.m.** Motion carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30.

Approved:

Mary Ann Greene
Chairperson