

Kentfield Planning Advisory Board

P.O. Box 304, Kentfield, California 94914

Minutes of December 11, 2019

Anne Petersen called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. in the COM Academic Center, Room 105. Other board members who were also present: Bitsa Freeman, John Mann, Ross McKenna, Neil Park, Pam Scott. Guests Present: County Parks Operations Supervisor Jim Chayka, AvidGreen Landscaping CEO Scott Sherman, Supervisor Rice aide Nancy Vernon, CDA Senior Planner Michelle Levenson, Greenbrae resident Cindy Winter.

October 9, 2019 Minutes. M/S (John/Bitsa) and unanimously passed to approve October 9 minutes as distributed.

Proposal for CSA Funds

Jim Chayka provided an update on current status of CSA 17 funds. The balance will be \$3,942,304 after completion of the new bridge and pathway in Hal Brown Park.

Jim also described a request for use of some of the CSA 17 funds toward two projects that were approved as part of the Sir Francis Drake Blvd roadway rehabilitation but for which money was not available in the grant for the roadway work. These are: 1) pathway/sidewalk widening on north side of SFD from Eliseo to El Portal, and 2) landscape refurbishment in SFD medians west of 101 from Larkspur town line to College Avenue.

The sidewalk widening would include the following: remove the old guard rail and install a new steel fence, widen the pathway 1.5 feet by removing vegetation on the inside edge and replanting a more narrow buffer. This could make the walkway up to 7 or 8 feet wide in some stretches. The widening, and strengthened fencing between the sidewalk and the street, would serve a recreational purpose but also improve the walkway's safety for schoolchildren, many of whom walk or ride bicycles from Greenbrae to Bacich School along this route.

Landscaping work in currently planted median areas would replace some soils, improve irrigation to more closely match plant need, add mulch, reduce water usage, and improve some sight distance for drivers. Scott Sherman, who is working on landscaping for the SFD project, reviewed some options for updating median planting to also improve visual appeal and habitat value. Pam Scott suggested the new median construction along the Miracle Mile in San Anselmo be studied for alternative environmental solutions. Board members agreed they would favor improving the appearance and environmental value of the medians.

Estimated cost of the pathway work: \$1.2 million, and of the median refurbishing: \$700,000. The SFD Blvd roadway work begins in mid-2020 and is expected to be a two-year process, so median refurbishment would be after that is completed.

Recommendation. M/S (John/Neil) and unanimously passed to approve in concept that the proposed pathway and median projects be funded with CSA 17 funds, with a provision that the KPAB continues to be updated on planning and cost changes, and kept informed as the projects are developed.

Changes in County Noticing Procedures for Design Review Boards

County Senior Planner Michelle Levenson reviewed the revised noticing requirements for design review boards, a category under which the KPAB falls. The changes must be made due to provision of the California Government Code which mandates a 10-day notice rule for design review board hearings. Although the KPAB – Kentfield Planning Advisory Board, along with county design review boards, render recommendations that are only advisory, does not mean that its meetings are not public hearings. Thus, the 72-hour notice period that the KPAB, and others, have operating under, is no longer permitted. In order to comply with the 10-day notice, the CDA will now require agendas to be submitted two weeks in advance of a meeting.

Board members observed that the extended notice time means that project plans transmitted to the KPAB within the 2-week period before a meeting would no longer be able to be heard on that agenda, and that the following meeting – two weeks later - could be too late to meet CDA's deadline for response to the applicant. Michelle acknowledged that the system could raise a bar to the advisory groups' ability to contribute completeness comments, and they may receive some projects following completeness to comment only on merits. Of all the applications received by the CDA, she noted, only a portion qualify for local community design review, so this new system would only affect that group of planning projects; e.g. variance requests always go to the local design review boards, but many FAR and other projects are not of a magnitude that qualifies them for community hearings.

To help address this situation she said that CDA will hire someone who would shepherd project information as quickly as possible after applications are received at the CDA to the advisory boards, take meeting minutes for all the boards, and try to expedite the process to the extent possible to allow for design review board participation. Some changes will be made to the applicant checklist to require materials, such as 3-D renderings and color samples, be provided early to go to the advisory boards.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. The next scheduled meeting is January 8, 2020 and the agenda for that meeting is due by December 20, 2019.

Minutes: Ann Thomas