



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2014**

PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

1. Call to Order

Chair Nydam called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Olson, Nydam, Koblin, Berkuta, and Kamar all present.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Comments from the Public.

Chair Nydam stated that this portion of the meeting is for comments that are for items that are not on the Commission's agenda. Items that are on the agenda including off-leash dogs, access to the Cross-Town Trail, or Recognition Plaques will be addressed when they come up on the agenda.

Marjorie Cates addressed the Commission on horseback riders that use the trail to cross the 210 freeway. She stated that there are signs present requesting that riders get off and walk their horses. She suggested that a mounting block at each end would be helpful to mount and dismount the horse.

5. Approval of December 11, 2013 Regular Meeting Minutes.

M/S/C: Commissioner Olson/Koblin to approve the December 11, 2013 Commission Regular Meeting Minutes. 4-0-1 (Berkuta abstaining).

NEW BUSINESS

6. Discussion of Off-Leash Dogs along the Cross Town Trail.

City Staff Liaison Alameda provided the Commission a background on the issue, which began as a request made by a group of residents at the November 18, 2013 City Council meeting. The City Council referred the issue for discussion to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

City staff informed the Commission that the land underlying the Cross Town Trail belongs to Southern California Edison (SCE). SCE does not allow for off-leash dogs along their rights-of-way and off-leash dogs would be in violation of the City's municipal code. City staff did contact SCE prior to the meeting to determine if any smaller portion of

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an Edison right-of-way within the City could be used for a “dog park”. Edison stated that even a smaller controlled area would not be allowed on their right-of-way.

Dale Ball, the resident that has led the effort, addressed the Commission. Ms. Ball pointed out that there already exists a separate area fenced off from the remainder of the Cross Town Trail along the western perimeter of the property from Indiana to Olive. She suggested that this could be designated an off-leash zone, with minimal gate and fencing modifications.

Stephen Ball requested that residents be provided the opportunity to contact Edison to further discuss the issue in light of the number of signatures that they have on their petition.

Mary Barrie addressed the Commission expressing concerns that pushing for off-leash dogs along the trail could jeopardize the status of the trail. She would love to see a dog park in the City, but believes that dogs need to be on-leash along the trails.

Nancy Fairchild supports Stephen Ball’s proposal that the residents be allowed to discuss the potential for having dogs off-leash with Edison.

Bill Pounders supports the allowance of dogs off-leash along the Cross Town Trail.

Glenn Shindler opposes the use of City funds to create a dog park or off-leash zone. He is also opposed to the off-leash zone, as there is a lot of dog waste along the Cross Town Trail.

Ellen Leyda supports the allowance of dogs off-leash along the Cross Town Trail.

Caroline Craven, President of the LCF Trails Council, walks her dogs on-leash along the trail and has had her on-leash dogs attacked by off-leash dogs. As a multi-use trail, she opposes the allowance of off-leash dogs along the Cross Town Trail.

Lisa Schwo supports the allowance of dogs off-leash along the Cross Town Trail.

Jennifer Whilt supports the allowance of dogs off-leash along the Cross Town Trail.

James Kropff supports the allowance of dogs off-leash along the Cross Town Trail and requests that the residents are allowed to contact SCE.

Lisa Novick supports the allowance of dogs off-leash along the Cross Town Trail.

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Sab Kim opposes the allowance of off-leash dogs along the Cross Town Trail. He runs the Cross Town Trail and has been bitten once on his morning run on the Cross Town Trail. He also sees a lot of dog waste along the Cross Town Trail.

Deborah Pitts supports the allowance of dogs off-leash along the Cross Town Trail. She is opposed to a dog park, as she views dog parks as disease carriers.

Michael Cahill supports the allowance of dogs off-leash along the Cross Town Trail. Believes that the City would have minimal liability with dogs off-leash.

Frank Motia opposes off-leash dogs along the Cross Town Trail. He walks his dog on-leash and has had his dog attacked twice on the Cross Town Trail.

Bonnie Marshall opposes off-leash dogs along the Cross Town Trail. She was been attacked by an off-leash dog on the Cross Town Trail, she received medical treatment due to the attack.

Debbie Tinkham opposes off-leash dogs along the Cross Town Trail. She views that off-leash dogs will conflict with the other uses of the multi-use trails.

Tanya Nielsen supports the allowance of dogs off-leash along the Cross Town Trail.

Carol Wolper supports the allowance of dogs off-leash along the Cross Town Trail.

Marjorie Cates opposes off-leash dogs along the Cross Town Trail. She sees a lot of dog waste along the trail.

Ralph Beltran, of the County of Los Angeles, addressed the Commission regarding off-leash dogs along the Cross Town Trail. He said that the County doesn't allow dogs off-leash anywhere along their trails. He said that if Edison observes that the trail isn't being in its intended use that there will be problems and the agreement can be terminated. He said that he has recently encouraged the Sheriff's Department to operate a "sting operation" on off leash dogs on the Cross Town Trail.

Chair Nydam closed the public comment period on the Agenda Item and requested input from the Commission.

Commissioner Koblin stated while he doesn't see Edison as being flexible on the issue, he would like to see the residents that have

presented a petition with 137 signatures to have the opportunity to approach Edison.

Staff Liaison Alameda stated that from the Commission's discussion, he could forward the petition to Southern California Edison and put a small committee of no more than four (4) residents led by Dale Ball in touch with Edison to discuss making a portion of the Cross Town Trail an "off-leash zone". The primary zone under consideration would be the existing fenced-off flood control access area.

However, Alameda stated that should Edison approve this usage that this would not automatically mean that the City would also approve of this usage. He said there is a liability issue still; the City has had two children bitten in the last two years on the Cornishon Athletic Field by off-leash dogs. He stated that while a few speakers mentioned that the City would have no liability that the City could always be sued and has had to pay settlements in the past in cases where there was also no liability.

M/S/C: Commissioner Nydam/Koblin to uphold the City's leash law along the Cross Town Trail. Request that City staff forward the resident petition to SCE and put the resident led committee in contact with a representative from SCE to discuss the future potential for an off-leash zone along the Cross Town Trail. 5-0.

7. Discussion of Access to the Cross Town Trail.

Staff liaison Alameda provided a background on access to the Cross Town Trail, an issue that arose in November 2013. It was called to the attention of the County of Los Angeles and later the City that the existing gate at the terminus of Flanders along the eastern side of the Cross Town Trail was an "unpermitted" access point. The fence had been cut and a residential style yard gate was installed at the location.

The County removed the access point in early December 2013 (although the City requested that no action be taken until the Commission's January meeting). Alameda pointed out that with the removal of this access point it would now require adjacent residents to likely need to drive to access the Cross Town Trail, given the long distances to the other access points at Indiana or Olive Lane.

Staff Liaison requests the Commission's input on the issue of access, as should the City wish to reinstall the City would need to make a formal request of the County of Los Angeles.

Commissioner Olson stated that he visited the area and there are multiple "No Trespassing" signs posted on the fence. He wanted to know where those originated from. Alameda stated that they were not posted by the City and he is unsure who posted those signs. Olson

asked if there are residents opposed to the opening. Alameda stated that he has only received contact from two residents opposed to having access at that location. The concerns expressed were teens loitering and off-leash dogs. Alameda stated that he has asked that the Sheriff's Department patrol the area.

Taylor Carbonetti addressed the Commission she said that she has lived near the Flanders access for 15 years and used it on an almost daily basis. Currently, she has to walk an inordinate distance to access the trail with the access taken away, she would like to see it reinstated. Ms. Carbonetti stated that having teenagers herself, that a fence will not stop their access, but it will stop her access to the trail.

Caroline Craven of the Trails Council stated that over 40 years ago Carmita Frost who used the Indiana Trail came across new gate installed by Edison adjacent to Armstrong Nursery and the effort to remove the gate was the start of the La Cañada Flintridge Trails Council and she was the first President of the Trails Council. Ms. Craven stated that the access point is an access point in the Trails Master plan. She also stated that the trail is used by school children to get to La Cañada Elementary via the trail rather than the streets.

Annette O'Brien requests that the Flanders access be reopened permanently.

Glenn Shindler would like to see the access at Flanders restored and said that the access there could be important for emergency purposes.

Melinda Thompson lives directly next to the Flanders access easement (on the north side of the street). Melinda and her husband Bill wish to see the access restored. She has lived at the location for 35 years and there has always been access that the location, first via two large separated areas in the fence and 12 years ago a gate that was installed. She said that the complaints made for the removal of the access are separate issues that require enforcement.

Mary Barrie stated that the Flanders access point is listed within the Trails Master Plan and she believes that the County should respect the City's Trails Master Plan. Also, she said that access is one of the top issues for the Trails Council.

Ralph Beltran of the County of Los Angeles stated that he received a phone call about the access at Flanders complaining about dogs off leash. When he looked at the site he said it was clear the gate installed was not something that Edison would install, as it was residential material. The access is not recorded with the County trail map system. He called Edison and they left the decision up to the County on how to address the issue. He states under the conditions with Edison that the County is to keep the fencing in repair and this gate was a "bootleg"

modification, so it had to be removed. He also installed the No Trespassing signage at that time.

Commissioner Koblin asked if the City of La Cañada Flintridge requested that the access be reinstalled would the County install the access. Beltran said that if the City made the request that the process would have to go through the County's Trails Planning staff.

M/S/C: Commissioner Nydam/Koblin to request that City staff contact Southern California Edison as soon as possible to request the reinstallation of access to the Cross Town Trail at Flanders Road. 5-0.

8. Adoption of Policy for the Installation of Recognition Plaques along Trails within the City of La Cañada Flintridge.

City Staff provided an update on the Recognition Plaques policy that the Commission has been working in since September 2013. He went through the general guidelines within the policy. One devolvement he noted is since the last Commission meeting that Mayor Laura Olhasso requested that City staff develop a list of volunteer projects, so that the City can better drive the process on the selection of volunteer projects.

Randy Strapazon stated that the policy should be named "Policy for Recognition Plaques for Projects Completed within the City of La Cañada Flintridge", removing the word "trails" from the policy. The Trails Council doesn't support public service projects along the trails. She also favors the removal of all plaques to the centralized location, as to not favor the boys that have completed projects in the past.

Marrie Barrie addressed the Commission that she would like to see a plaque honoring the Trails Council volunteers at the top of the new centralized monument.

Frank Motia addressed the Commission that as a Troop 507 parent that the projects are very labor intensive. He doesn't believe that the projects need plaques, but he would like the children to have the ability to do projects if they wish.

Michael Devine of Troop 507 addressed the Commission stating that the project list would be very helpful. He also would like to state that the trail projects that are completed are done in a professional manner and are supervised by the County.

Ralph Beltran of the County of Los Angeles addressed the Commission that the projects are done in a professional manner that the County supervises. With respect to the plaques installed by the County along Commonwealth he feels are a benefit to the community and the Boy Scout Troops have the right to install plaques along the trails. He

stated that it sends a bad message to the youth if plaques are not allowed for trail projects.

Commissioner Olson would support the policy with the exception of the complete removal of the plaques. He supports the prior discussion to only relocate to the trail head area.

M/S/C: Commissioner Nydam/Koblin to adopt the Policy for the Installation of Recognition Plaques along Trails within the City of La Cañada Flintridge incorporating that existing plaques will only be relocated to a trail head areas, rather than relocated to the centralized location. 5-0.

9. Discussion of 2014 Music-in-the-Park Summer Concert Series.

The Commission would like to see David Sagal, Pacific Coast Highway (PCH), Past Action Heroes, and the Neil Diamond Tribute all return. They would like to see the Neil Diamond tribute as the final concert of the summer again and have it extended to two and half hour show, as was done in 2013. Furthermore, they would like to add a surf rock band to the series.

CONCLUDING BUSINESS

11. Staff Comments

None.

12. Items for Future Agendas

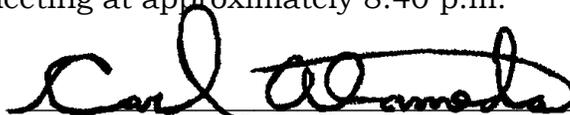
Commissioner Olson would like to have a future discussion regarding the installation of a drinking fountain on the FIS Lower Field.

13. Comments from the Commission

Commissioner Olson stated that the access to the restrooms at the Community Center of La Cañada Flintridge is an excellent addition for the community.

ADJOURN

Chair Nydam adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:40 p.m.



**Carl Alameda, Senior Management Analyst II
(Staff Liaison to the Commission)**