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McKay Community Forest Advisory Group

MEETING MINUTES

February 11, 2016

Redwood Acres, Eureka, 4:00 pm

Advisory Group members attending:

Berit Meyer, Redwood Empire Endurance Riders

Bruce Roessler, Eureka Open Space Committee

Craig Benson, Redwood Community Action Agency, Eureka Open Space Committee

Emily Sinkhorn, Redwood Community Action Agency

Dan Ehresman, Northcoast Regional Land Trust

Marlene Allen, Six Rivers Running Club & Redwood Empire Endurance Riders

Nick Simpson, CDFW Timber Review

Pete Johnson, Timber Heritage Association & Cutten resident

Richard Yeider, Greater Eureka Area Municipal Advisory Committee

Yana Valochovic, University of California Cooperative Extension – Humboldt-Del Norte & Forest Advisor,
Arcata Community Forest management committee, Humboldt County Forestry Review
Committee

Staff attending:

Hank Seemann, Deputy Director, Humboldt County Public Works

Robert Vogt, Senior Environmental Analyst, Humboldt County Public Works

Michael Legrand, Assistant Engineer, Humboldt County Public Works

Michael Orr, Humboldt County Parks

Denise Monday, Environmental Analyst, Humboldt County Public Works

Members of the public attending:

Brian Jennings, Humboldt State University Student

Dave Creech, Eureka Resident

Tom Phillips, Humboldt Trails Council

Agenda Item 1: Introductions

The meeting started at 4:03 pm. Introductions were made around the room.

Agenda Item 2: Brief Information Updates

A. Grant Applications:

Hank Seemann gave a brief update regarding the status of grant applications. The application submitted in March 2015 to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife 2015 Fisheries Restoration Grant Program for road decommissioning and upgrades was not funded. The application submitted to the State Natural Resources Agency's Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program in July 2015 for funds to support the Phase II acquisition was not awarded (however, the project was placed on the substitution list in the event that funds become available). A grant in the

amount of \$400,000 was awarded in August 2014 by the US Forest Service for the Phase II acquisition, however this grant is contingent on achieving a minimum of 1:1 matching funds. The County will work with The Trust for Public Land to explore other funding opportunities.

In December 2015 the County applied to the State Department of Housing and Community Development for park improvement funds, based on the County's record of supporting affordable housing and implementation of the Housing Element. There is a strong possibility that we will be awarded at least \$163,500 for facilities improvement. The project described in the application was for parking improvements on Northridge Road.

B. Off-site Access Points:

Hank Seemann discussed the slides previewing the near-term opportunities for access points. There are two on the east and south side of Redwood Acres, and there hasn't been any new activity related to those locations. The access point on Harris Street near Hubbard Lane provides frontage for on-street parking. The County is prioritizing trail development and pedestrian improvements in that area. Potential improvements along Harris Street include high visibility crosswalks, rectangular rapid flashing beacons, curb extensions (bulb-outs), and additional warning signs.

The County is also looking at partnering with Hospice of Humboldt for an access point at their new facility. There would need to be an easement and it is still in the development stage.

The east end of Manzanita is a possible access point. The County has expressed interest to Green Diamond and Kramer Properties in integrating parking and access as development proceeds on adjacent parcels.

Kramer Properties, which owns McKay Ranch (80-acres around Redwoods Fields), submitted a tentative map for future residential and commercial development. The County has provided initial feedback on desired trail alignments and access points. The County expects to meet with them soon to discuss formalizing access in conjunction with the phasing of the project.

County staff has researched a 1.9 acre parcel for sale at the east end of Home Drive, which is not directly adjacent to Phase I, but is adjacent to the proposed Phase II. The topography of the parcel is extremely sloped, we will continue to explore this option, though not a perfect location.

C. Trail Plan:

The Committee members gave good feedback on the Administrative Trail Plan Draft, distributed in September 2015. The revised draft with the input should be completed by the end of March. **Hank Seemann** asked if the advisory group would like to review the revised draft before releasing it to the public. There will also be outreach to the residents at Northridge in March to get feedback prior to releasing the document. The response from the committee was that the group has had ample time to review the draft.

ACTION ITEM: **Hank Seemann** will schedule a report to the Board of Supervisors and send out the Trail Plan for public review at the end of March or early April.

Agenda Item 3: Northridge Road Parking Options

A. Feedback on revised design layouts:

Hank Seemann displayed three options for development of the Northridge Parking area. **Chris Woodworth**, a retired Public Works Engineer worked on the design options.

Option 1 is a single entrance, in and out, with approximately 10 vehicle parking spots and 3-4 horse trailer parking spots.

Option 2, the design left a vegetation area in the middle, providing options for tables and other amenities. This option has fewer disturbances.

Option 3, has a uni-directional flow, a longer road with ingress and egress. One benefit is this option can have a narrower road.

Yana Valochovic commented that she prefers option 3, it feels more forested and might deter people from just hanging out.

Marlene Allen commented that the Arcata Forest had the design with the circulating parking lot and they had people continually driving in and out, driving fast, joy riding with no intention of parking.

There was a question from **Pete Johnston** regarding gates. **Hank Seemann** mentioned that the County still desires a gate, but the logistics for opening and closing are a challenge at this point. **Bruce Roessler** mentioned that the Sequoia Park gate is always closed, to deter overnight camping, unless there is a specific request. **Craig Benson** stated that the new Eureka dog park does not have a gate and there hasn't been a problem with overnight camping or dumping of trash, maybe because it is more remote, like the Northridge area. It might be good to try without the gate and be ready to install if needed.

Richard Yeider mentioned that two driveways add vehicle usage in two locations as opposed to one, which may make a difference to the neighbors.

Marlene Allen questioned whether the Humboldt County Fire District review the plans and have any input on the plans.

ACTION ITEMS: County to review options for emergency response. Review topography, drainage, and the mature stand of timber to see if we can maximize the parking space of option 3, possibly create a phase 2 with low impact parking amongst the trees. Review ground conditions to see if the road can be widened on option 1 and 2 near the entrance.

Agenda Item 4: Bridge Design Evaluation

A. Identify locations and types of use:

Hank Seemann discussed the map showing locations where bridges are required. There is a need for a short-span bridge off of Harris Street and one off the east side of Redwood Acres, both are multi-use trails. For the Mid-McKay area, southeast of Winship school, there are three locations, one non-motorized crossing and two for motorized crossing. At the south end, west of Ryan Creek there are two locations for bridges for the multiuse trail. Pictures of a variety of existing bridges at locations around the County were shown.

B. Group discussion regarding advantages and disadvantages of different bridge construction materials:

The group discussed their preference and material issues.

All Wood Option: **Emily Sinkhorn** commented that timber bridges in the forest are desirable. **Marlene Allen** commented that wood can get slippery, but is best for horse use.

Concrete and Steel Option: **Marlene Allen** stated that horses do not mind the concrete material. It's nice to have perpendicular ridges in the concrete for horses not to slip. She noted that it's desirable for horses not to be able to see through the bridge deck.

Fiberglass: **Craig Benson** mentioned that the fiberglass on the Widow White Creek portion of the Hammond Trail developed "fiber blooming" and had to be painted (the bridge manufacturer covered the cost). Fiberglass bridges come as a kit, and can be decked with wood. **Marlene Allen** stated that fiberglass bridges have a tendency to bounce which horses do not like.

Rail Car: **Craig Benson** mentioned that railroad cars are harder to find now and expensive to move. **Marlene Allen** stated that Trex decking is least desirable for horse use.

- C. Desired outcome: Feedback on bridge design:
The wooden bridges seem to hold up and be desirable for hiking, aesthetics, and horse compatibility. Constructability of wood is desirable, concrete can be hard to build in remote areas.

Agenda Item 5: Proposed single-use, one-way mountain bike trail in Mid-McKay Loop

- A. Identify location and attributes of a proposed trail (based on preliminary evaluation):
Bob Vogt reviewed maps of the proposed single-use mountain bike trail in Mid-McKay. He has been meeting with mountain bike community members to find the best locations to create trails that maximize the length of travel and time. The plan proposes a single-use, one-way bike loop.
- B. Group discussion regarding advantages and disadvantages of single-use/one-way trails:
There was discussion regarding issues of other users, such as hikers, utilizing the single-use bike trail and one-way might be an issue.
- C. Desired outcome: Feedback on proposed mountain bike trail:
The terrain has good flow and will be good for children on bikes. There was consensus among the committee that they like a single-use bike loop close to a multi-use trail. There was discussion that making the switch back out to the multiuse trail, a one-way out, for bikers, would not be as attractive to hikers. Also, signage would help reduce issues with hikers on the single-use trail and one-way issues.

Agenda Item 6: Review timelines and action items

Hank Seemann proposed aiming for meeting every two months. The next meeting will be held April 7th at 4:00 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 5:12 pm.