

**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
MINUTES – January 23, 2018**

Roll Call – The meeting called to order at 7:01 p.m. Present were Commissioners: Chair William Kelly, Vice-Chair Al Benzoni, Kay Findley, and Nancy Wilms. Commission Lieder arrived late. Absent were Council Liaison Dr. Schneider and Commissioner Noah Puni. Staff present: Rafael Casillas, Acting Public Works Director.

Minutes – Minutes for November 28, 2017, approved with minor corrections (Benzoni, Findley; Ayes: All, Nays: 0).

NO PUBLIC COMMENT

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. **Tree Removal Permit Hearing 1750 Hanscom Dr. (Staff)** – Chair Kelly requested Rafael Casillas of Public Works to provide some background information as it relates to the tree removal. Staff explained that Mr. Bakhtiari submitted a tree removal application for the removal of three non-native Pine trees. The arborist recommended removal of all three trees. The City received one letter of opposition. The applicant for this project was not present.

Commissioner Wilms inquired if anyone inspected the trees for evidence of boring. Mr. Casillas explained inspection was conducted and no evidence of boring found.

Chair Kelly inquired if there was any follow up to the claim made by Mr. Bakhtiari (applicant) about the contaminated soil, which he believes caused damage to the trees. Staff responded that he was not aware of any issues with contaminated soil.

Commissioner Benzoni asked if this permit request is part of a construction permit. Staff responded that this permit is a standalone permit.

Commission Findley commented that there was concern regarding the pine trees because pictures showed the trees were green and now the trees are dead.

Public Comment – Janet Ferguson stated in April 2017, she presented to the City Council samples of the soil, which she claims the applicant contaminated with gasoline and photos of the holes that he drilled in the pine trees. She claims the applicant/owner does not want to follow the rules of the City and all of the trees on the property were healthy. She claims he killed all of the trees on the property. She stated during the Christmas holiday he installed a fence surrounding the property in order to have his contractors work at the rear of the property, with no posted permits for the work. She stated the pine trees did not die of natural causes and if someone intentionally kills trees penalties are required.

Chair Kelly asked if staff tested the soil. Staff responded the City would not do that. Chair Kelly asked if the Department of Toxic Substances Control was contacted, due to the owner's comment

of soil contamination. Staff stated no. Chair Kelly stated the Commission requested staff to investigate this issue and bring it back to the Commission. The Commission requested photos of evidence from Ms. Ferguson.

A motion was made to continue this item to the next meeting. (Benzoni, Wilms; Ayes: All, Nays: 0)

Chair Kelly requested to reorganize the agenda to hear Item No. 3 Volunteer Tree Planting and Resident Education Efforts (Kelly) prior to Item No. 2 Cool Roofs (Benzoni).

- 3. Volunteer Tree Planting and Resident Education Efforts (Kelly)** – Chair Kelly gave a brief overview of this item. He stated he wrote an article for the South Pasadena Review that discussed the state of the City’s Urban Forestry.

Public Comment – Members of South Pasadena Beautiful (SPB) discussed the training of the residents on how to water their trees. They are fully committed to support the City with this training and applying for grants, due to their non-profit status. Chair Kelly explained that Sustainable Claremont plants 50 trees in a weekend over several times a year and they have volunteers and Boy Scouts assist with the planting. Chair Kelly stated his understanding is the City would provide funding to SPB, which would have a paid staff person and SPB would outreach and provide volunteers.

Discussion ensued regarding the Sustainable Claremont program, the tree drive sponsored by SPB, funding for trees, education and outreach to residents.

Members of SPB announced that they are proposing an Earth and Arbor Day poster contest and celebration. SPB suggested the NREC sponsor the poster contest and at the Earth Day Event, we can handout certificates to the kids and this helps the overall effort of bringing awareness to the Community.

Discussion ensued regarding the non-profit program, planting of trees, Earth Day celebration and funding for the purchase of trees.

Chair Kelly stated he would prepare a recommendation to the City Council to provide money for tree planting.

A motion was made to recommend entering into a sponsorship for public education, for installation of a banner and for the City to hold a poster contest for the elementary school students and awards will be provided. (Kelly, Wilms Ayes; All, Nays: 0)

- 2. Cool Roofs (Benzoni)** – Commissioner Benzoni gave a brief overview of this item. He would like to have a conversation with the Building Department regarding roofing permits, which require material certification. Mr. Casillas stated that it is part of the Building Energy Efficiency Program Title 24 process. As the standards change, all roofing material has to meet a certain standard.

Chair Kelly requested to have someone from the Planning & Building Department to give a presentation or provide a report on the roofing permit process.

4. **Water Conservation Programs and Drought Update (Casillas)** – Mr. Casillas said the water use reduction of 22.28% in the most recent month.

INFORMATIONAL ONLY

5. **Urban Forest Update (Courdy)** – No update.
6. **Upcoming Events** – Too Toxic to Trash, HHW Event: February 3, 2018 (Rosemead)

Chair Communications – None at this time.

Commission Communications – Commissioner Wilms – She advised there is a Golf Sub Committee meeting in January and another in February. The Clubhouse is still a disaster and remains so. The Mayor and Councilmember Cacciotti attended the meeting and there is no funding for the repairs of the restrooms. There is a desperate need to update the bathrooms and the kitchen. The overall revenue for the Golf Course in 2011-2012 was \$280,000 and last year was \$108,000.

Commissioner Benzoni – He commented on the General Plan Update and he observed that there is no distinct overall effort/plan to increase albedo or minimize heat island, there are some contributors noted. He stated he did not see a simple energy conversation encouragement effort noted in the General Plan.

Staff Liaison Communications – None at this time.

Council Liaison Communications – None at this time.

Adjournment – Commissioner Leider motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m., Commissioner Wilms seconded. Ayes: All, Nays: None.

NEXT MEETING – The next meeting of the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission will be held on February 27 at 7:00 p.m.


William Kelly, Chair