

**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION – REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES – February 23, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:02p.m. Present at the time of roll call were: Commissioner Rona Bortz, Commissioner Michelle Hammond, Commissioner Casey Law, Commissioner William Kelly, Commissioner Michael Siegel, Vice Chair Madeline Di Giorgi, Chair Amy Jones, and Mayor Pro Tem Michael Cacciotti. Staff present: Anteneh Tesfaye, Acting Deputy Public Works Director; Garret Crawford, Acting Deputy Public Work Director; Reyna Salazar-Martin, Public Works Management Assistant; Arpy Kasparian, Water Conservation and Sustainability Analyst.

1) GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Barbara Eisenstein, Resident – Proposed to add a stream bed in the Nature Park.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

2) Virtual Earth Day

Staff and commissioners discussed activities for a virtual Earth Day celebration. Commissioners agreed to promote the City's current environmental programs and assist with promoting the events held by local groups such as South Pasadena Beautiful and the Library. Commissioners will contribute to a social media/blog entry that highlights what sustainable/environmental programs they love in the City.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments

ACTION ITEMS:

3) Recommendation of Tree Ordinance

Acting Deputy Public Works Director, Garret Crawford presented this item and reviewed recommended updates to the tree code including an adjustment in language pertaining to the financial hardship allowance and the removal of harsher penalties for developers for equality purposes. Crawford added that penalties for intentional violations by developers would result in a 5 year ban from violators developing in the City.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER BORTZ, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER KELLY, MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7-0 TO APPROVE

4) Approval of Minutes- Meeting of January 23, 2021

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments

MOTION BY VICE CHAIR DI GIORGI, SECOND BY COMMISSIONER HAMOND, MOTION CARRIED 6-0, COMMISSIONER KELLY ABSTAINED, TO APPROVE MINUTES

COMMUNICATIONS:

5) City Council Liaison Communications

Mayor Pro Tem M. Cacciotti discussed his actions over the past several weeks including contacting HOA presidents and meeting with Arroyo Vista Elementary School to encourage them to switch to electric lawn equipment. Cacciotti suggested that NREC work with the school district to encourage them to convert to electric lawn equipment and requested to add prohibiting the use of gas-powered leaf blowers to the next NREC agenda.

6) Commissioner Communications

Commissioner Law shared the idea of supporting a tool lending library to assist with the cost of switching to electric powered leaf blowers. Commissioner Hammond shared future street improvements and discussed the possibility of establishing a second location for a community garden. She highlighted the great work of Compost Culture, a local youth group collecting and processing organic waste. Commissioner Siegel raised his concerns of the pushback for complete/open street projects and expressed his support for them. Commissioner Bortz supported the public comment regarding the updates to the Nature Park. Commissioner Kelly shared a seed giveaway event at the Farmer's Market and expressed support for restricting gas-powered lawn equipment. He warned about the lobbying from the gas utility industry to prevent restrictions on gas hook-ups in buildings. He asked that West Coast Arborist continue to provide mulch to the Nature Park and suggested that retractable shades be put up on Mission St. in conjunction with the complete streets projects. Vice-Chair Di Giorgi reiterated support for restricting gas-powered lawn equipment. Chair Jones agreed to include the restricting of gas-powered lawn equipment as an agenda item in the next meeting.

7) Staff Liaison Communications

Tesfaye expressed support for the commission. Kasparian explained that an ordinance restricting gas-powered lawn equipment was included in the Climate Action Plan and would therefore be implemented regardless in due time.

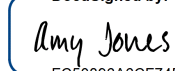
8) Upcoming Events

- LA County Smart Gardening Webinars – Various dates (<https://www.ladpw.org/epd/sg/webinars.cfm>)
- MWD Turf Removal + CA Native Landscape Webinars – Various dates (<https://greengardensgroup.com/turf-transformation>)

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Amy Jones adjourned the meeting at 8:53 p.m.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing minutes were adopted by the Natural Resources and Environmental Commission of the City of South Pasadena at a meeting held on March 23, 2021.



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Amy Jones, Chair