

***Del Mar Mesa Community Planning Board***  
***3525 Del Mar Heights Road, Box 246, San Diego, California 92130***  
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October 19, 2017

Herman Parker, Park and Recreation Director  
202 C Street  
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Mr. Parker:

The Del Mar Mesa Planning Board passed the following motion at its October 12, 2017 meeting regarding the re-naming of the new Del Mar Mesa Neighborhood Park and requests that you review the process by which this occurred.

Attached for reference is City Policy 600-33.

The Del Mar Mesa Community, as a semi-rural community has no park and recreation council of its own. Throughout the park planning process, the Del Mar Mesa Planning Board has served as advisor to the City Parks, Development Services and Planning Departments in the design and construction of the Del Mar Mesa Neighborhood Park. Despite establishing this precedent and receiving the Planning Group's assistance and time commitment to the process at that time, this board was left out of the park naming process.

History: The Del Mar Mesa Community Planning Board was formed in the mid 1990's in an effort to preserve the rural nature of this special place while still accommodating development. The Del Mar Mesa Preserve is home to highly valued endangered species, plant and animal. The Del Mar Mesa Community Planning Board is an extremely active board with a well-deserved reputation of negotiating complex projects—landmark compromises that city staff, wildlife agencies and developers have agreed to. Every single development project was poured over and negotiated with individual developer groups to ensure the best use of land with habitat impacts minimized. Thousands of volunteer hours, by about a dozen and a half residents and board members is a testament to what we have today.

Our park planning process underwent the same kind of process, except the project has extended to almost 20 years. During all that time, our board has been involved in EVERY step of our park planning---- siting, design, funding, permitting, and now construction. The board, in many instances, had to fight to keep the financing and construction momentum going.

So, despite our board being notified for years on every bit of City of San Diego minutiae, no matter how irrelevant to our community, and representatives from city parks and facilities regularly updating us on the progress of our park—— that very neighborhood park was named WITHOUT this board's knowledge or input. No other relevant community-wide groups were notified. Zero.

The Del Mar Mesa Planning Board and other involved members of the community “discovered” the new park name was officially approved at the board’s September 14, 2017 meeting. We were shocked.

As a result of this action, at the October 12, 2017 meeting of the Del Mar Mesa Planning Board, the following resolution was passed with a vote of 6 in favor, two against and three abstentions:

*The Del Mar Mesa Planning Board officially requests that the Deputy Chief Operating Office for Neighborhood Services Investigate the process by which the name of the Del Mar Mesa Community Park was approved, including whether there was proper public noticing of city park council meetings, why the groups most involved in the park planning, financing and implementation were not involved, and why the Parks Department failed to advise the petitioners to obtain Planning Board and other relevant community group support.*

*Had the meetings been properly noticed and the Planning Board consulted, all residents of our community’s opinion would have been considered and taken into account before a final decision was reached.*

This has caused a huge division in our lovely and until now, contented community. It is important that the city understands that “wide community support” was not obtained in the naming of this park, but driven by one neighborhood in close proximity to the new park. This park represents our community’s “crowning jewel” of all our planning efforts.

The community’s official planning board and the majority of the community should not have been left out of this important decision. We ask you to review and reconsider this process.

Thank you for your attention and follow up on this issue.

Respectfully,



Gary Levitt, Chair



Lisa Ross, Vice-Chair

cc : Kevin Faulkner, Mayor  
Barbara Bry, Councilmember District 1  
David Graham, Deputy Chief Operating Officer Neighborhood Services  
Kathy Ruiz, Deputy Parks Director, District 1  
Hillary Nemchik, City Council District 1 Representative  
Sara Toma, Community Planner  
Dan Monroe, Senior Planner  
Steve Hadley, District 1 Representative