

**City of San Diego
Park and Recreation Board
Minutes
Thursday, May 16, 2019**

“TO PROVIDE HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE, AND ENRICHING ENVIRONMENTS FOR ALL”

Meeting Held at:

Balboa Park Club Ballroom
2150 Pan American Road West
San Diego, CA 92101

Mailing Address is:

City of San Diego
202 C Street, MS 37C
San Diego, CA 92101

Members Present

Katherine Johnston, Chair
David Baron
Jon Becker
Marcella Bothwell
Ron Cho
Rick Gulley
Bobby Hughes
Noli Zosa

Members Absent

Nick Anastasopoulos
(excused)
Dennis Otsuji (excused)

City Staff Present

Andrew Field, Assistant Director
Mike Armenta
James Arnhart
Francis Barraza
Jane Boardman
Jody Cheung
Nancy Graham
Alex Hardy
Yovanna Lewis
Maricris Lumibao
John Ly
Debbie Marcotte
Betsy Miller
Robert Nicolson
Kevin Oliver
Mike Rodrigues
Heidi Vonblum
Becky Yzaguirre
Nancy Zamora-Hudson

CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order by Chair Johnston at 2:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF APRIL 18, 2019

MOTION:

MOVED/SECONDED

Ms. Bothwell/Mr. Becker

A motion was made by Ms. Bothwell and seconded by Mr. Becker to approve the April 18, 2019, Park and Recreation Board Meeting minutes. The motion was approved 7-0-1 and passed by the following vote; Yea: David Baron, Jon Becker, Marcella Bothwell, Ron, Cho, Rick Gulley, Bobby Hughes and Noli Zosa. Nay: (None). Recused: (None). Abstained: Chair Johnston. Not Present: Nick Anastasopoulos and Dennis Otsuji.

NON-ADOPTION AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT – None

This portion of the agenda provides an opportunity for members of the public to address the Board on items of interest within the jurisdiction of the Board. (Comments relating to items on today's Agenda are to be taken at the time the item is heard.) Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes and is not debatable unless part of an organized group presentation whereby time is ceded to main speaker.

REQUEST FOR ITEMS TO BE PLACED ON CONSENT AGENDA – None

The Chair may entertain a motion by any Board member to approve any agenda item as consent when no speaker slips have been submitted in favor or in opposition to the item. Items approved on consent are approved in accordance with staff's recommendation as reflected on the agenda and described in the Staff Report to the Park and Recreation Board, unless otherwise noted in the motion. At this time the Board may consider adoption of one or more items on the adoption agenda as "Consent" items.

REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCE – None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Community Parks I Area Committee –No Report

Community Parks II Area Committee – No Report

Balboa Park Committee

- Chair Johnston reported that the City had released a request for proposal for Inspiration Point. There was going to be a Public Workshop on July 11th. She invited others to attend.

Mission Trails Regional Task Force

- Ms. Bothwell reported that there had been three action items on the agenda at the last meeting. 1. Community Lakes cancelled the funds allocated for dredging and allowed them to be re-consumed; 2. West Sycamore Staging Area CIP had been approved; and 3. Old Mission Dam Preservation Project had funding.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – None

BOARD MEMBER'S COMMENTS – None

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Assistant Director Andy Field mentioned that the Department was ready for summer hiring. Applications were being accepted for Pool Guards and Recreation Leaders. The Mayor's Proposed Budget May Revisions Press Conference had been held in Balboa Park where he had announced restoration of Ranger Positions and restoration of Brush Management in the revised budget. The Budget Review Committee was scheduled to continue discussion of the budget on Friday, May 17, 2019. It would then go to the Budget Analyst and then before Council for formal approval by mid-June. The Department was very excited now that Parks and Recreation budget reductions were no longer on the table.

ACTION ITEMS

Chair Johnston requested that Action Item 102 be heard first to be respectful of community members' time.

102. Olive Street Park Acquisition and Development – General Development Plan

Presenters: Yovanna L. Lewis, Associate Engineer, Public Works
Department
Kurt Carlson, Principal, KTUA
Timothy Henderson, Associate, KTUA
Josef Gutierrez, Designer, KTUA

The presentation outlined the following:

- Background
- Discussion
- Project Description
- Requested Action

Speakers (7) – In favor

Nicole Murray Ramirez spoke in favor of Action Item 101, time ceded by Joseph Letzkus

Susan Jester spoke in favor of Action Item 101, with time ceded
(email attached to these minutes)

Leo Wilson spoke in favor of Action Item 101 (email attached to these minutes)

Mike Phillips spoke in favor of Action Item 101

Julia Legaspi spoke in favor of Action Item 101.

Penny Bridges spoke in favor of Action Item 101.

Michael Lochner spoke in favor of Action Item 101.

Additional emails and correspondence submitted to the Park and Recreation Board are attached to these minutes.

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED Mr. Zosa/Ms. Bothwell

A motion was made by Mr. Zosa and seconded by Ms. Bothwell to recommend approval of Action Item 102, Olive Street Park Acquisition and Development – General Development Plan. The motion was approved 8-0-0 and passed by the following vote; Yea: David Baron, Jon Becker, Marcella Bothwell, Ron, Cho, Rick Gulley, Bobby Hughes, Chair Johnston and Noli Zosa. Nay: (None). Recused: (None). Abstained: (None). Not Present: Nick Anastasopoulos and Dennis Otsuji.

101. Addition of Prefabricated Comfort Station/Concession/Storage Building for Ocean Air Community Park – Amendment to the General Development Plan

Presenters: Jody Cheung, Assistant Engineer, Public Works Department
Erin Leugers, Landscape Architect, Spurlock Landscape
Architects

The presentation outlined the following:

- Background
- Discussion
- Project Description
- Requested Action

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED Ms. Bothwell/Mr. Becker

A motion was made by Ms. Bothwell and seconded by Mr. Becker to recommend approval of Action Item 101, Addition of Prefabricated Comfort Station/Concession/Storage Building for Ocean Air Community Park – Amendment to the General Development Plan. The motion was approved 8-0-0 and passed by the following vote; Yea: David Baron, Jon Becker, Marcella Bothwell, Ron, Cho, Rick Gulley, Bobby Hughes, Chair Johnston and Noli Zosa. Nay: (None). Recused: (None). Abstained: (None). Not Present: Nick Anastasopoulos and Dennis Otsuji.

103. Mission Valley Community Plan Update – Parks and Open Space Chapter

Presenters: Betsy Miller, Development Project Manager III,
 Planning Department
 Nancy Graham, Development Project Manager III,
 Planning Department
 Heidi Vonblum, Program Manager, Planning Department

The presentation outlined the following:

- Background
- Discussion
- Project Description
- Requested Action

MOTION: MOVED/SECONDED Mr. Becker/Mr. Gulley

A motion was made by Mr. Becker and seconded by Mr. Gulley to recommend approval of Action Item 103, Mission Valley Community Plan Update – Parks and Open Space Chapter. The motion was approved 8-0-0 and passed by the following vote; Yea: David Baron, Jon Becker, Marcella Bothwell, Ron, Cho, Rick Gulley, Bobby Hughes, Chair Johnston and Noli Zosa. Nay: (None). Recused: (None). Abstained: (None). Not Present: Nick Anastasopoulos and Dennis Otsuji.

INFORMATION ITEMS – None

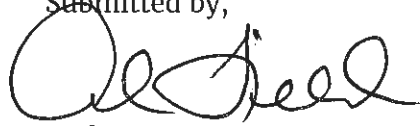
WORKSHOP – None

ADJOURNMENT - The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Copies of the reports, audio and PowerPoint presentations can be found on the Parks and Recreation Department website at <http://www.sandiego.gov/parkandrecboard/reports>

Next Meeting: June 20, 2019
Balboa Park Club Ballroom
2150 Pan American Road West
San Diego, CA 92101

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Field", written over a horizontal line.

Andrew Field
Assistant Director
Parks and Recreation Department



Tuesday, May 14, 2019

Park and Recreation Board
City of San Diego
David Kinney, Chair

Re: Olive Street Park, Community Vision Plan

Chair Kinney and Board,

The Bankers Hill Community Group (BHCG) supports the Olive Street Park plan as presented at the Uptown Planners May 2019 meeting, which is based on the prior approved Community Vision Plan (see attached) and does NOT include a regional-focused AIDS Memorial. The City consciously decided not to present the regional memorial component at the Uptown Planners May 2019 presentation, due to their prior lack of support in February 2018 for a regional AIDS Memorial in this 0.6 acre pocket park. As the City has now moved in this direction, the proposed regional AIDS Memorial concept should be brought back to Uptown Planners for a community presentation and recommendation.

Olive Street Park is not an appropriate location for the San Diego AIDS Memorial because it is a neighborhood pocket park. As such, it will not include parking or restrooms; it is hidden within the Bankers Hill neighborhood on a dead-end street (please visit). This park cannot accommodate medium, let alone large-scale events, such as World AIDS day.

Despite the Park Guidelines within the General Plan (table RE-2 attached), which classify this site as a "pocket park" serving the population within a ¼ mile, the City and AIDS Task Force have pursued Olive Street Park as the location for this regional memorial, which then falls into the category of "community cultural facility." The General Plan's Park Guidelines state that a "community cultural facility," such as a memorial that displays more than 8,000 names, should be located in a community park with a minimum of 13 acres (table RE-2).

Given that San Diego has lost more than 8,000 people to the AIDS epidemic, the magnitude and importance of San Diego within the national AIDS narrative is central. San Diego must find a memorial location that is respectful and honors those we have lost. A regional-focused AIDS memorial should be in a prominent and easily accessible location with restrooms and parking as well as the capacity to accommodate large gatherings for events such as World AIDS day.

The BHCG urges the Park and Recreation Board to listen to the community and adopt the Community Vision Plan, as recommended by Uptown Planners in May 2019, WITHOUT a regional memorial or community cultural facility. For your reference, attached are previous copies of BHCG correspondence on this issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amie Hayes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Amie" and last name "Hayes" clearly legible.

Amie Hayes, Chair
Bankers Hill Community Group
www.bankershillcommunity.org

cc: Councilmember Chris Ward
cc: Uptown Planners Chair, Soheil Nakhshab





Monday, March 12, 2018

Park and Recreation Board
City of San Diego
David Kinney, Chair

Re: Olive Street Park, Community Vision Plan

Chair Kinney and Board,

The Bankers Hill Community Group (BHCG) does not support a regional-focused AIDS Memorial located in Olive Street Park (0.6 acre) and are providing an alternative option: the Community Vision Plan (attached) as endorsed and approved by Uptown Planners (11-2-1) at a special meeting on February 22, 2018. The BHCG urges the Park and Recreation Board to listen to the community and adopt the Community Vision Plan.

Olive Street Park is not an appropriate location for the San Diego AIDS Memorial because it is a neighborhood pocket park (at 0.6 acre). As such, it will not include parking or restrooms; it is hidden within the Bankers Hill neighborhood at a dead end street (Third Ave/Olive St, please visit). This park cannot accommodate medium let alone large-scale events such as World AIDS day.

Despite the Park Guidelines within the General Plan (table RE-2 attached), which classify this site as a "pocket park" serving the population within a ¼ mile, the City and AIDS Task Force have pursued Olive Street Park as the location for this regional memorial, falling into the category of a "community cultural facility." The General Plan's Park Guidelines state that a "community cultural facility," such as a memorial that displays more than 8,000 names, should be located in a community park with a minimum of 13 acres (table RE-2).

The Community Vision Plan, as recommended by Uptown Planners, is an alternative to the City proposal for a memorial park and illustrates a neighborhood pocket park for users within a ¼ mile. This plan was devised through a BHCG hosted charrette in July 2016 (resulting letter attached), upon learning the park was close to being fully funded. The Vision Plan was then presented to the community in both November 2017 and February 2018. Specifically, the open space of this plan meets neighborhood needs and is maximized for optimal multi-use, the hardscape is minimized, and the overlook is a passive area for all. This plan also creates the Maple Canyon Memorial Overlook as an area devoted to memorializing persons and events related to the Bankers Hill neighborhood and its residents, which could include small plaques on benches, walkway tiles or other appropriate elements dedicated to persons or events that relate to all aspects of Bankers Hill history. Additionally, this pocket park helps to address the neighborhood's substantial open space or park deficit.

Given that San Diego has lost more than 8,000 people to the AIDS epidemic, the magnitude and importance of San Diego within the national AIDS narrative is central. San Diego must find a memorial location that is respectful and honors those we have lost. A regional-focused AIDS memorial should be in a prominent and easily accessible location with restrooms and parking as well as the capacity to accommodate large gatherings for events such as World AIDS day.

The BHCG fully supports the need for the San Diego AIDS memorial, with planning that follows a transparent and open public process. However, the location of this memorial is a very important decision and Olive Street Pocket Park is clearly not an appropriate location.

The BHCG requests the Park and Recreation Board endorse and adopt the Uptown Planners' recommendation of the Community Vision Plan for Olive Street Park.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amie Hayes". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Amie Hayes, Chair
Bankers Hill Community Group



Friday, September 22, 2017

Mayor Faulconer
San Diego City Council
San Diego AIDS Memorial Task Force
202 "C" Street
San Diego, CA 92101

Re: San Diego AIDS Memorial & Olive Street Park, Bankers Hill

Mayor Faulconer, Councilmembers, and AIDS Task Force Members,

The Bankers Hill Community Group (BHCG) has serious concern regarding the chosen site for the San Diego AIDS Memorial in Olive Street Park. Not only does the AIDS Memorial warrant a more respectful and visible location within the San Diego region, but the lack of transparency and public process over the site selection, the shortage of funds available to build a memorial, and the insufficient integration between the park and memorial designs are not the ingredients that will create a worthy park plan or result in a beloved neighborhood park. Furthermore, the park priorities that emerged from a public workshop put on by the BHCG in July 2016 did not support an AIDS Memorial at this location.

The San Diego AIDS Memorial warrants a respectful and visible location within the region. The right location would include restrooms, vehicular and bike parking, and an adequate gathering space for special ceremonies such as the Memorial's dedication. Olive Street Park is tucked into the Bankers Hill neighborhood at a dead end street and is not intended to have restrooms or parking included on the site, nor is neighborhood parking readily available. Additionally, the Memorial is proposed to share the programming of this compact park site with a children's playground.

The lack of transparency and public process in choosing the Olive Street Park location for the memorial is also of significant issue. San Diego is home to one of the first AIDS Hospices within the country (Dr. Brad Truax House), because our city has been so highly impacted by this disease and, as a result of this impact, the decisions about this memorial are of large public interest. The AIDS Task Force should be subject to the Brown Act and hold open public meetings that are noticed on the City's website, and the Task Force should be instructed to involve the public in their decision making process, such as site selection and memorial design. Further, as the Port Authority has previously agreed to house the memorial prominently along the waterfront, and other more respectful available locations have also been dismissed, it is important for the AIDS Task Force to make public the reasons why they believe Olive Street Park to be the right location for the San Diego AIDS Memorial.

With approximately \$40,000, the AIDS Task Force has not raised enough funds to design and build a San Diego AIDS Memorial. Due to the shortage of funding, this does not appear to be compatible with the Olive Street Park design and construction schedule, which is funded. Although there are news reports stating that funds for the memorial would come from the sale of the Dr. Brad Truax House, the BHCG understands these proceeds will have to revert to the gas tax fund and cannot be transferred to pay for the memorial. Further, this gas tax fund is taxpayer money, and therefore, not eligible to pay for a private AIDS Memorial. Eliminating this confusion and connecting these dots to

explain how this memorial will be financed would give the public confidence in this process and resolve some of the larger transparency issues that are haunting this Task Force.

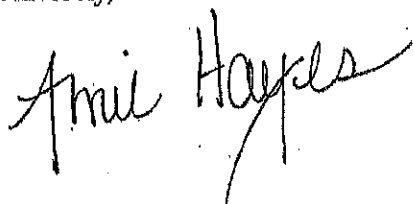
Finally, the design for the San Diego AIDS Memorial is currently unknown and so cannot be integrated into the plan or design for Olive Street Park, which will have a third and final public meeting in October. The San Diego AIDS Memorial deserves to have a park or space specifically designed for this use. If located in Olive Street Park, the program and design of the park will be completed before the memorial is designed. These may or may not be compatible with each other. And since the compact nature and programming of this park is not going to support a sizable memorial, a contextual memorial at this site is likely one that is substantially subdued and/or smaller in scale, but this would not pay nearly enough respect to the many we have lost to AIDS.

Additionally, at the July 2016 meeting of the BHCG, a public workshop was held to specifically discuss priorities for Olive Street Park and a letter was submitted to Councilmember Gloria explaining those who will likely use the park most do not support locating a regional AIDS Memorial here. With approximately 50 people in attendance, including members of the family who donated this land long ago, the priorities that emerged were to pay tribute to the family and house that was once located here, provide access to Maple Canyon, and to develop a landscape that is for passive park uses, which would not include a children's playground.

The BHCG strongly encourages the Mayor, Councilmembers, and Task Force members to visit the Olive Street Park site to better understand and support these concerns about this location for a San Diego regional AIDS Memorial.

The BHCG fully supports an AIDS Memorial in San Diego that follows a transparent and open public process, but for the abundant reasons listed, we know Olive Street Park is not an appropriate location. Further, we request the AIDS Task Force make public their reasons for choosing the Olive Street Park site over the multiple other more respectful and available locations within San Diego.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amie Hayes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Amie" and last name "Hayes" clearly distinguishable.

Amie Hayes, President
Bankers Hill Community Group

Cc: Chair Wilson & Uptown Planners
Cc: LAMBDA Archives of San Diego
Cc: The Center, San Diego LGBT Community

Subject:

FW: Proposed Olive Street Park/AIDS Memorial

From: Mark R Lester

Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2019 2:20 PM

To: Zamora-Hudson, Nancy <NHudson@sandiego.gov>

Subject: Proposed Olive Street Park/AIDS Memorial

Dear Members of the Parks and Recreation Board,

I'm writing in wholehearted support of the proposed Olive Street Park/AIDS Memorial which you will consider tomorrow.

The current plan was developed by a blue-ribbon panel of citizens with strong records of work for the public good in our community. It has been reviewed by the Planning Commission, and has the support of Councilperson Chris Ward, in whose district the site is located.

Some opponents of the location have argued that an AIDS Memorial would be better situated in the traditional center of the LGBTQ community, but I believe a true memorial requires a space apart from the hustle and bustle of Hillcrest, a place where members of the community can come to reflect in a tranquil atmosphere on loved ones who have been lost to AIDS. The canyon-edge Olive Street parcel is ideal in this regard.

I strongly urge you to support the proposal coming before you tomorrow.

Sincerely,
Mark Lester

Subject:

FW: Please vote to approve the AIDS Memorial in Olive Street Park

From: Jeff Martinhauk

Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2019 2:33 PM

To: Zamora-Hudson, Nancy <NHudson@sanidiego.gov>

Subject: Fw: Please vote to approve the AIDS Memorial in Olive Street Park

Dear Ms. Hudson,

I am writing in support of the AIDS Memorial that will be discussed by the Parks and Rec Commission tomorrow.

The AIDS Memorial is an important opportunity for the city to remember the plague that devastated so many lives, and the Olive street park is the right place for it near Hillcrest in the heart of the LGBTQ+ community.

Please do not give in to the NIMBYs. There is no legitimate reason to keep this long overdue project from moving forward.

Jeff Martinhauk,

Subject:

FW: Olive Street Park

From: Vicki Kelley

Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2019 2:40 PM

To: Zamora-Hudson, Nancy <NHudson@sanidiego.gov>

Subject: Olive Street Park

Dear Secretary,

I am writing to you to let you know that I highly support the Olive Street Park and general plan development item on the agenda tomorrow and respectfully ask that they vote to approve the project.

Regards,

Vicki Kelley

Subject:

FW: Olive Street Park & the General Development Plan including the AIDS Memorial

From: John Will

Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2019 1:50 PM

To: Zamora-Hudson, Nancy <NHudson@sandiego.gov>

Subject: Olive Street Park & the General Development Plan including the AIDS Memorial

Good Afternoon,

I am a member of St Paul's Cathedral and I would respectfully ask that you vote to approve the above project. Thank you!

Sincerely, John J. Will

St Paul's Cathedral

From: Susan Jester

Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2019 3:14 PM

To: Zamora-Hudson, Nancy <NHudson@sandiego.gov>

Subject: Olive St Park and general development plan

Dear Park and Rec Commissioners:

As the founder of the San Diego AIDS Walk, and a member of the AIDS Memorial Task Force, I'm writing to encourage you to support the development of the Olive Street Park and the general development plan before you tomorrow. As someone who spends a lot of time in that neighborhood as well as 35 years of neighborhood and community activism, I believe the Park would be a wonderful addition to the neighborhood and the inclusion of an AIDS Memorial at the site would honor the concept of our task force of finding a place of reflection, quiet and meditation that could be incorporated into a public space. We did a great deal of research before voting to pursue the concept of an AIDS Memorial in the proposed Olive St Park and the expedited development of what is now and has been for sometime an empty lot surrounded by fencing. The intent of the family that donated the land 100 years ago was to provide a public space of enjoyment and relaxation for the neighborhood and the plans developed by the city will do exactly that while providing for a space of reflection for those we have lost to AIDS in our city.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Susan Jester

Founder, AIDS Walk San Diego 1986

Member, San Diego AIDS Memorial AIDS Task Force

From: joe.letzkus.
Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2019 6:22 PM
To: Zamora-Hudson, Nancy
Subject: Olive Street Park

Dear Parks, and Recreation Committee,
I support the Olive Street Park, and General Plan Developing Item.
I am a licensed Real Estate Agt. who believes the location is
appropriate for an AIDS Memorial.
Please support this meaningful project.
Joseph Letzkus

Sent from Windows Mail

From: Mark Patzman
Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2019 7:34 PM
To: Zamora-Hudson, Nancy
Cc: Susan Jester
Subject: Support for Olive Street

Please register our support for the Olive Street Park project and general plan. Do not allow NIMBYism to prevent the Coty from doing the right thing!

Warm regards,
Mark Patzman

Sent from my iPhone

From: Debbie Kistler
Sent: Thursday, May 16, 2019 7:25 AM
To: Zamora-Hudson, Nancy
Subject: The Parks and Recreation Commission

To those with the power to make the Olive Street Park happen,

My heart goes out to those opposed to this project because of the Aids Memorial. Aids is not limited to a specific sexual preference or way of life. Aids has and continues to enter the lives of many who are "straight", God loving, children, black, white...it doesn't seem to care or target any specific group of people. Would their disdain or hatred be the same if it were to be a Cancer Memorial or Military Memorial or...? If not maybe it is just their ignorance of who aids truly touches and they choose to join the "band wagon" because they have failed to do research or opened their heart to those outside their hatred who are effected?

Please pass this project.

With gratitude for you open hearts and reading this email,

Deborah Kistler

From: Robert Heylman >
Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2019 5:26 PM
To: Zamora-Hudson, Nancy
Subject: Olive Street Park Development

I'm writing in support of the general plan development and the inclusion of an AIDS memorial. We lost many people during the AIDS crisis and this memorial will be a tribute to them and a lasting statement from our city that their lives mattered.

Sincerely,
Robert Heylman

Subject:

FW: I Support Olive Street Park

From: Tom W

Sent: Wednesday, May 15, 2019 2:24 PM

To: Zamora-Hudson, Nancy <NHudson@sandiego.gov>

Subject: I Support Olive Street Park

I am writing in support the Olive Street Park and the general plan development item on the Parks and Rec agenda tomorrow. I respectfully ask that you vote to approve the project.

Thank you

Thomas A. Wilson

"Above all, trust in the slow work of God."

Teilhard de Chardin

From: Maria Harman
Sent: Thursday, May 16, 2019 8:46 AM
To: Zamora-Hudson, Nancy
Subject: I support the Olive Street Park and general plan development

To whom it may concern.

I support the Olive Street Park and general plan development item on the agenda today and respectfully ask that you vote to approve the project.

Thank you!!!

--
Kind Regards,

Maria Harman

METRO
SAN DIEGO CDC

536 Maple Street, #103
San Diego, California 92103
(619) 822-5103

May 13, 2019

Honorable Chair and Members of the
City of San Diego Park & Recreation Board:

Re: Olive Street Park Acquisition and Development: Agenda Item 102:

Dear Chair and Board Members of the Park & Recreation Board:

The Metro San Diego Community Development Association ("Metro San Diego CDC") is made up of commercial/residential property owners, businesses, and residents of the Bankers Hill/Park West community and adjacent neighborhoods.

The Metro San Diego CDC strongly supports the development of the Olive Street Park, and also is fully in support of locating an AIDS Memorial within it. Metro San Diego CDC members have been very active in moving the Olive Street Park project forward, as indicated in the Uptown News article attached below, entitled: "Olive Street Park the 100-year delay," It presents an excellent summary of the background of the long process that has taken place to create the Olive Street Park ("Woods McKee Park").

On October 17, 2016, the Metro San Diego CDC unanimously voted to support the placement of an AIDS Memorial in Olive Street Park, and subsequently passed another motion on October 19, 2017, that contained recommendations regarding its design (see second attachment).

The Metro San Diego CDC is in full support of the current design of the Olive Street Park project, and requests the Park & Recreation Board approve it at its May 16, 2019 meeting. It also recommends the park be named the "Woods-McKee Park" in honor of the family that donated the land for the park.

Sincerely,

Leo Wilson

Leo Wilson,
Administrator
Metro San Diego CDC

Attachment #1

Olive Street Park: the 100-year delay

November 17th, 2017 by Leo Wilson

Last month, I described the background of the new Waldo D. Waterman Park that was recently dedicated in Bankers Hill. This article will focus on the future Woods/McKee Park, presently known as the Olive Street Park.

The Olive Street Park has been a long time in coming — more than 100 years. In 1908, the Woods-McKee family donated a parcel of land in Bankers Hill, at Olive Street and Third Avenue, to the city for a park. The following notice appears in the San Diego Union newspaper:

“San Diego Union, Oct. 18, 1908 ... Park on Olive Street, between 2nd and 3rd streets, offered to city.” (Balboa Park Notes; from Richard Amero)



Aerial photo of Olive Street Park site at Olive Street and Third Avenue (*Google*)

Although the city accepted the donated land from the Woods/McKee families, it never built the park. Instead the land sat vacant for decades. On June 11, 1963, the city granted the owner of an adjacent medical office building north of the donated land the right of ingress and egress to his building through the dedicated parcel. In return, the owner of the medical complex was required to maintain the rest of the site as a public park. This did not happen. Instead, the medical office building owner converted almost the entire Woods/McKee parcel into a parking lot for his business. The Woods and McKee family sued the city in 1981, seeking the return of their donated property, since it was not being used as a park as intended. The lawsuit was unsuccessful.

Nothing further happened until 2008, when a representative from the city's Park and Recreation Department, and Michael Turko, a KUSI-TV investigative reporter, showed up at an Uptown Planners meeting. This led to a recommendation from Uptown Planners, adopted at its Aug. 5, 2008 meeting, requesting that the city revoke the permit of the medical complex owner to use

the Woods/McKee parcel as a parking lot. Uptown Planners also recommended that the city acquire two additional parcels of land immediately south of the Woods/McKee parcel, for inclusion in a future Woods/McKee Park. The Woods/McKee parcel totaled 16,000 square feet; and the two additional parcels added 15,000 square feet. The new park will overlook Maple Canyon.

After Uptown Planners made its recommendation, the Bankers Hill/Park West Community Association set up a special task force to advocate for the creation of the Woods/McKee Park. Attorney Don Liddell, who was also vice chair of Uptown Planners, and myself led the effort. It was a very contentious process involving a labyrinth of hearings, countless meetings with city staff, threats of legal action, and ultimately a lawsuit by the owner of the medical complex against the city.

1. On March 24, 2010, the City Council's Land Use and Housing Committee approved the purchase of the two south parcels of land, which had been recommended by Uptown Planners for addition to the future Woods/McKee Park. This action was subsequently approved by the City Council, and the two parcels purchased. This was a major turnaround from the year prior; in 2009 we had learned the city had actually removed the purchase of these parcels from its priority funding list. After a strong protest, and timely intervention from then-City Councilmember Kevin Faulconer's office, it was restored.
2. On May 1, 2013, the City Council terminated the medical complex owner's revocable permit, which he claimed allowed him to place the parking lot on the Woods/McKee parcel. This action followed a strongly written letter written by Don Liddell, and approved by the Metro San Diego Community Development Corp., on Sept. 10, 2012, requesting the city "commence legal proceedings to immediately and completely revoke any formal conditional entitlement by the current owner of the adjacent parcel of property to use of any property that is owned by the city of San Diego."
3. The formal notice of revocation of the permit was issued July 13, 2013. In response, the medical complex owner sued the city. On Sept. 19, 2014, a Superior Court judge dismissed the lawsuit, indicated that the permit could be terminated "at the will of the city at any time." In February 2015, the city noticed a right-of-entry permit, so that it could enter the Woods/McKee parcel and remove non-permitted improvements. In effect, the city again took possession of the Woods/McKee parcel.
4. In 2016, the city finally began planning the new park; retaining KTU+A as the consultant to design what would become the future Woods/McKee Park. A hearing on the KTU+A design concept will take place at Uptown Planners at 6 p.m. Dec. 5 at Joyce Beers Community Center in Hillcrest. Making matters again controversial: There is now a proposal to place the city's AIDS memorial in the Olive Street Park.

It has now been almost a decade since Uptown Planners made its Aug. 8, 2008 recommendations for the Woods/McKee Park. Since then it has been a long and contentious process. Want to especially thank Don Liddell for keeping the project on track. Also, a huge debt of gratitude goes to KUSI-TV reporter Michal Turko, who did about five stories about the Olive Street Park. watch four of them at metrosandiegocdc.org.

— Leo Wilson is administrator for Metro San Diego CDC and is a Bankers Hill resident.

Attachment #2

METRO
SAN DIEGO CDC
536 Maple Street, No. 103
San Diego, California 92103
(619) 822-5103

October 19, 2017

Dear Co-Chairs & Members of the AIDS Memorial Task Force:

As a result of an online design competition, a preferred conceptual design for the San Diego AIDS Memorial was put forward in early October 2017. The proposed conceptual design will be considered for adoption by the San Diego AIDS Task Force at a future meeting. The San Diego AIDS Memorial will be placed within the Olive Street Park ("Woods McKee Park") in Bankers Hill.

The Metro San Diego Community Development Corporation ("Metro San Diego CDC") reviewed and discussed the proposed preferred conceptual design at its October 16, 2017 meeting. Metro San Diego CDC members have been involved in the planning and development of the Olive Street Park for over a decade. The proposed park consists of a northern parcel, which was donated to the City of San Diego over a decade ago by the Woods-McKee family for use as a park, and a southern parcel purchased by the City of San Diego in 2010. Both parcels together will become the future "Woods-McKee Park."

The City of San Diego, because of limited funding, had indicated that the design/construction of the Olive Street Park would not take place until after about 2026. However, as a result of the sale of the Truax House property in 2017, funds were obtained to begin the immediate design and construction of the future Olive Street Park, conditioned on the placing of the San Diego AIDS Memorial within the new park. The Metro San Diego CDC endorsed the placement of the AIDS Memorial in the Olive Street Park in a letter dated October 27, 2016.

The Metro San Diego CDC, after reviewing the preferred conceptual design of the San Diego AIDS Memorial, approved the following motion by a vote of 17-0:

- 1.) The Metro San Diego CDC is very favorably impressed with the preferred conceptual design, particularly that of the northern parcel and its cantilevered canyon lookout;
- 2.) As the AIDS Memorial was intended to be a memorial placed in a community park; the Metro San Diego CDC requests that the AIDS Task Force honor its previous commitment to not use more than 25% of the land within the proposed Olive Street Park for the AIDS Memorial. This could be done through utilizing the preferred conceptual design for the northern parcel of the proposed park; while the southern parcel would be utilized for community park use;

3.) The Metro San Diego CDC recommends the proposed memorial path on the southern parcel with boulders with "names engraved of those lost" be removed from the preferred design concept. The memorial path would be in close proximity to the neighborhood play structure, and having a memorial walk/memorialized rocks next to the children's playground is inappropriate. The memorial path and rocks should be relocated to the northern parcel;

4.) The proposed parking within the proposed park's footprint along the west side of Third Avenue should be removed. It reduces the size of the future park, and there is already street parking on Third Avenue, as well as additional parking a few blocks away in Balboa Park;

5.) The medium tree in middle of Third Avenue is not part of the proposed park, and should not be included as part of the memorial. It is unknown who has jurisdiction over medium with the tree, whether it's the City of San Diego or an adjacent private property owner.

The Metro San Diego CDC again expresses its support for the AIDS Memorial being placed in Olive Street Park, and is very impressed with the preferred design conceptual, with the suggested modifications stated above.

Sincerely yours,

B. Michael Seidel
President,
Metro San Diego CDC

