

TOWN OF CORTE MADERA
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMISSION
MARCH 8, 2010
CORTE MADERA TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
DRAFT MINUTES

Commissioners Chair Barbara Becker
Present: Robert Czeck
 Ted Meyer

Staff Present: Public Works Director/Town Engineer Dan Ring

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chair Becker called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

2. Open Forum for Non Agenda Items

Mr. George Marsh stated there is a project that Larkspur is doing near Birch Avenue that may have ADA consequences. He suggested that the AAC discuss the project at the next meeting. Public Works Director Ring noted it was a Larkspur project. He would be meeting with the Larkspur Public Works Director and the neighbors next week. Mr. Marsh stated the project was on Corte Madera property.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

M/s, Czeck/Meyer to approve the AAC minutes of February 8, 2010 with corrections.
Ayes: All

4. Old Business

A. Tamalpais/Corte Madera Ave. Overlay Plan Review

Public Works Director Ring presented a brief staff report. He stated there was little to report. Work was started near the Recreation Center about a month ago but was not continued to the upper area. Design work was being done on the specifications for that upper area near the traffic signal in terms of grades, ramps, crosswalks, etc. Chair Becker stated they want to be sure the plans are compliant in the design stage so the work does not have to get "fixed".

B. Higgins Landing Boat Dock- update

Public Works Director Ring presented a brief staff report. The Town Council would review the project at an upcoming meeting in terms of the land use issues (rezoning the area from Residential to Public Use District). They are not approving the plans since they are being revised. The California Department of Boating and Waterways would like to know how long the project would take to construct in order to allocate the funding. He noted he received some feedback about the parking spaces and felt that should be reviewed. Design of the project continues.

Chair Becker asked about a possible start date. Public Works Director Ring stated the environmental permitting process would take some time and he would project a start date sometime in 2011 (spring or summer). Chair Becker stated it would be nice if it would be ready in the fall for the Redwood High School students.

Chair Becker stated she would like to rearrange the order of the agenda.

C. Recreation Center Patio- update

Dr. Bob Bundy, representing the Corte Madera Community Foundation, stated they presented the preliminary plan to the AAC several months ago. Since that time they have solicited the help of several other contractors to look at other phases of the project. One of the things they looked at early on was the existing ramp and whether or not it fit within the existing guidelines in terms of accessibility. It was found to be compliant and in good order and some of the decking and beams were available for reuse. The hardscape consists of pavers that have good accessibility and they have installed high quality artificial grass. One of the other things that they looked at was a new access point to the patio and the Recreation Center from the park. This would be very desirable for many reasons and would be a new access point to the Recreation Center from the parking lot for special events. They also looked at accessibility from the patio to the Recreation Center. He introduced Ms. Robin Moller, landscape architect. Ms. Moller stated they moved the location for the handicapped access door because the grade was a bit steep. She pointed to the new location and stated they got a very good price for automatic sliding doors. She noted the doors could operate manually or automatically. The Recreation Department Maintenance Fund would pay for one of the doors and the Community Foundation would pay for the other.

Chair Becker asked about the location of the pavers. Ms. Moller pointed out the pavers, the synthetic lawn, the fountain, and the retaining wall. She noted a wheelchair could easily roll on the synthetic lawn. The foundation and decking has been installed and they have installed the stringers for the stairs. The treads would be installed soon. The two trees near the deck were removed. She pointed out a couple of details (trellis, etc.) that would be built during the next phase.

Ms. Moller discussed the proposed new access from the park and noted Mr. Doug Wade, landscape architect, is working on this detail. She pointed out the new trash area and stated the area that houses the park maintenance equipment would remain. She pointed out the new corridor that would be created along with a new gate. Chair Becker asked if this would be a lockable gate. Ms. Moller stated "yes". Commissioner Czeck asked about the lighting in that area. Ms. Moller stated she was not sure what currently exists.

Commissioner Meyer asked about the number of accessible parking stalls in the lot. Ms. Moller stated there were at least two. Commissioner Meyer stated the loading zone was not accessible. Dr. Bundy stated the driveway for the kitchen and trash bins would become a service driveway so trucks could back in and things could be easily carried to the building. Commissioner Meyer stated the project was wonderful and he wondered if some of the details could be fine-tuned (landscaping, etc.).

Chair Becker agreed that the project was wonderful and stated it could be a catalyst for other projects.

Commissioner Czeck asked how many pavers had been sold. Ms. Moller stated about one hundred and fifty.

Commissioner Czeck asked about the long-term plan for the Recreation Center. Dr. Bundy stated there was a Master Plan developed several years ago for Town Park and the Recreation Center but it has been on hold. Ms. Moller stated this project could improve the "rentability" of the Recreation Center and perhaps raise more money for maintenance of the building.

Commissioner Czeck asked about the completion date for this phase of the project. Dr. Bundy stated they should finish up this phase in a couple of weeks.

Chair Becker thanked Dr. Bundy and Ms. Moller for their efforts in bringing this wonderful project to fruition.

D. ADA Mediation- update

Public Works Director Ring presented a brief staff report. He stated he did not know the date of the next meeting. He stated the Town Manager has been spending a significant amount of time documenting the accessibility improvements that have been done as a part of other Public Works projects throughout Town. Many of those improvements were done as a part of other projects (overlay projects, the Safe Routes to

Schools, etc.) and not necessarily under the “Accessibility” line item in the Capital Improvements Budget. Chair Becker asked that the information from the Town Manager be made available to the Commission.

E. Bike & Pedestrian Corridor Study- update

Public Works Director Ring stated that the study is in the process of responding to comments received from interested parties. The County would be making a presentation to the Town Council sometime in April. Chair Becker asked if the Commission should attend the meeting. Public Works Director Ring stated “yes”.

F. AAC Member Search- update

Chair Becker stated she is aware of an individual that is interested in serving on the Commission but has a conflict with the meeting date. She asked if the Commission would consider changing the meeting date. Public Works Director Ring distributed the list of meeting dates for other Boards, Commissions, etc. and Council Chamber availability. He noted Mondays and Tuesdays seemed to be very busy. Chair Becker suggested moving the meeting to the third Monday of the month. Public Works Director Ring stated he would discuss this change with the Town Clerk. Chair Becker stated she saw a recent advertisement for the vacancy in the Twin Cities Times.

G. Transition Plan Review

Commissioner Meyer stated he reviewed the consultant’s methodology for establishing priorities and he felt it was very accurate. He referred to Chapter 2, page 5, Priority One, Two, Three, and Four and noted the cost for Priority One was only \$250.00. He stated there were opportunities out there. Chair Becker stated she liked the idea of concentrating on one area since most of the projects are quite small and they really want some high visibility. Public Works Director Ring agreed and stated they need to put the money where it matters most. Commissioner Meyer stated there might be some opportunities regarding signage and a possible partnership with the Beautification Committee.

Chair Becker asked Public Works Director Ring to come back with a list of items for Tamalpais Drive and Meadowsweet. Commissioner Czeck stated that would help them focus on some short-term projects.

5. New Business

A. Bayside Trail

Public Works Director Ring distributed the current plan for the Bayside Trail Project. He discussed the landscape plan and noted it was mainly infill planting including several mounds of plantings. The second part of the plan is augmenting or changing the seating areas. He pointed to the proposed bench seating and stated they could review the possibility of better placement and alignment of those benches. There is a possibility that there would be funding available to fix some of the driveways on the other side of San Clemente (near the EAH housing project and Hertz Equipment Rental (Big 4 Rents).

Commissioner Meyer referred to the second page, the top section, and stated that the nearest accessible parking to the trail is at the end of Echo, and there is a path connecting this cul-de-sac to the trail. Public Works Director Ring stated he spoke to the Planning Department about this issue and they indicated that this pathway was not recognized in the General Plan and improvements could be problematic. He acknowledged that this route was used by many residents but the Town should not be “encouraging” people to use that path. Commissioner Meyer noted it could almost be considered a prescriptive right. Public Works Director Ring agreed.

Commissioner Meyer pointed to an area and asked if that was the railroad right-of-way. Public Works Director Ring stated “yes”. Commissioner Meyer noted there was an unimproved path behind Cost Plus and the trailer park and he asked if this could be connected to this plan. Chair Becker stated the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) has plans to link the Wornum Way area to the pathway leading to the ferry terminal.

Commissioner Meyer stated the existing benches were on pads and were ADA accessible and any improvements would be more along the lines of aesthetics. Chair Becker stated there used to be “exercise stations” along the longer pathways and she wondered if they should suggest adding these stations.

Commissioner Meyer stated there were some areas on the trail that were graded a bit high and have a sharp drop-off next to adjacent catch basins. The shoulder transitions could get reviewed along with considering one more extension on the catch basins.

Commissioner Czeck asked when the path was paved. Public Works Director Ring stated it has been paved for quite some time and it was recently rehabilitated and repaved through this project about a year ago.

Public Works Director Ring stated he would have a better idea on the cost for the landscaping at the next meeting.

B. Grant Funding Opportunity

Public Works Director Ring stated the Local Streets and Roads Funding, a Federal grant, is occasionally made available to cities and counties. This year the amount is small and would get divided up among all the jurisdictions. Corte Madera’s share is about \$70,000. However, for this money to be used, a project must have a minimum value of \$250,000 and be located on a federal-aid eligible roadway. Due to these constraints, several of the smaller municipalities have considered swapping their funds with either San Rafael or the County, who would then return 75% of the value in local unrestricted funds. The Town has proposed to use this money for ADA improvements along Tamalpais Drive from Willow to the Freeway. Chair Becker asked about the problem areas along Tamalpais Drive. Public Works Director Ring stated he knew of six to eight curb ramps that do not meet the current standards.

Chair Becker asked if they could address driveways into private homes. Public Works Director Ring stated “no” but there were some areas that had tight access due to street light locations, etc. They should probably concentrate on curb ramps, sidewalks, etc. Chair Becker asked Public Works Director Ring to bring back a list of the problem areas.

Chair Becker stated there was an individual from the EAH housing project who complained about the drop-off and blacktop along the Tamalpais overpass. Public Works Director Ring stated CalTrans has been out with survey crews and are proposing to fix that area by putting in lightweight fill and redoing the approach ramps leading to the overpass. Chair Becker stated they should add a railing.

6. Commissioner Reports

Chair Becker reported she went to the Planning Commission meeting regarding the Higgins Landing Boat Dock project. There was a contingent from Riviera Circle who expressed concern about how far the dock would encroach into the water and whether or not they could easily maneuver boats around the new dock. She noted that issue had not been raised before. She stated the dock for the condominiums was 200 feet away from the road and the Higgins Landing Boat Dock would be 100 feet away. This information seemed to satisfy the Riviera Circle residents. The residents also had questions about where the barge would be located when dredging occurred. The Planning Commission voted in favor of the plan.

7. Adjournment

Chair Becker stated the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 12, 2010. The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.