



**Wildfire Prevention Assessment District Citizens'
Advisory Committee Meeting**

Thursday, August 19, 2010 7:00 p.m.

Richard C. Trudeau Center ~ 11500 Skyline Boulevard Oakland, CA
(Wheel Chair Accessible)

*Barbara Goldenberg, Chair, Doug Wong, Vice Chair; Lilah Greene, Treasurer; Chuck Bowes;
Chris Candell; Don Johnson; David Kessler; Dee McDonough, Dinah Benson, Bob Sieben; Vacancy - Council District 6*
Present: D. Kessler, D. Johnson, B. Sieben
Absent: D. Wong, L. Green, C. Bowes, C. Candell, D. McDonough, D. Benson

NOTES

Call to Order 7:15

1. Roll Call & Determination of Quorum

NOTES reflect that 5 action items could not be address for lack of quorum

2. Open Public Forum

Gordon Piper – thanked Fire Dept. for the chipping program and support. Sat/Sun. for the last two years, teams with probation, two crews of high school students, Civic Corp, and college students have helped at Kaiser Elementary School with several cubic feet of vegetation stacked and the chipping contractor partnered.

Hiller Highland – Participation from the State, OUSD, East Bay Park, and goats needed for additional work that was cut two years ago and is now very thick.

Standard enforcement of fire code – G. Piper took pictures and thought reports of compliance weren't realistic. Not much changed in two years and in terms of performance audit and this years audit, he would invite auditors to focus on North Oakland. He doesn't think they are focused on defensible space, not seeing 10 ft. or limbing-up. He reports that 90% of houses in his homeowners association have trees touching, over hanging, growing through decks and other things not in compliance.

G. Piper stated concern related to fire fighters in a fire situation and how the fuel surrounding and touching structures does not help the fire fighters. Since the inspection program is our strongest take we need to look beyond the goats and the standards need to be strictly enforced. He invites the board to do a walking audit or get in a van and drive around. Looking along freeways and Redwood Road, vegetation is a problem and probably in many other locations. The maintenance force is likely down for City and CalTrans properties and it's looking bad this year with the history, he states, "We're ripe for disaster."

AFM L. Griffin stated that 323 homes were sited. An example was given about a palm not revealing a house number. That homeowner complained to the Mayor's office. Additional staff time had to be expended to answer the complaint. Sept. will be 2nd rounds of inspections. A committee member spoke of email complaints from people who were requested to do things with trees that they haven't been doing in the past; this means that the equity of inspections is better than in past years.

Dick Ottostead – Has family brush clearing services and has been working on trees in the Oakland area for the last 20 years. He and workers are hearing from their regular clients about out of compliance neighbors with code violations visible from the street. Areas of concern are between Broadway Terrace and Ascot. The focus is that, "The situation is demoralizing for people who year after year see no citations for neighbors who aren't complying. So, citizens feel they are being taxed and their home is still vulnerable because of a neighbor." This is the 6th year of a 10 year program so it needs to be addressed in order for the ballot measure to pass for the next time.

The discussion continued related to the importance of inspections and their thoroughness. Examples of questionable and incorrect issuance of compliance was shared. Residents knowing they are out of compliance may not be hiring to have the work done because they are presently cash strapped. There was a suggestion to go down streets by the end of October instead of going overboard on pruning. Also, that the first of July, engine companies note what needs to be cited so things don't fall through the cracks. It's thought that this is reasonable work for the city to conduct in efforts to prevent a repeat of the fire storm.

Discussion continued about possible future budget cuts and lay offs to OFD. AFM Griffin explained that OFD lost fire protection engineer and froze 5 other positions. Station 24 has core of fire fighter who understand and care. Constantly rotating people in from the flats and other parts of the city who haven't worked the WPAD have a forte for preventing buildings from fire. There needs to be a change of mind-set. Having inspectors that only focus on code in the hills would work; the fundamental challenge for fire fighters – they don't want residents to be angry with them.

The question of making this happen, accountability, and staggered inspections throughout the year rose. AFM Griffin explained that each inspection notice is signed by the inspector and their station so, accountability is in place. Inspections of other things occurs during the year. We're trying to work on the culture to educate the residents so the WPAD continues. Even if it's voted out, the threat does not go away; the Asst. Fire Marshal would need to go to plan B – how to do this without budget.

3. **Approval of Minutes of the July 15, 2010 Meeting** - Withheld due to lack of quorum

4. **Financial Report & Budget Adjustments** **Monthly Financial Update – 2009-10 & 2010-11 Donna Hom**

June Fiscal 2009-10: Bills paid for parcel clearing \$23,800.

Cash \$1.19M reserve for next year to be disclosed until it's audited. Had a paramilitary meeting with auditor; they wait until mid September to work on the process which entails looking at website meeting minutes. Presently, nothing to report, just closed the books.

2010 -11 usually closes and goes to treasury and then Sunshine, as of Aug 12th we recorded no revenue so far this year and the expenditure for Vegetation Management, \$10,150 and \$8,386 staff time.

Cash basis \$1.19 million, FEMA grant matching \$300k and Chabot Space Center \$171K, Skyline Median work is \$4k, and \$559,779 fund balance available that this committee planned.

There was a question about late rains and AFM Griffin explained that target areas were delayed to make sure contracts are done correctly.

A committee member met with present treasurer who is timing-off the committee and was told that the committee doesn't need a treasurer. There was a question about how that would impact D. Hom's role. She explained that the role of committee member is to review the reports and work on budget, and keep ad hoc committee for budget planning. WPAD is appointed not registered so should be brought up with the committee.

Ad Hoc committee Report

- Action Item - Funds Performance Audit
- Action Item – Funds for Fire Safety Day
- Action Item – Other budget adjustments
- Action Item – Allocating funds for design & installation of plaque at Gateway Garden Firestorm Memorial

5. **Action Item – Nomination & Election of Chair, Vice Chair, & Treasurer - Congeniality**

Discussion deferred due to lack of quorum.

6. Staff Report - AFM L. Griffin

- 2010 Fire Season Inspection Program Updates
12,000 inspections have been accomplished with 74% compliance. Once data person arrives, we can review specifics. They will start within next couple of weeks.
- Action Item - Garber Park, project funding proposal - deferred for lack of quorum.
- Goat Grazing Update – they are out grazing
- FEMA Grant update
Aug. 26, Trudeau, scoping session for the east bay hills, open to the public, 2-4:30 and 6:30 – 9 PM
Each session is the same – giving people ample opportunity to attend. Point Pinole shores to Lake Chabot and farther. The focus is to gather input and focus on what the EIS will cover. Attendees can make comments in support or opposition. Every federal dollar assigned to each of the 3 agencies (UC Berkeley, East Bay Regional Parks and OFD in the hills area), is being reviewed. Trying to make sure we have every tool in the tool box to accomplish subsequent work. Sierra Club will appose to herbicides and conservation group will be present. Sierra Club is challenging the EIR in court – hazardous fuels removal.
Aug 24th – Homeland Security secretary will tour area with OFD, UCB, EBRPD. Where UC did major eucalyptus removal and where it didn't happen simultaneously, it just sprouted and became more prolific; North Hills Athletic Field is a good example.
- No smoking signs for parks – (Gordon) and Sue's red flag day signs are now budgeted and coming.
- Red Flag Day Verses Fire Weather Day – Presentation
Deferred to next meeting due to lack of quorum

7. Resolution of Support For The EBRPD – Status Report

- Update on *Amicus curiae Brief*
Deferred until Sep meeting

8. Ad Hoc Committees Reports None

9. Education, Outreach & Marketing Update – Fire Safety Education Coordinator

- Signage Project
- Press Releases, “The Kids R Baaaack” & Oakland Business Review
- National Night Out – Review

10. Advisory Committee Open Forum

None

11. Pending List of Future Agenda Items:

- Request from Scott Hill, EBMUD to present to board on weather data with real time report
- Insurance Debunked Myths – Scott Halbrook
- Creating a fire safe landscape that looks good – Bob Sieben.

Adjournment 8:03

Note: Type in blue underline indicates a link to a report attachment available at www.Oaklandnet.com/WildfirePrevention