



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

Thursday, August 18, 2011 7:00 p.m.

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

*Doug Wong, Chair, David Kessler, Vice Chair; Chuck Bowes, Financial Liaison; Chris Candell; Don Mitchell;
Dee McDonough, Dinah Benson, Diane Hill, Bob Sieben; Sean Walsh*

Present: D. Wong, D. Kessler, C. Bowes, C. Candell, D. Mitchell, D. Benson, D. Hill, B. Sieben, S. Walsh

Absent: D. McDonough

AUGUST 2011 MINUTES

Call to Order 7:02

1. Roll Call & Determination of Quorum

2. Open Public Forum

Lynn Hovland, WPAD resident referenced the April minutes and requested the relationship of the \$300k matching FEMA grant money and what projects the Oakland's WPAD will fund .

AFM L. Griffin described the FEMA PDM 006 is for North Hills project to develop the soccer field area in UC Berkeley and East Bay Regional Parks. They will create a fuel break within that triangle above the Caldecott Tunnel. There's an EIS/Environmental Impact statement covering all the grants awarded to East Bay Parks & UC Berkeley. This is just one of several grants. \$300K seed money from WPAD will be part of the \$3m FEMA grant.

Robert Sand, WPAD resident asked about the \$1m spent on vegetation Management and how the contracts are made. AFM Griffin explained that the Fire Dept over sees this effort by following city's contracting procedures and getting 3 bids on scope of work. An outside auditing firm oversees that every dime goes to a project. AFM and Inspector C. Rodgers look at basically the same sites that are done each year. Once it goes to bid, they take the lowest bid and issue notice to proceed. Contractors cut, do the work and then OFD inspects that it was done to specs. It's a check and balance system.

Inspector C. Rodgers added that she sees the site, contract scope is viewed, then it goes to OFD's financial unit with three bids. The lowest bid is accepted in the process. Donna Hom makes sure we have the money so we don't go over budget. When the work is approved to our satisfaction, invoice is paid. Before checks are sent, DC Chief Williams approves payment of the invoice which D. Hom forwards to the Controller's office.

Bob Sieben – The Fire Prevention Committee of the North Hills Community Association is holding their first Educational Meeting at 7-9 PM, Thursday, Sept. 8th at Highlands Country Club (10 Hiller Drive), all are invited. New directions will be looked at, there will be a presentation on timing and work for homeowners. They will also address projects for Diablo Fire Safe Council. Cheryl Miller may attend in November. A handout with the information was distributed.

DC Williams presented Gateway Panel, following corrections were noted: Street address correction for Trudeau and website to be added. He introduced Anne Campbell-Washington, Chief of Staff to the Director of OFD. Also, the City is attempting to raise \$15-20,000 for the 20th Anniversary events. As per DC Williams, the City will approach MSA Company, PG&E, insurance companies and other stakeholders to fund this educational event at Lake Temescal.

Anne Campbell-Washington, Chief of Staff to the Director of OFD gave an overview of the contract process for WPAD and clarification for the benefit of the DVD project. Anne used as an example the \$2,500 for the Gateway Panel at the Memorial Garden and the recommendation for approval. She is aware of the \$14,900 contract with MegTV, this is the DVD for the 20th Anniversary. It is moving forward.

The scope of work is for 35 days. The process for projects over \$15k is very different. It entails announcing the opportunity that becomes available, creating a Request for Proposal, (RFP), there must be 3 bids or more, reviewing proposals, interviewing and choosing a company that's most suitable. This process must be overseen by staff; WPAD committee member(s) may participate.

3. Approval of Minutes June 16 & July 21, 2011 Meeting

June Minutes were approved.

July minutes were approved as amended.

4. Financial Report & Budget Adjustments [Attachment #2] Monthly Financial Update – 2010-11 Donna Hom & P. Feng

Donna Hom presented two concurrent financial statements one for prior year June 30, 2011 and one partial for July and August. June 30th – not an audited final. Be advised, no revenue this month. January and April are the main months of income from county collections.

- Ad Hoc committee Report - Financial Liaison, C. Bowes concurred

5. Structure & Tree Clearance Clarification

Discussion on communications related to public information and Municipal, County, and State Codes.

It was noted that fire suppression personnel are not as well versed as vegetation management inspection personnel. Inspectors are experts in commercial, public, vegetation management fire codes. When in doubt, Fire Fighters will refer to inspectors for clarification.

AFM Power Point presentation – Urban Wild Land Interface Codes

The info has been in the code since late 50's. Looking at a Power Point example, the slide demonstrated the public resource code with 30 ft around the home, at least 10 ft of distance between the trees and structures.

Documents from State Fire Marshal's office, from Berkeley border to Grass Valley, there are five different types of vegetation areas. First slide showed dense brush. Urban interface showed some requirements that OFD cannot change. Going back to 2007, truly defensible space was one line item in the fire code; it was plants away from structures. Code now stresses new construction and how to reduce ember casting.

- Class A Roof – prior to 1991 there was no requirement for a Class A roof and structures could be built with wood siding. Exterior wall assembly in the hills now have to have a NAFPA one-hour rated wall, based on the type of structure.
- Trees – most important aspect is tree placement. It showed that a tree next to an opening may produce radiant transfer from outside to inside shear drapes, flammable furniture, and household items. It's a major aspect of the relocation of trees.
- Vent Assembly – trees next to ventilation openings within the structure---looking at trees and how they can transfer fire/embers to the inside of a house, next to a window is faster than next to a side that is one-hour rated. Clarification is based upon these circumstances, it doesn't mean every tree within 10 ft of a structure needs to be cut down.

It was discussed how to use the inspection process with tree removal permits. Example - if under the code, a property owner pulls a removal permit, they can remove it if it's a safety hazard. When Parks and Recreation approve, they do not look at safety, when they have an appeal that the homeowner wants to approve, WPAD can intercede with that process due to the fire safety hazard. A. Campbell-Washington will discuss the matter with Parks and Recreation staff.

There was discussion about tree removal around a steep slope in the Hiller Highland area. The approval process was very simple, two opinions were obtained. Because of the fire safety, no problems were encountered.

An ongoing discussion ensued concerning public education about vegetation management, defensible space, types of building, and construction needs to continue. This discussion should include fire prevention, fire suppression, City Government, the public, homeowner associations, and possibly insurance companies. .

DC Williams recommended to add to next year's annual notice, a series of workshops that clearly show a graphic illustration of trees that are 5ft from buildings, stucco exterior verses wood building and window with radiant heat. The 20th year anniversary, (Saturday, Oct. 22nd 2011), at Lake Temescal should have photographs of good and poor examples of defensible space. Audrey Jones, Parks and Recreation, will look into how to be pro-active instead of reactive. We continue to learn each year.

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

- Media - Montclarian
- Signs – new design with same information and higher visibility. AFM stated, starting tomorrow, they will be posted in high traffic areas. One will be posted at each of the existing fire weather signs, vehicle turnout areas, along Skyline Blvd., and lookout points. The public can request sign placement.
- Event/Meeting Announcements – Art & Soul, August 20th & 21st
- Gateway Panel – An 8.5x11 color draft was distributed

7. 20th Anniversary of the Hills's Fire Update

Discussion about what will bring children/parent to the events such as a helicopter demonstration of lifting and dumping water from the lake. It was noted that they will not show if they are on a call and fighting a fire, possible jump house, and a variety of activity for children. It was noted that United Policy Holders also asking for funds to support their organization only. The Committee approved \$2,500 toward the 20th Anniversary events for public outreach.

8. Ad Hoc Committee Reports:

- Orientation – continues to meet, working on a Beta sample
- Education Ad Hoc – see above • Project Management - see above • Risk Management – no report
- Performance Audit
AFM – action needed up to \$14,999 for contracting performance audit using the city auditor's office.
Walsh moved, Kessler 2nd Approved for performance audit outsourced or by city auditor.
- Parcel Inspection
AFM – with defensible space inspections
Kessler – trees from house

It was noted that because of the same date of the OCT 20th Anniversary event, the WPAD meeting date was moved to Thursday, Oct. 13th, 7 PM.

9. Verbal Staff Report - AFM L. Griffin

- Fire Prevention Bureau Vegetation Management Inspectors staffing update
As of yesterday 3 permanent part-time seasonal were approved to hire, 3 submitted applications to the City Administrator to sign-off; hopefully this will be completed by next Wed. and they can start the following Monday. Retired fire fighters all worked in the Prevention Bureau and worked on fire suppression; it's cost effective with a quick learning curve. They will be inspectors like those laid off, doing improved and unimproved properties. The general fund is the funding source; it's equivalent to 1.5 hourly wage, with no benefits. It's part time, 5 months, 7.5 hours per day, April/May to Oct/Nov pending weather and vegetation growth cycle.

- FEMA Grant update

Aug 31st FEMA head quarters, National Fisheries, National Forest Service, FEMA required a matrix of activities with description of existing conditions in those areas and what areas we will stage equipment, and long range goals. We reviewed 10 years and its effect on the project; we'll be working next to streams. All environmental impacts will be reviewed. All the sub-grantees, UC, East Bay Region Parks, Oakland will do an environmental assessment in less than a day to see if they meet the terms. This is being done for the first time with directions of FEMA headquarter and Senator Diane Feinstein. We'll be back on schedule and will know if the projects are a go or not. Using settlement from East Bay Regional Parks will serve as a starting point. When EIS is published we want to address every possible legal challenge.

- 2011 Defensible Space Inspection Update

Completed to date - 11 fire stations conduction 21,189 of which 2,416 are out-of-compliance. We'll pull and review 10% of the originals that were out-of-compliance. This was done manually and now starting it electronically. One temp has been hired; the next will join after the city goes through redeployment regarding laid-off employees who have 48 hours to respond. We will probably finish with the one temp and 4 light duty fire fighters; the process is at a slow pace.

AFM – regarding inspections and the way the system works – it's paper/computer generated. When out-of-compliance, the company doing it arranges their re-inspection dates. When we pick up the forms from each company they are divided in/out of compliance; we know how many need re-inspections. Inspector Rodgers is the only one going to all the stations to pick-up the forms.

AFM – Chabot Space and Science Center has hired a new General Manager. The project is on hold until the General Manager is up to speed on the project.

AFM – Fish and Wildlife Services is concerned with the loss of Pallet Manzanita so there's an incentive to get the project up and running.

Discussion of the Skyline Blvd. project - funds will be spent this year.

- Alameda County Community Wildfire Prevention Plan

A third meeting was held, the group is narrowing membership to development of the plans. Having a CWPP allows access to federal dollars. The plan incorporates indentified projects and sets priorities. Next meeting of ACCWPP is Sept. 1st. 11 – 1 PM.

10. Pending List of Future Agenda Items:

- Creating a fire safe landscape that looks good – Bob Sieben
- Audit Presentation – Courtney Ruby's Staff

11. Other Business

Adjournment 8:55 PM

Next WPAD Meeting: Thursday, Sept. 15, 2011, 7PM, Trudeau

Changed Meeting Date for October: Thursday, Oct. 13, 2011, 7 PM, Trudeau

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