



**Wildfire Prevention Assessment District Citizens'
Advisory Committee Meeting
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 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.McDonough, D.Hill, S.Walsh

Absent: D. Benson, B. Sieben

Staff: Chief Hoffman, DC Williams, D. Hom, P.Feng, C.Rodgers, Y.Altez

Minutes DEC. 15, 2011

Call to Order 7:03

1. Roll Call & Determination of Quorum

2. Open Public Forum

Andrea Pook and her husband Bob – Resident of Valley View Road spoke about a problem with a neighbor's tree, that has fallen on their property. It's considered blight and a fire hazard. It's been almost a year since the neighbor's tree has fallen. A. Polk has spoken with her Councilmember Libby Schaaf's office on how to get the situation resolved and is now requesting assistance or direction from the WPAD Advisory Committee.

D. Mitchell offered to follow-up and stated that there are two code issues - blight is one. C. Candell will follow-up with building inspectors to review the interpretation of code. The tree is approximately 3 ft from the property line and was cut at the property line with the remaining tree on their property. A. Polk was advised to exchange insurance information with their neighbor, Mr. Cole; he refused and reported that, "It's an act of God." Vegetation Management Inspector Enrique Orduna, (recently laid off), had been to the site several times. A discussion ensued about the situation such as: If the roots or a root ball causes damage then it's the homeowner's responsibility. Their property is located downhill from Mr. Cole's property in Montclair. D. Mitchell mentioned the blight issue and it being a public nuisance. D. Wong suggested that they go through the City Attorney.

Andrea's husband Bob gave a brief history about fallen trees from their neighbor, Mr. Coles property. The trees are a great hazard that is recognized by the city and OFD and that Monterey pine trees can be removed without a permit.

Discussion continued about how a responsible person would notice and report a tree in danger of falling. It was suggested that Inspector C. Rodgers follows-up with this site and stated that the WPAD Advisory Committee are not an enforcement body and cannot use or allocate funds to remove fallen trees on private property. Inspector C. Rodgers explained that the tree can be chipped if brought to the curb

WPAD's Financial Liaison reported that this group has specific funding with a charter that doesn't include finances to assist and does not have authority to do more.

3. Approval of Minutes [November 17, 2011](#) Meetings

The minutes were approved.

4. Financial Report & Budget Adjustments

Monthly Financial Update – 2010-11 P. Feng

- No outstanding issues related to last year's audit; this year's audit is still in progress and will be updated at the next meeting.
- Reserve for DVD & 20th Firestorm Anniversary were paid in full
- Revenue and expenditures were listed on the handout.
- It is time to work on the proposed budget for the next fiscal year; P. Feng will prepare a draft.

Financial Liaison Ad Hoc Committee Report/Presentation

It was pointed-out that special projects are noted in the lower corner of the Financial Report and the amount of money spent is on the front page.

D. Mitchell asked about the \$300K matching FEMA Grant. It was confirmed that the money is in the budget. Committee Chair mentioned that with multi-year contracts, we proceed into maintenance contracts which are a lower cost.

- Discussion/Action occurred related to funding for the following projects:
 - Inspector C. Rodger explained that contracts go out to bid. The contract being discussed asks for a biologist who will be responsible for hiring his contractors and staff is responsible for monitoring each site. Exact figures will be provided at future meetings.
 - a. Garber Park – The acreage is not as massive as Sheppard Canyon where most of the money will be spent. There's a very active group in Garber Park to assist with the project. Massive clearance from years ago created a much better maintenance program for this project.
 - b. Skyline (Beaconsfield) – The project is under way for a second year with year 'round maintenance. For two years, this project has included working with a biologist, Oakland Fire Dept, abatement of hazardous materials, and preserving native plants. The contract started at \$14,000 and is now down to \$6-\$7,000 per year. Work is performed continuously throughout the year with community groups and fuel has been reduced and maintained.
 - c. Shepherd Canyon – Is a massive undertaking because the entire facility butts against private property with about 20 streets; it requires more maintenance. In the past, money at Garber Park was \$15,000 and that was two years ago with massive clearing. We are now better equipped to preserve native vegetation; the biologist will be helpful with these efforts. In 2009 and part of 2010, rough cost was \$82,000 with massive overgrowth and removing downed trees. The work did not include taking down trees, only diseased and trees that had fallen were removed. It's about \$150,000 for all three sites.

There was a discussion about these project and inquiry about how we don't vote on every contract so why are we voting on these 3 contracts? Inspector C. Rodgers explained that this falls well within the budget. These sites require year 'round maintenance which keeps the cost down. We involve residents with their community while caring for that part of the city. It's an approach to have people take a vested interest within their community.

We need a Botanist advisor to inform us what to cut and when to cut. In the past we go in at the height of the fire season and that's not the best practice. It's better than clear cutting a couple times a year. Each section of the WPAD is different, the terrain, type of vegetation and property that surrounds a projects is unique unto itself. This undertaking of projects gives us a better opportunity to evaluate successes and failures.

It was noted that Vegetation Management Inspection staff has changed, instead of five inspectors for the city, there is now one. By shifting that responsibility to contractors under 2-year contracts, it removes day-to-day responsibility that staff used to oversee.

A Motion was presented and passed authorizing funds for the hiring of a biologist from the WPAD Vegetation Management portion of the WPAD budget. All were in favor.

Shelagh Brodersen, a volunteer coordinator under Council Member Jane Brunner's office spoke about maintaining parks. Garber Park Project volunteers heard about Beaconsfield and what seems like a perfect approach to apply to all park projects.

5. Advisory Committee Officer Nominations

Chair, Vice Chair, & Financial Liaison need replacements. Those terming out may still serve on sub-committees. The present Chair has been a committee member for 5 years because he was appointed by the At Large Councilmember and then by Mayor Dellums. S. Walsh moved to conduct nominations in Jan. Motion passed.

6. Pending List of Future Agenda Items:

- Creating a fire safe landscape that looks good – Bob Sieben

7. Other Business

Announcements:

Diablo Fire District will address structure safety, Jan.12, 2012 at Hiller Highland Country Club, 7 PM. It will be posted on their website.

Adjournment 8:08 PM

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