



Wildfire Prevention Assessment District

Citizens' Advisory Committee

Approved Meeting Minutes for

Thursday, January 15, 2015, 7:00 PM



Trudeau Center, 15500 Skyline Blvd., Oakland CA (Wheel Chair Accessible)

Committee Members in Attendance:

Fred Booker, Chair (District 1)

Susan Piper (District 1)

Clint Johnson (District 6)

Mary Thiessen, Recording Secretary (District 4)

Vacant (District 6)

Vacant (District 7)

Vacant (District 7)

Committee Members Absent:

Doug Wong, Vice Chair (At Large)

Ken Thames - Mayor's Representative

Chris Burgardt, Mayor's fire fighter rep.

Staff Present:

Vince Crudele - Supervisor, Vegetation Management Unit, Oakland Fire Department

Lin Barron attending for the Oakland Wildland Stewards (OWLS)

Meeting Called to Order: 7:05 PM

1. APPROVAL OF WPAD DRAFT MEETING MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 18, 2014.

The Board approved the meeting minutes for December 18, 2014 meeting.

2. OPEN PUBLIC FORUM

No Speaker Requests submitted.

3. REVIEW OF FINANCIALS

a. Ad Hoc Budget Committee for 2015-16 FY

In preparation for this upcoming fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015, an Ad Hoc Budget Committee, volunteers Ken Benson and Clint Johnson will begin the review process.

4. STAFF REPORT

Please see attached, "Oakland Fire Department Prevention Bureau Vegetation Management Unit Staff Report", January 15, 2015, submitted by Vincent Crudele, Vegetation Management Supervisor/Inspector.

Inspector Crudele informs the Board that he is down to 1 fulltime and 1 part time inspectors. Human Resources told Inspector Crudele that they anticipate making an offer for a fulltime inspector in early February.

Clint Johnson inquires about the District 6 Red Flag Warning sign. Inspector Crudele explains that he is waiting approval from Chief Reed.

5. CEQA/EIS FOR FEMA GRANT PROJECT

Inspector Crudele, Fred Booker and Mary Thiessen discussed and attempted to search out information on the FEMA Grant documentation and who is responsible for funding the reports requires by the FEMA grant. It is still unclear where the FEMA application is located and who is responsible, is it a necessity, and how quickly we need to have it completed. Fred emailed a request to Chief Reed and has not received a response.

Sue Piper explains that the City of Oakland needs to do CEQA report in order to comply with FEMA Grant requirements. Sue Piper than asks if the CEQA is for the entire city or just the Wildfire District?

Deputy Director Darin Ranelletti, City Department of Planning and Building, and acting Environmental Review Officer, "My understanding is that at least a portion of the FEMA Grant can be used for the CEQA review, to cover the City's acceptance of the FEMA Grant. Now if there are other actions that the City takes, those actions also could be subject to CEQA if they could have an environmental effect. So, if there are other activities that the City is doing, when the City takes that action to approve that, that's subject to CEQA. So we need to think about what activities is the District and or City planning to do and to see if those are subject to CEQA and what kind of analysis would be required."

Sue Piper asks if we can use the EIS from the FEMA review as the basis of our CEQA, so we don't have to start from scratch?

Deputy Director Ranelletti says, Yes, we think that the cost of the CEQA review on the FEMA Grant will be limited because of the work done for the EIS. A lot of the background data is there. We don't exactly know how much it would cost, given the number of factors including if there has been any changes since the EIS was prepared or more importantly what kind of public comments we will get during the CEQA review. So, if the City receives one comment letter on the CEQA document, that's going to be a lot different than a 100 letters that we would respond to.

Ken Benson states, As I understand it there would be funds from the Grantor (FEMA) that would cover within the context of what they are granting, CEQA moneys from that grant to cover the activities that were in that grant.

Deputy Director Ranelletti says, That's right, and only those activities.

Ken Benson then asks, So, if what they are granting is modifying what we applied to do, would those funds still cover what they are granting us to go about doing if we accept their response? So, the only

additional cost apparently would be the size of the response and may expand beyond the budget coming from the grant. If we choose to put other activities into this, that are beyond the initial scope of the grant, that would obviously require an additional environmental review.

Deputy Director Ranelletti, That is correct.

Sue Piper, If the CEQA we are doing is for what is in the grant and if I'm correct, you would be using herbicides.

Supervisor Crudele, Correct.

Sue Piper, Then would that CEQA be sufficient for us to amend the City's IPM, which we will need to do?

Deputy Director Ranelletti, I think we would be looking for areas where we could do analysis as part of the CEQA review of the Grant that could have a twofold, cover activities we are doing that overlap with the Grant. So, if there is a sufficient analysis in the CEQA review of the Grant activities, it's possible that it could cover other activities. It depends on what they are. So, if the FEMA Grant says we are doing work over here and there's no consideration analysis for this type of work over here, less likely to be covered, it all depends on what that analysis is.

Supervisor Crudele, There is some concern and questions about the three locations of the Grant area that the City of Oakland has. Chief Reed has asked, would this CEQA cover the entire High Fire Severity Zone/ the Urban Interface or will it simply just cover those areas. Because Chief Reed would like to do the same type of work that we do in the Grant areas at a future time when funds might become available through other sources. So, is this document only going to cover those three areas or do we have to have something that's Oakland Hills wide? And if so, based on your experience, what are we talking about cost wise? It seems to me what you are saying is the FEMA Grant money is only going to cover those three areas listed by the City of Oakland.

Deputy Director Ranelletti, "It's going to cover what the Grant is for. So, we need to read that grant, understand what the activities are and where those activities are going to take place and that's what the CEQA will cover.

Barbara Kluger, But if the EIR was prepared and covers more than the Grant area, then your application/ confession to CEQA references the Federal EIS, then you don't need a new EIR?

Deputy Director Ranelletti, So, we have FEMA giving us money, there's an EIS that analyzes that. FEMA is also saying, "Here's money to study under CEQA". Let's say, just for conversation we do an EIR in that now the City could do an EIR that covers other things. Now, FEMA is not going to cover those other things.

Barbara Kluger, But CEQA allows you to use the EIS in lieu of an additional EIR if it covers only those activities and area in the FEMA Grant, it should be simple to move that along where we have an EIS, this is what it says and we don't need a new EIR, right?

Deputy Director Ranelletti, Well, that action of the City Council accepting that Grant is subject to CEQA and so much of the analysis is already done in the EIS. But it would need to support some kind of CEQA document.

It is still unclear who officially applied for the FEMA Grant, where the records are of the WPAD providing Matching funds, and where there is a copy of the FEMA Application.

Supervisor Crudele asks if we have a person internally or do we contract out to do this? How long is this going to take? And how much is it going to cost?

Deputy Director Ranelletti, City staff typically does not prepare CEQA, however it would be prepared under the direction of City staff. The time will vary on factors such as: public comments and the complexity of the analysis. I don't know the cost, and I would suggest putting out a Request For Proposal.

Supervisor Crudele, Both the Public and the Fire Department have requested a Vegetation Management Plan for the Oakland Hills. A previous Plan was drafted, but not accepted by City Council because it did not have CEQA documentation to justify it. So, in order to accomplish that task I need to know how do I acquire this document that covers the entire Wildland Urban Interface?

Sue Piper asks how can we then move forward with an RFP?

Deputy Director Ranelletti, The main task would be identifying the activities that would be studied outside the FEMA Grant. As Vincent said, there was a Vegetation Management Plan drafted which would be a good foundation. That way we could let the consultants know what they would be analyzing, that's the first task. Then issuing the RFP is pretty straight forward.

Questions were asked about the Planning and Building Department's role in the process.

Deputy Director Ranelletti, Planning and Building would not look at what's in the Grant or what's funding what, we would defer to the Fire Department for that. But where I think the Planning and Building Department can assist is with identifying the tasks required for the CEQA Review. So, we would work with the Fire Department staff to write the RFP.

Some discussion was then brought up regarding doing an EIR or a vegetation management plan.

Fred Booker, We want to do a vegetation management plan (VMP) rather than an EIR. The VMP identifies each parcel, the hazard rating, what's being protected, what are the species, are there homes nearby, because that has greater impact on the parcel being treated versus something that has no impact.

Deputy Director Ranelletti, There are two things, first there's the Project, that's what you want to do, then there's the CEQA clearance or the EIR that studies that. It's just understanding what you have and how you're going to treat it.

This discussion will continue into the day of the Retreat on February 7, 2015.

6. OFD ANNUAL FLIER CHANGES

A few edits were still required. Mary Thiessen will make necessary edits and incorporate high resolution graphics and then email to Vincent who can then submit to the Fire Department for review.

7. GATEWAY GARDEN PANELS

Sue Piper discusses the Gateway Garden Panels and where she is with the process. The final panels are about ready for production and a few more sealed plates are required. She would like to move the budget from \$5,000 to \$6,000 to cover the costs and taxes. The panels should be up by July 2015.

Clint Johnson makes a motion to increase the budget for Gateway Garden Panels to \$6,000. The Board approves the increase.

8. SKYLINE BROOM PROJECT, FEBRUARY 21 & 22.

The Skyline Broom Project was discussed earlier in the Staff Report, section 4.

9. RETREAT, FEBRUARY 7TH

The Board discusses the need to publicize the Retreat on internet websites and the Montclarion newspaper. Fred Booker will also get an email address out for RSVP's.

10. ADJOURNMENT

CITY OF OAKLAND



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January 15, 2015

Oakland Fire Department Fire Prevention Bureau Vegetation Management Unit Staff
Report

WPAD Board Members,

Fire Suppression District Inspector Staffing;
Currently staffing has now been reduced to 1 full time Inspector (Orduna) and 1 part time Inspector (Dieffenbach - 15 hours per week = 2 days). As such we are focusing on complaints, weekly chipping & debris pile pick up contracts and planning of winter vegetation removal contracts only. The additional Full Time Fire Suppression District Inspector position has not yet been filled by DHRM.

Retreat Room Reservation;

The Trudeau Center has been reserved for 6 hours on February 7th 2015 per Robin Secrist at EBRP 510-544-2103.

Winter Broom Project;

The volunteer Winter Broom Pulling project has been tentatively scheduled for Saturday February 21st & Sunday February 22nd 2015 from 9 AM to 3 PM. A walk through of the project was conducted on January 9th, 2015 at 10 AM. OFD will have an Engine Company present each day to assist the volunteers. Ken Thames and I have been working together along with PWA to provide tools, tarps, portable bathrooms and dumpsters.

Broom Busters;

Broom is being removed from the Public Works Yard on Shepherd Canyon Road by a group of probationers assigned to PWA. PWA Supervisor Clarence Rice reached out to FPB to inquire if we could use the help. As such, we are getting this large invasive stand of broom pulled at NO COST to the WPAD. Work is on-going. So far they have been on location for the past 3 days and removed several hundred yards of broom.

FEMA Grant;

Darin Ranelletti with the City of Oakland will address the need for a comprehensive CEQA report.

- A. Completing a localized EIS & CEQA which addresses the areas of the FEMA grant only, thus expediting that project.
- B. Conducting a complete full WPAD District report to address all future projects and work which can then be presented for City Council approval with a specific Vegetation Management Plan.

Thank you,

Vincent Crudele
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