

MINUTES



**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
August 26, 2003
Council Chambers
250 Hamilton Ave.**

Commissioners Present: Anne Cribbs, Bill Garvey, Ellie Gioumouis, Jennifer Hagan, Edie Keating and Lynn Torin

Commissioners Absent: Judith Steiner

Others Present: Vic Ojakian, City Council Liaison
PAUSD Attendees: Nicholas Morisco, Architect; Larry Thomas, Terman School Principal; Augie Lavagnino
Community Members: David Clark, Floyd Kessler, Michael Maurier, Stan Louis, Tim Josling, Ken Szuta, Andy Drexler, Richard Neeley, Zachariah Bering, Teri Blackburn, Martha Bowden, Kate Hill, Betsy Allyn, Herb Borock, Joe Hirsch

Staff Present: Paul Thiltgen, Dan Williams, Paul Dias, Virginia Gibbons, Wynne Furth (Acting City Attorney), Richard James, Chris Neier, Eric Christensen, Dawn Calvert, Beth Young, John Lusardi and Dave Dockter

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order by Chairman Garvey at 6:45 p.m.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: Betsy Allyn, 4186 Wellman, PA: spoke regarding signage stating that people can't use the park from 7:30-3:30 and that signs cannot be put up keeping the public out of the park.

AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS: None.

BUSINESS:

1. **Approval of Minutes of Special Meeting of July 31, 2003.** Minutes were approved (Commissioners Cribbs, Gioumouis, Hagan, Torin) with 1 abstention (Chairman Garvey).
2. **Terman Park – City Council referral of PAUSD/Terman long-term solution for basketball and tennis facilities at Terman Park.** Paul Thiltgen reinforced to the Commission its role to provide a recommendation to Council and then gave the



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Commission background information on Terman Park. Originally Palo Alto schools and parks were designed together to jointly share space. In the early 1980's PAUSD sold Terman to the City. In 2001 the Joint Use Agreement transferred Terman land to PAUSD in exchange for Cubberley High School. It was a different environment at that time and the Joint Use Agreement was prepared with a community center in mind. There was no issue of security or child safety like today.

Paul went on to explain that the major challenge encountered in this project was the multitude of communities involved; the neighborhood community, people who have ownership in the Terman Plan, the school district, the school community (parents/kids), and park users. The question was how to compromise and still meet the needs of kids. Staff tried to come up with a solution that maintains the spirit of the Terman Plan. The compromises won't please everyone, but will meet some of the needs of everyone involved.

Paul mentioned the number of groups involved in the planning, the wide variety of views involved, and the compromises made by all parties in order to bring the plan before the Commission. Paul went on to state that the School District is on a time schedule but that this schedule does not apply to the Commission and decisions should not be based on the School District's time schedule.

Paul then presented the staff's recommendation for Attachment A, which takes into consideration the tree issues and proposes that the park lose little turf, but maintains its program areas.

Augie Lavagnino of the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) stated that the School District's priorities are adequate facilities, adequate supervision of students, and after school programs. He then asked architect, Larry Thomas, to present the School District's new option, a modification of Attachment C, which would make no impact on the trees, less impact on park space, and included dual use basketball and tennis courts.

Commissioner Gioumouis raised the issue of windscreens and questioned the status. Mr. Lavagnino stated that they are looking at various screens and plan to keep screens in place.

Oral Communications

1. **David Clark, 4218 Pomona Ave.:** reminded the Commission that there are 88 homes neighboring Terman Park and that their concerns are safety, tranquility, plausibility of plans, retaining the neighborhood green space and requested that the Commission be sensitive to the needs of the neighborhood.
2. **Floyd Kessler, 4272 Los Altos Ave.:** stated that it has been 25 years since the Terman Specific Plan was written and that he felt the tennis courts should be restriped to accommodate basketball, and the baseball diamond be moved.



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3. **Michael Maurier, 646 Fairmede Ave.:** supports position taken in Greenacres I letter and its attachments. Propose that new courts be added only to the southwest end of the tennis courts and oppose building basketball or tennis courts near the Glenbrook entrance.
4. **Stan Louis, 4206 Pomona Ave.:** stated that the Terman Specific Plan reflects the desire of the neighborhood and that Attachment B would result in increased noise. He recommends Attachment C, or the new plan presented by PAUSD.
5. **Tim Josling, 4250 Pomona Ave.:** stated that he is against any land use in space located near the neighborhood.
6. **Ken Szuta, 647 Fairmede Ave.:** stated that he likes the new PAUSD proposal and that Attachment C is the best plan due to less noise impact and no tree removal.
7. **Andy Drexler, 12580 La Cuesta:** has a son at Terman as well as coaches, and feels that the courts are needed as soon as possible. Half courts are not working well and requested that the decision be made quickly.
8. **Richard Neeley, 4256 Pomona Ave.:** spokesperson for Greenacres I referred to his presentation, which was sent to the Commissioners prior to the meeting and was available to interested parties. Summary: “propose that basketball courts be built according to Plan 1 or 2 (of presentation), with preference to Plan 1. Greenacres I neighbors adamantly oppose any decision to build basketball or tennis courts near the Glenbrook entrance or any decision of the Commission, including inaction, that would result in courts being built along the property line of Pomona residents.” He stated that in the past residents have always been left out of the planning process regarding Terman Park. Requested that it be noted that the Terman Termites were not at the meeting and that the Termites may have found another location to play tennis.
9. **Teri Blackburn, 408 Grant Ave., #308:** is PTA president and has a son at Terman and is requesting enhancement to the park in the form of recreation. Noted that there are 60 special needs students at Terman and is concerned for their safety, particularly if cars will be using the parking lot. Drivers will not be able to see handicapped students.
10. **Zachariah Bering 408 Grant Ave., #308:** agrees with mother, Terri Blackburn.
11. **Martha Bowden, Saddle Ct., Los Altos Hills:** has a 7th grade son at Terman and feels there is urgency to making the changes at Terman. Remembers hearing that a middle school was needed 8 years ago and the problem still has not been resolved. Noted that there are 12 basketball teams and only two courts presently available. She has no preference for which the courts are placed, just wants to get it done.
12. **Kate Hill, 884 Los Robles:** has a 6th grade student and requests a quick resolution.
13. **Betsy Allyn, 4186 Wellman:** stated that the Commission’s priority should be the safeguard of the parks and that the safety of the school should be left up to the school district. She referred to her disappointment in the July 22nd meeting when



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the City Attorney was unable to attend, and stated her opinion that Chairman Garvey should be removed from his position.

14. **Herb Borock, PO Box 632:** stated his concerns about the park charter, was disappointed that there was no attorney presence at the July 22nd meeting, complained that the minutes of the July 22, 2003 meeting are in draft form and not available to the public, and that the park is for the users of the park, not basketball courts.
15. **Joe Hirsch, 4149 _____ Ave.:** mentioned that Stanford has 3.5 acres behind Gunn High School that is available for use and suggested that courts could be built on this property. He requested that no changes be made to the trees or parkland at Terman and that the parkland be preserved as permanent open space.

A question and answer period ensued in which the Commission discussed the following issues:

- Which Palo Alto parks presently have two basketball courts;
- Giving up parkland;
- Opposition to giving up trees;
- New PAUSD proposal;
- Ordinance changes;
- Number of courts necessary to fill need;
- Putting courts in another park;
- Cons of PAUSD proposal;
- Bus turnaround and parking lot at Terman;
- Creating new tennis courts in at Mitchell Park

It was determined that PAUSD's new proposal is extremely similar to Attachment C and therefore, a viable option. Paul Thiltgen proposed that staff would work with PAUSD to iron out the differences between the two plans.

Commissioner Garvey made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Cribbs:

MOTION: Recommend that Council accept Attachment A, minus two courts. **FOR: 5** (Commissioners Cribbs, Garvey, Hagan, Keating, Torin) **AGAINST: 1** (Commissioner Gioumouis) **ABSENT: 1** (Commissioner Steiner)

Paul Thiltgen stated that staff is comfortable with Commissioner Garvey's motion as it has the least impact on parkland. Both plans will have to go back to the Planning Department for review.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Commissioner Torin made special note that Commissioner Steiner's absence was due to a recent surgery and that she is recovering well.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

