



CITY OF PIEDMONT

Park Commission Agenda
Wednesday, September 4, 2019
5:30 p.m.

City Council Chambers, 120 Vista Avenue, Piedmont, CA

Call to Order Pledge of Allegiance

Public Forum This is an opportunity for members of the audience to speak on an item not on the agenda. The 10 minute period will be divided evenly between those wishing to address the Commission.

Regular Agenda

1. Approval of Park Commission Minutes for August 7, 2019
2. Consideration of a Request to Remove a Street Tree at 331 Magnolia Ave. by Eric Schen and Laurie Lau
3. Update on Annual Playground Inspections
4. Update on Lower Grand Avenue Median Landscape Improvements
5. Monthly Maintenance Report: Park, Open Space, and Street Tree Update for the Month of August 2019

Announcements, old business and consideration of future agenda items

Adjourn

Materials related to an item on this agenda submitted to the Park Commission are available for public inspection in the Public Works Department during normal business hours.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk at (510) 420-3040. Notification at least two business days preceding the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. [28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title II]

In accordance with G.C. Sec. 54954.2(a) this notice and agenda were posted on the City Hall bulletin board and also in the Piedmont Police Department on August 30, 2019.

DRAFT

PIEDMONT PARK COMMISSION

Regular Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, August 7, 2019

A Regular Session of the Piedmont Park Commission was held August 7, 2019, in the City Hall Council Chambers at 120 Vista Avenue. In accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2(a) the agenda for this meeting was posted for public inspection on August 2, 2019.

CALL TO ORDER Chairperson Goodman called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Chairperson Goodman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL Present: Chairperson Betsy Goodman; Vice Chairperson Patty Dunlap; Commissioners Amber Brumfiel, Jim Horner, Brian Mahany, Eileen Ruby and Robin Wu

Staff Present: Parks and Project Manager Nancy Kent, Public Works Director Chester Nakahara and Senior Maintenance Worker Nick Millosovich

PUBLIC FORUM There were no speakers for Public Forum.

REGULAR AGENDA

Minutes **Resolved,** that the Park Commission approves the Park Commission Minutes for June 5, 2019, as submitted.

Moved by Dunlap, seconded by Ruby
Ayes: Brumfiel, Dunlap, Goodman, Horner, Mahany, Ruby, and Wu
Noes: None

Piedmont Evergreen & 4th of July Recycling & Composting Efforts Parks and Project Manager Nancy Kent introduced Laura McKaughan from Abbe & Associates who is working with staff to provide outreach and assistance to increase recycling, composting and reduction of waste to landfills.

Ms. McKaughan gave a presentation on the efforts on the 4th of July to provide trash, recycle, and compost bin for use by attendees. As a result, residents achieved an 81% waste diversion rate. She also indicated that their team is preparing for Harvest Festival and other seasonal events. Ms. Kent spoke of the methods used to help residents properly sort their waste.

In conclusion, Ms. McKaughan stated that the next goal is to support the use of student ambassadors at the Harvest Festival to increase diversion rates.

Magnolia Avenue Street Tree Designation Ms. Kent stated the Commission previously discussed street tree designation on Magnolia Avenue at its June meeting and reviewed the history of the discussion. At the Commission's previous meeting, staff presented a concept for two different trees to be designated: a smaller scale tree under utility lines and a larger scale tree where there were no utilities. At that meeting, the Commission requested additional information from staff.

Ms. Kent then presented the concept plan illustrating a proposed planting scheme with smaller trees under the utilities and larger trees placed where there were no overhead wires. If the Commission adopts this plan, it would guide future street tree plantings as the Liquid Ambar trees are removed and replaced.

In response to Commission questions, Public Works Director Chester Nakahara explained that staff had originally proposed removing 47 trees in conjunction with the paving of Magnolia Avenue. This number was reduced to eighteen trees, which were necessary to further the project. Mr. Nakahara indicated that the remaining trees were put on a watch list. Staff will watch those rated at level 2 or worse, will return to the Commission and indicate which trees would be removed and their reasons, and he thinks it will be easily 10 years before the street is completely replanted.

There was no **Public Testimony** on this matter.

The Commission discussed the proposed planting scheme at length.

In response to concerns raised by Commissioners, Ms. Kent stated almost all of the 20 existing Chinese Pistache street trees are not planted in the appropriate zones and are in locations where a larger scale tree, as proposed in the planting scheme, could be planted. She indicated that staff could consider moving these Pistache in order to implement a plan for continuous sweeps of large scale trees where there are no constraints. Ms. Kent indicated that as Magnolia Avenue is a prominent entrance to the City center, she thinks it is worth considering planting as many large scale trees on the street as possible to mitigate the loss of the Liquid Ambers.

Commissioner Horner provided commentary on the proposed planting scheme. He discussed the pros and cons of several species of trees, the limited space these trees will be planted in, issues and suggestions regarding irrigation, the current and future visual setting on Magnolia Avenue, and his preference to have long stretches of the same species for a stronger visual impact.

Chairperson Goodman thanked Commissioner Horner for his expertise and comments. She suggested voting on two trees, noting neighbors like the Autumn Blaze Maple. She suggested putting large trees wherever possible and putting the Chinese Pistache underneath power lines.

Ms. Kent suggested the Commission make a motion to designate the two trees with the caveat that as additional planting moves forward, this be brought to the Park Commission to review how staff is implementing the concept plan. Regarding the concept plan, there is a slight variation in spacing of the larger versus smaller tree, as well as nuances of the driveways and pull boxes, etc. Staff can walk the street, talk with residents and return with a plan that shows how it would provide infill and costs.

Ms. Kent then summarized the Commission's desire to explore new tree options elsewhere and not for Magnolia Avenue, to leave in place the existing Chinese Pistache, guide future planting with the concept plan, and to choose the Red Autumn Blaze Maple. She asked and confirmed the use of Chinese Pistache near power lines as the infill tree and infill with the Autumn Blaze Maple tree in clusters.

Resolved, that the Park Commission designates the Red Autumn Blaze Maple and the Chinese Pistache as the street trees for Magnolia Avenue;

Resolved Further, that the Red Autumn Blaze Maple will be planted in clusters in areas where there is no conflict with overhead utility lines and the Chinese Pistache will be planted where there may be conflict with overhead utility lines;

Resolved Further, that staff is directed to bring a concept planting plan back to the Commission for review.

Moved by Ruby, seconded by Dunlap

Ayes: Brumfiel, Dunlap, Goodman, Horner, Mahany, Ruby, and Wu

Noes: None

**Temporary Placement
Signs in Piedmont Park
Designating a
Philosopher's Walk**

Ms. Kent indicated that resident Nancy Lehrkind had requested the placement of temporary signs in Piedmont Park to designate a philosopher's walk. She stated that the Philosopher's Walk Committee is a group of residents that have asked for permission to place signs in Piedmont Park near the Tea House to create a self-guided walking tour.

Nancy Lehrkind provided an overview of the self-guided tour proposal, stating this would be an educational use for parks in Piedmont. She said Ms. Kent created a tasteful signage design and they would change the code monthly to promote one philosopher per month. Their committee would maintain the signage and encourage people to come and participate.

There was no **Public Testimony** on this matter.

The Commission discussed the matter at length. Commissioners were generally supportive of the overall concept, but raised concerns about the proposal, including conflict with Piedmont Beautification Foundation memorial trees, the private use of public spaces, and lack of integration with the schools.

The Commission indicated that this type of activity, if vetted properly, could be a public amenity, but more detail and study was required before this request could be granted. The Commission requested that staff create protocols for implementing the project before moving the request forward. The Commission thanked Ms. Lehrkind for the proposal.

**Oakmont Ave.
Improvements**

Ms. Kent provided an update on the Oakmont Avenue tree replacement. She indicated that nearly ninety percent of the trees have been planted, irrigation was in place, and that the concrete work has been completed. She reported that the trees planted have a nice size and presence. Ms. Kent indicated her hope that residents will water them.

There was no **Public Testimony** on this matter.

**Lower Grand Ave.
Landscape Improvement**

Ms. Kent reported staff has met with the City's new landscape maintenance contractor, Terra Landscape, regarding this project. She indicated that staff is in the process of finalizing the landscape improvement costs for this project.

There was no **Public Testimony** on this matter.

**Monthly Maintenance
Report –June/July 2019**

Senior Maintenance Worker Nick Millosovich provided the maintenance report for June and July of 2019. He detailed staff's work preparing for the 4th of July festivities, including pruning of trees, mulching work, setting up, sweeping and weeding of the parade route, and planting of trees. He indicated that preparations for the beginning of school were under way, including pruning and cleaning of pedestrian pathways and tree trimming.

With regard to fire safety, Mr. Millosovich reported that Cal Fire has removed over eighty cubic yards of fuel from the hillside behind the corporation yard to reduce fuel load in the area.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairperson Goodman presented a letter from the Piedmont Beautification Foundation regarding vandalism occurring in Dracena Park. She also announced that a Shakespeare in the Park event will be held at Dracena Quarry on Sunday, August 11th from 3-5:30 p.m. Those interested in learning more can contact Nancy Lehrkind.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 4, 2019.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairperson Goodman adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

DRAFT

City of Piedmont
PARK COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

DATE: September 4, 2019

TO: Park Commissioners

FROM: Nancy B. Kent, Parks and Project Manager

SUBJECT: Consideration of a Request to Remove a Street Tree at 331 Magnolia Ave. by Eric Schen and Laurie Lau

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the Request to Remove a Street Tree, tag # 23 at 331 Magnolia Ave.

BACKGROUND

The tree in front of 331 Magnolia Avenue, tree tag #23, was reviewed by arborists from HortScience/ Bartlett Consulting as part of the Tree Assessment for Magnolia Avenue report dated April 26, 2019. In the arborists report, 70 Liquidambar street trees were reviewed. The purpose of the report was to assess the health and structural condition of trees, evaluate the impacts of construction and provide recommendations for tree preservation and removal. The report provided an evaluation of tree health and structural condition and evaluation of project impacts and recommendations for action.

Tree assessment consisted of a visual inspection from the ground evaluation of the health and structural condition of the trees and ranked trees using a scale of 0 – 5. An overview of the rankings for the assessed trees is as follows:

- **1- very poor condition: (11) trees :** Tree in severe decline, dieback of scaffold branches and/or trunk; most of foliage from epicormic shoots (secondary shoots that arise along the trunk and branches); extensive structural defects that cannot be abated
- **2- poor condition: (40) trees:** Tree in decline, epicormic growth, extensive dieback of medium to large branches, significant structural defects that cannot be abated.
- **3- fair condition :(17) trees:** Tree with moderate vigor, moderate twig and small branch dieback, thinning of crown, poor leaf color, moderate structural defects that might be mitigated with regular care.
- **4- good condition: (2) trees :** Tree with slight decline in vigor, small amount of twig dieback, or minor structural defects that could be corrected.

In the arborist report, Tree #23 is one of the trees ranked in poor condition and the tree and condition of the adjacent sidewalk has been described as follows:

Severe displacement of sidewalk & curb; large surface roots;
root pruned in the past; codominant trunks @ 8'; vertical;
topped; multiple attachments high in crown; poor crown form;
history of branch reduction; twig dieback.

Currently, this tree is on the phase 2 watch list of the Magnolia Ave. street trees.

DISCUSSION

Eric Schen and Laurie Lau have requested that this street tree be removed, in part due to the extensive shallow root system that extends into their front yard and the damage the roots have caused to their private property. In compliance with City regulations, Mr. Chen has provided the City with a formal application for tree removal and has submitted the required petition that was circulated to the adjacent neighbors notifying them of the tree removal request.

In addition, due to damage the street tree has done to private property, Mr. Schen has begun the process of filing a claim with the City. The process of remediating the damage to the front yard will require the removal of the root system. Consulting with Jim Clark as to the impact of root removal, he stated:

Assuming that roots would be severed at the back edge of the sidewalk, this would be approximately 6-feet from the trunk of the tree. Removing roots from a tree in poor condition will only hasten its decline and will increase the potential for the entire tree to fall to some degree.

With this additional information on the impact of root removal on the tree #23, from Jim Clark, and the review of the City's arborist, the removal of this street tree is recommended.

CITY OF PIEDMONT CALIFORNIA



Public Works Department

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Piedmont Park Commission will consider a request from residents Eric Schen and Laurie Lau of 331 Magnolia Ave. to remove (1) mature sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) tree tag # 22.

These sweetgum street trees, were previously assessed in an arborist's report entitled Magnolia Avenue Tree Assessment dated April 2019 by HortScience/Bartlett Consulting that was presented to the Park Commission at their May 1, 2019 meeting. The City hired the consulting arborists to prepare a report on all sixty-eight (68) sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) trees along Magnolia Avenue between Hillside Ave. and Nova Drive as part of the 2018 Paving Project. The report provides an assessment of tree health and structural conditions, assessment of tree risk and management recommendations, which includes tree tag 22. The arborist report is available on the City's website.

This is your official notification of this request. The matter will be heard by the City Park Commission at their meeting on **Wednesday, September 4, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, located in City Hall, 120 Vista Avenue.**

You are invited to attend the Park Commission meeting and express your opinion. You may choose to write your opinion and address the response to the Piedmont Park Commission, c/o Nancy Kent, 120 Vista Avenue, Piedmont, CA 94611 or send an e-mail to nkent@piedmont.ca.gov.

For further information, contact Nancy Kent, Parks & Project Manager at 420-3064. The Park Commission meeting, including this issue, will be televised on KCOM-TV, Channel 27, and the City's government access TV station.

Nancy Kent, Parks & Project Manager

Posted: August 15, 2019

Tree Removal Request: 331 Magnolia Ave. : Site Photos



Photo A



Photo B



Photo E



Photo C



Photo D



Photo F



Photo G

City of Piedmont
PARK COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

DATE: September 4, 2019
TO: Park Commissioners
FROM: Nancy B. Kent, Parks and Project Manager
SUBJECT: Update on Annual Playground Inspections

RECOMMENDATION

This is an informational item. No action is required.

BACKGROUND

As part of the City's comprehensive review of the Facilities Maintenance Program, Staff is charged with assessing the various play structures for safety compliance with industry standards. In August 2019, the City requested playground safety audits for all City parks. The last time the audit was performed was in January of 2018. The City has six play areas with structures in our parks including:

- a swing set and climbing structure at the Recreation Department Tot lot,
- our biggest climbing structure and swing set at Piedmont Park,
- a climbing structure at Hampton Park,
- tot lot play area at the PlaySchool at Hampton Park
- two swings sets, a climbing structure and climbing wall at Lower Dracena Park
- a climbing structure and swing set at Beach Tot lot.

There are two areas we have playground matting:

- Dracena Park
- Lower level of the Community Hall : Play Area

In August, Timothy R. Kelly, a Certified Playground Safety Inspector reviewed all six play areas and their play equipment, performed a drop test on the two areas with playground matting and a drop test at the climbing wall in Lower Dracena Park.

The safety audit reviews the equipment based on the current playground safety standards and guidelines set forth by the American Society of Testing and Materials and the Consumer Product Safety Commission. The City requests that play equipment be inspected annually and will update the Commissioners once the field reports and audits once they have been received.

City of Piedmont
PARK COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

DATE: September 4, 2019
TO: Park Commissioners
FROM: Nancy B. Kent, Parks and Project Manager
SUBJECT: Update on Lower Grand Avenue Median Landscape Improvements

RECOMMENDATION

This is an informational item. No action is required.

BACKGROUND

The irrigation system on the Lower Grand Median has been completely renovated by Public Works crews coordinated by Irrigation Specialist Alberto Barron. The irrigation controller was upgraded last year with a Smart Controller and the old pop-up sprays heads were replaced with MP Rotator nozzles. The MP Rotators feature, multi-trajectory rotating streams that deliver water at a steady rate. This slower application rate allows water to soak in at rates that soils can absorb. In general, the City has seen a water savings when nozzles have been switched from conventional spray heads to MP Rotators.

Terra Landscape crews have completed extensive pruning and removal of dead plant material. Compost to enrich the new planting areas has been spread including along the Pittosporum hedge that runs along the Grand Ave. edge of the median.

Over three hundred new shrubs and sixteen new trees will be planted starting in early September. New planting areas will also be top dressed with a new mulch layer. The renovations are expected to be completed by mid- September.