



SONOMA COUNTY

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION
AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

Thursday, June 28, 2007

REGULAR MEETING

**SONOMA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACE
DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Meeting begins at 5:30 p.m.

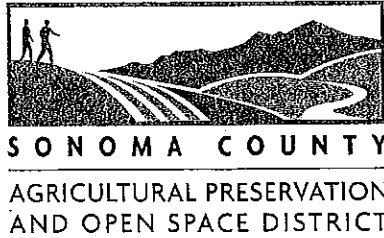
MEMBERS PLEASE CALL IF UNABLE TO ATTEND

AGENDA

1. **Public Comment** - Comments on items not listed on the agenda
(*Time is limited to 3 minutes per person/item*)
2. **Approval of Minutes** [Attachment "A"] **ACTION**
3. **Announcements from Advisory Committee Members** **INFORMATIONAL**
4. **General Manager's Report** **INFORMATIONAL**
 - Limited Tax Bonds – Status of AB 1063
 - Operations and Maintenance Policy Update
 - New Acquisitions
 - California Climate Change Registry
 - Bay Area Open Space Council Annual Conference
 - Land Trust Alliance Rally
5. **Matching Grant Program** [Attachment "B"]
Resolution Recommending Projects under the District's 2007 Matching Grant Program
Presentation by District Staff/Subcommittee **DISCUSSION / ACTION**
6. **Projects in Negotiation Chart** [Attachment "C"] **INFORMATIONAL**
7. **Adjournment**

Next scheduled meeting: July 26, 2007

DISABLED ACCOMMODATION: If you have a disability which requires the agenda materials to be in an alternative format or requires an interpreter or other person to assist you while attending this meeting, please contact Janet Christensen at (707) 565-7363, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting to ensure arrangements for accommodation.



Attachment "A"

SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MAY 24, 2007 MINUTES

5:45 p.m. Meeting convened at the District office, 747 Mendocino Avenue,
Suite 100, Santa Rosa, California

Members Present

Andy Rodgers	Janet Orchard	Victoria Wikle
Douglas Hanford	Cary Fargo	Jake Mackenzie
Yancey Forest Knowles	Suzanne Doyle	Kate Symonds

Members Absent

Helen Bacigalupi	Paul Brophy	Dennis Murphy
Mike Strunk	Mike McGuire	

Staff Present

Andrea Mackenzie, General Manager, Maria J. Cipriani, Assistant General Manager; Marta Puente, Open Space Planner; Janet Christensen, Advisory Committee Secretary.

Public Attendees

David Hansen, Kenyon Webster, Sherry Pimsler and Susan Kirks

Public Comment No comment

Approval of Minutes

Chair Forest Knowles called for comments on the minutes of April 26, 2007. Hearing none he called for the question. Motion by Jake Mackenzie and second by Victoria Wikle to approve the minutes.

Announcement from Advisory Committee Members

As co-chair of the Green Vision Group, Mr. Mackenzie reported that the group is looking toward the future for ways to preserve the character of the Bay Area in terms of open space, active agriculture, and recreational opportunities throughout the nine-county Bay Area. Over the past year, the group has created a map which identifies all of the areas that would be suitable for preservation by either acquisition of fee title or easement or by policy determinations. The group will assist the Association of Bay Area Governments to identify primary conservation areas to complement development which will help to achieve this vision of city-centered growth with permanently protected open space.

Andy Rodgers announced that there is an event called 'Day on the Water' on the Petaluma River on June 2nd from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. The event is organized by a coalition of the North Bay Rowing Club, Traditional Small Craft Association and three different Outrigger Clubs.

Chair Forest Knowles encouraged Advisory Committee members to sign up and join staff at the District's booth at the Wednesday Night Market throughout the summer months.

Kate Symonds announced that the Open Space Authority approved \$500,000 towards the purchase of the 29-acre Lower Pitkin Marsh property at its meeting on May 17. The Sonoma Land Trust will negotiate the transaction with the landowner and other partner organizations will help out with developing a management strategy for this botanical treasure trove.

Chair Forest Knowles announced that copies of the Advisory Committee's letter of support to the District's Board of Directors in support of the General Manager's recommended use of limited tax bonds were available for members.

General Manager's Report:

Acknowledgement of Jake Mackenzie

Chair Forest Knowles joined Andrea Mackenzie, General Manager, in acknowledging Advisory Committee, Jake Mackenzie, for his outstanding service in representing the Mayors' and Councilmembers' Association for the past nine years. The Chair presented and read a Resolution of Appreciation to Jake from the Advisory Committee. On behalf of the Open Space District staff, Ms. Mackenzie gave Jake a framed photograph of the Oken property in recognition of his significant service and commitment to protecting agriculture and open space in Sonoma County.

Operations and Maintenance – Proposed Budget Policy

Andrea Mackenzie, General Manager, presented committee members with a draft budget policy for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) which will implement provisions of the recently passed Measure F, which includes an expenditure plan now referred to as the 2006 Expenditure Plan. The new plan includes limited funding for initial access, operations and maintenance of recreational lands purchased in accordance with this plan. The key provision is that no more than 10% of the total tax over the life of Measure F can be used for operations and maintenance. Ms. Mackenzie met with the Auditor-Controller, County Counsel and consultant, Tom Ford, to discuss administrative guidelines for operations and maintenance and devise a budget policy which would ensure the 10% cap would not be exceeded. After conducting research, District staff is proposing that *“reasonable and necessary costs incurred for maintaining park and open space improvements and providing services for public use for properties acquired for recreational purposes – capital improvement project costs are excluded”* would be used to define the term Operations and Maintenance. In both Measures C and F, the language is very clear that recreation is subordinate to other conservation purposes. The emphasis for Operations and Maintenance funding will be low-intensity uses, such as payment for park rangers, trash pickup, or trail erosion repair. These funds would not be used for building capital infrastructure on land purchased for recreation such as restrooms, or a visitor's center.

The overall policy guideline for the Operations and Maintenance Program will be to transfer recreational properties to appropriate recreational partners early in the process. In some instances, however, the District will retain title to some properties purchased for recreation, which for one reason or another cannot be transferred at this time. For example, Calabazas Creek will be managed by the District, for the foreseeable future, as a low-intensity Open Space Preserve using O & M funds. Three years was considered an appropriate and reasonable time limit for O & M funding public access – exceptions may be negotiated under certain circumstances. Grant Agreements between the District and the recreational partner are negotiated at the time of purchase or subsequent to the purchase. After the transfer of the property, responsibilities of the District and the recreational entity will be outlined. The property must be managed consistent with the conservation easement and an audit of the O & M funds spent will be conducted on an annual basis. Most importantly, the policy will be consistent whether the entity be a city, county or non-profit.

With regards to Operations and Maintenance and the Matching Grant Program, a major function of the Matching Grant Program is to help cities, non-profit organizations and the County to launch open space and recreation projects near cities or in urbanized unincorporated areas. Emphasis is given to projects that make critical connections between protected lands and between cities and the county. Consideration is given to grantees that are prepared to take responsibility for the property. A city or non-profit organization may have access to other sources of funding that would acquire, develop or restore aspects of a project, but may lack start-up funding for operations and maintenance. These requests will be considered on a case by case basis looking at the entirety of the funding. To budget funds for O & M, 10% of anticipated sales tax revenue is proposed be appropriated annually. Specific project needs will be calculated and any unspent balance will go into an endowment that would continue to grow over time. These funds will go into an Open Space/Special Tax account and can not be transferred to the County's General Fund, but would be dedicated for Open Space. The Board of Directors will have discretion over how the endowment funds are appropriated. The draft budget policy will be presented to the Open Space Authority at its June 7th meeting for consistency with the 2006 Expenditure Plan.

Grazing as a Resource Management Tool

Presentation by Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District was postponed until a future meeting.

Matching Grant Program 2007

Marta Puente, Open Space Planner, stated that the Matching Grant program is referenced in the District's Expenditure Plan in the 'Other Open Space Projects' category which includes, but is not limited to urban open space and recreation projects within and near incorporated areas and other urbanized areas of Sonoma County. Funds for these projects are available to public agencies, cities and non-profit organizations with preference given to acquisition and development projects that link communities. Examples of these projects include: creek restoration and enhancement, such as along the Petaluma River, Santa Rosa Creek, and the Laguna de Santa Rosa, trails and urban green space. Eligible matching grant projects include: acquisition of land to protect significant natural habitats, agricultural resources, and lands for local open space and recreation. They also include restoration and development projects, such as enhancement of critical habitat, and site improvements to facilitate initial opening of lands for public access and recreational use. The program requires a matching contribution of either direct funds from an agency or organizational budget, private donations, or federal, state, local or community grants and in-kind services or a combination of all of the above. The Matching Grant program provides funds primarily for land acquisition and may also provide funds for initial development of projects, habitat restoration and enhancement. This program promotes partnerships, community connections and public access and educational opportunities.

Ms. Puente introduced the following Matching Grant Program (MGP) applications received by the District for 2007:

1. Applicant: Russian Riverkeeper

This project proposes purchase of a conservation easement over a 5-acre riparian property held by Russian Riverkeeper located in downtown Guerneville on the north side of the river. The project consists of invasive plant removal, creation of a permeable trail system, native plant re-vegetation, and an interpretive element to educate residents and visitors. The project cost is \$645,000 and the funding request is \$50,000. Matching funding is from the Community Foundation, Russian River Redevelopment and Marmot Mountain LLC.

2. Applicant: Sonoma County Regional Parks Department for the West County Regional Trail. This project proposes construction of a trailhead on county-owned land located between Forestville and Graton. The parking lot will provide parking spaces for trail users and a safe area for school buses and will also provide wheelchair users an access path from the parking lot to the trail. The project cost is \$100,000 and the funding request is \$88,000.

3. Applicant: City of Sebastopol
This project will acquire and improve the Village Park Mobile Home property located on the Laguna de Santa Rosa channel and the Highway 12 entrance to Sebastopol. The project would result in a connection to the city's Laguna de Santa Rosa Wetlands Preserve. The City is requesting approximately \$1.9 million and is proposing a match of approximately \$1.2 million.

4. Applicant: City of Sebastopol
This project will fund recreation and enhancement projects: 1) Request of \$57,000 for playground improvements in Libbey Park to be matched by a contribution of \$85,000 for improvements and \$75,000 for maintenance; and 2) Request for \$529,575 for the Sebastopol Skate Park and Community Garden project to be matched by \$1.1 million.

5. Applicant: California Farmlink
This project proposes to conserve farmland on three small farm properties encompassing approximately 29 acres immediately surrounding Sebastopol - an apple orchard of six acres on High School Road; nursery, fruit trees, and vegetable crops of 14 acres on Pleasant Hill Road; of the 9 acres on Cunningham Road 6 acres would be farmed and the remaining 3 acres along Cunningham Creek and Marsh would be restored. The project cost is \$4.5 million and the funding request is \$770,000.

6. Applicant: City of Santa Rosa
This project will enhance recreation and transportation opportunities at three locations along Santa Rosa Creek. The City is requesting \$694,399 to complete the approximately \$1.5 million project and has secured matching funds. The improvements consist of erecting a bridge at A Place to Play, constructing an access ramp at Dutton Avenue, and completing a gap in the existing pathway between Streamside Drive and Mission Avenue.

7. Applicant: City of Santa Rosa and LandPaths
This project proposes acquisition of 6 acres of land in southwest Santa Rosa consisting of two parcels located on West Avenue. The City has entered into an agreement with the Bayer family to purchase the property and develop the site as a neighborhood park. The purchase price is \$5,250,000. The City has \$3.9 million in state grants and park development fees and is requesting approximately \$1.3 million to assist with the acquisition.

8. Applicant: City of Santa Rosa
This project, Phase Two of the Colgin Creek Park and Preserve Project, proposes acquisition of 5.45 acres of land. The project will create a pedestrian and bicycle pathway that links to regional trail systems. The project cost for this phase is \$4,864,000 and the City is requesting \$3.9 million.

9. Applicant: City of Rohnert Park, Sonoma State University, Sonoma County Regional Parks Department and Sonoma County Public Works Department.
This project will extend the existing Copeland Creek Trail from its present terminus in the university campus to a connecting trail that ends in Crane Creek Regional Park, providing continuous pedestrian and cyclist access through the city and the campus across Petaluma Hill Road to the regional park. The project cost is approximately \$1.4 million and the City is requesting approximately \$711,000.
10. Applicant: City of Petaluma
East Washington Park project proposes development of approximately 25 acres as a multi-use community park. The park property is owned by the City and is located within its Urban Growth Boundary on the south side of E. Washington Street. The City is requesting \$8 million and proposes to match with \$12 million in city funds and in-kind services.
11. Applicant: City of Petaluma and the Paula Lane Action Network
This project proposes acquisition of 11.2 acres consisting of two parcels on Paula Lane for an Open Space Preserve. The funding request is for \$2.4 million, with a proposed match of \$1.5 million in on-going property maintenance and \$200,000 towards educational programs for a total of approximately \$1.7 million.
12. Applicant: City of Sonoma
This project will permanently protect an historic agricultural property, the Castagnasso Farm, in downtown Sonoma. The city is requesting \$2.5 million toward the purchase of a perpetual conservation easement.

David Hansen, LandPaths Boardmember, spoke in favor of the LandPaths/City of Santa Rosa matching grant application for the project in southwest Santa Rosa.

Projects in Negotiation Chart

No comment

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Next scheduled meeting date: June 28, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Christensen
Advisory Committee Secretary

Date: June 25, 2007 [Advisory Committee Meeting June 28th]
To: Advisory Committee Members
From: Andrea Mackenzie, General Manager
Subject: 2007 Competitive Matching Grant Program: Funding Recommendations for Projects

The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (District) received twelve applications for consideration under the 2007 Matching Grant Program. Grant requests for the projects total over \$23,000,000. The matching grant applications were reviewed and evaluated based on the program's approved criteria including but not limited to: the project is identified as a priority in an adopted city, county or agency plan as a priority for open space preservation, resource enhancement, recreation or public access; the project is based on sound planning and assessment information which is described in detail in the application; the project is of regional significance; the project is near or adjacent to other protected lands; and the project can be implemented in a timely manner. The District's funding target for this round of the Matching Grant Program is \$10,000,000. Based on the competitive nature of the program, the criteria and the funding target, some projects are recommended for partial funding and others are not recommended for funding at this time. District staff, in conjunction with input from the Open Space Advisory Subcommittee, is recommending funding of \$10,240,074 for the 2007 Matching Grant Program projects as follows:

Project: Russian RiverKeeper Stewardship Park
Applicant: Russian RiverKeeper

Funding Recommendation: \$50,000

Russian RiverKeeper is requesting \$50,000 to be used for ongoing education, trail development and vegetation management on a 5-acre parcel of donated land on the north side of the Russian River in Guerneville. Russian RiverKeeper, a non-profit organization, has received funding from the Sonoma County Community Foundation, Russian River Redevelopment and Marmot Mountain LLC and has used over \$8,500 in organizational funds for the project. Matching funds in the amount of \$595,000 will come from grants and additional redevelopment funding which will support invasive plant removal, creation of a permeable trail system, native plant restoration, public educational elements and additional public river access.

Project: West County Trail, Ross Station Road Trailhead
 Applicant: Sonoma County Regional Parks Department

Funding Recommendation: \$88,000

The Regional Parks Department is requesting \$88,000 to develop a County-owned parcel, south of Ross Station Road between Forestville and Graton. The West County Trail currently has two developed trailheads for a 13-mile trail. Existing trailheads are located in Santa Rosa and Graton. The project will enable construction of a parking area and landscaping, and provide a safe, accessible trailhead for this regional trail. There will be no impact to trees, agriculture or significant habitat. The Regional Parks Department's match is \$12,000 for development costs and annual ongoing maintenance of \$15,000, totaling \$150,000 for over 10 years.

Project: Laguna de Santa Rosa Acquisition and Improvement
 Applicant: City of Sebastopol

Funding Recommendation: \$800,000

The City of Sebastopol is requesting \$1,967,875 to purchase and improve the Village Park property located on the Laguna de Santa Rosa channel at the eastern entrance to Sebastopol as a park addition to the City's Laguna Wetlands Preserve. The City has an option agreement with the owner to purchase the property. The City's grant request includes \$1,620,000 for purchase of the property and \$347,875 for park access and other improvements. The City's match of \$1,217,500 includes \$750,000 for maintenance and the remainder for improvements.

The funding recommendation is for acquisition, and for recreational and restoration improvements of the campground area of the property as an addition to the City's Laguna Wetlands Preserve.

Project: Sebastopol Area Recreation and Enhancement
 Applicant: City of Sebastopol

Funding Recommendation: \$529,575

The City of Sebastopol is requesting a total of \$586,616 for two components included in its Recreation and Enhancement application. The City is requesting \$529,575 for Skatepark and Community Garden improvements and proposes a match of \$1,145,991 for development and \$750,000 for maintenance. The City is requesting \$57,040 for improvements to the Super Playground and proposes a match of \$85,000 for improvements and \$75,000 for maintenance.

The funding recommendation is for development of the Skatepark and Community Garden. The subcommittee suggested that alternative surfaces be considered for the skatepark.

Project: **Growing the Sebastopol Small Farm Tradition**
Applicant: **FarmLink**

Funding Recommendation: \$250,000

FarmLink is requesting \$770,000 to protect two existing small farms, totaling 20 acres, through affirmative agricultural conservation easements, and assist a third small farmer in purchasing an 8.66-acre property on Cunningham Road in Sebastopol. FarmLink is proposing a match of \$3,708,500 which includes the farmer's contribution to the estimated value of the affirmative agricultural easements and ongoing management of the properties over 30 years. FarmLink has secured a \$20,000 grant from the Columbia Foundation.

The funding recommendation is for one pilot project, the acquisition of the 8.66-acre property on Cunningham Road in Sebastopol.

Project: **Bayer property, Southwest Santa Rosa Park**
Applicant: **City of Santa Rosa**

Funding Recommendation: \$1,311,229

The City of Santa Rosa, as the lead agency in this cooperative project, is requesting \$1,311,229 to acquire the 6-acre Bayer property located in the southwest quadrant of the City to provide a park. Project partners include LandPaths, the Trust for Public Land and the Coastal Conservancy. The City of Santa Rosa has entered into a purchase agreement with the owner to acquire the property for \$5,250,000. The City's match is \$3,938,771 from grants and park development fees. The project would support children in the Roseland School District by providing parkland within a ¼ mile of five school facilities. The project is consistent with the City's 2020 General Plan. A master plan will be developed for the park, which will consider open space uses such as a community garden, picnic areas, and a learning/recreation center.

Project: **Colgan Creek Park and Restoration**
Applicant: **City of Santa Rosa**

Funding Recommendation: \$2,000,000

The City of Santa Rosa is requesting \$3,962,000 to acquire one property and portions of three others totaling 5.45 acres to create 1.3 miles of restored creek, pathway and park in southwest Santa Rosa. This component of the Colgan Creek Park and Restoration project would add to existing Water Agency land of 4.77 acres and the Burbank property, resulting in 11.87 acres of open space and parkland. The \$3,962,000 request is \$2,337,000 for acquisition and \$1,625,000 for park and trail development. The City's match is \$3,494,000. The project is identified as a priority in the Santa Rosa Citywide Creek Master Plan.

The funding recommendation is for acquisition of the additional 5.45 acres necessary to complete the 1.3 miles of restored creek, pathway and park.

Project: Crane Creek Regional Trail
 Applicant: City of Rohnert Park

Funding Recommendation: \$711,270

The City of Rohnert Park, as the lead agency in this multi-agency project, is requesting \$711,270 to complete improvements to the Copeland Creek bicycle/pedestrian trail, extending it from the existing terminus within the Sonoma State University campus to Crane Creek Regional Park. Project partners include Sonoma County's Regional Parks Department and Transportation and Public Works Department and Sonoma State University. The City of Rohnert Park is providing a match of \$705,342 for construction of the first phase of the trail. Completion of this trail connection would encourage pedestrian and bicycle circulation in the area and provide a safer and more efficient route to the Regional Park.

Project: East Washington Park
 Applicant: City of Petaluma

Funding Recommendation: \$2,000,000

The City of Petaluma is requesting \$8,000,000 for park development of 24.88 acres of open land on East Washington Street for a planned active and passive use park that will serve local and regional needs. The City's match, also for park development, is \$8,000,000 from local funds of the City's Park Mitigation Fees and General Obligation Bond Funds. The land was dedicated to the City for the purpose of providing public recreational amenities such as multi-use sport fields and leisure activities, and bike and pedestrian paths connecting to the citywide network of creek and urban separator trails and paths. The project is consistent with the City's draft 2025 General Plan update. Additionally the City expects to contribute \$4,000,000 in in-kind services including administration, overhead costs and mitigation fees. Additionally the City estimates \$185,000 in annual costs for additional staff to maintain the park.

The funding recommendation is to assist with park construction. The subcommittee expressed concerns regarding the extent and effect of the night lighting, because the property, located within the City limits, is on the edge of the rural urban separator facing east towards Adobe Road and Sonoma Mountain.

Project: Castagnasso Farm
 Applicant: City of Sonoma

Funding Recommendation: \$2,500,000

The City of Sonoma is requesting \$2,500,000 to acquire an agricultural conservation easement over the Castagnasso family farm in downtown Sonoma to preserve it in agricultural use. The 2.72-acre property, which has been owned by the family since 1910, is adjacent to the Mission San Francisco de Solano and has significant scenic and open space importance to the historic character of the downtown area. The City proposes a cash contribution of \$1,905,000 as a match and has negotiated an option for a right of first refusal with the family to purchase the property. The farm is identified as a priority in the City's Open Space Preservation Strategy.

Based on the competitive nature of the program, the criteria and the funding target, the following two projects are not recommended for funding under the 2007 Competitive Matching Grant Program.

Project: **Santa Rosa Creek Access Improvements**
 Applicant: **City of Santa Rosa**

The City of Santa Rosa is requesting \$694,399 to construct improvements for recreational access and usage of the Santa Rosa Creek Greenway and Trail. These include installing a pedestrian bridge to connect 'A Place to Play' with the paved greenway path on the north side of the creek, building a pedestrian ramp to allow access from Dutton Avenue to the path, and completing a gap in the Creek trail between Streamside and Mission. The City's match of \$842,000 is for design, construction and right-of-way acquisition and has been secured through Measure M funds.

Project: **Paula Lane Open Space Preserve**
 Applicant: **City of Petaluma and P.L.A.N.**

The City of Petaluma and the Paula Lane Action Network (P.L.A.N.), a local non-profit organization, are requesting \$2,400,000 to acquire 11.22 acres located at 431 Paula Lane with two rented residences. The property is within the Urban Growth Boundary of Petaluma. The project proposes creation of an open space preserve with educational programs and appropriate public access. An initial match is proposed to come from rental income, (approximately \$20,400 annually) and associated property expenses (e.g. landscape maintenance) of \$15,300 per year. Fundraising for restoration and management of the property would be through community activities and personal donations. P.L.A.N. proposes to create an endowment within the first three years, to be funded with \$100,000 ten years from the date of project establishment. The match is estimated at \$1,540,000 for maintenance and \$200,000 for educational programs.

