

Mission Canyon Association
MINUTES
June 2, 2020, 7:30 p.m.

Minutes by Erika Sharghi

1. Meeting called to order by Jason Saltoun-Ebin:
 - 1.1. Board Members Present: Alex Feldwinn, Darby Feldwinn, Erika Sharghi, Jason Saltoun-Ebin, Jean Yamamura, Nancy Weiss, Ray Smith, Sandy Robertson, and Seldon Edner
 - 1.2. Board Members Absent: Hugh Twibell, Kellam deForest, Kevin Snow, Laurie Guitteau
 - 1.3. Guests: Luke Swetland, Steve Windhager, Marc Chytilo

2. Minutes of May meeting approved
 - 1st: Alex Feldwinn
 - 2nd: Seldon Edner
 - Abstained:

3. Treasurer's report (Erika)
 - 3.1. The quarterly report is read in January, April, July, and October.
 - 3.2. The waste container located at the trailhead on Tunnel Rd was replaced with an R65 container. The MarBorg service charge will likely increase.

4. Old Business
 - 4.1. Museum of Natural History update (Luke)

Beginning June 14, the outdoor spaces will be open to Museum members with online reservations only. Covid-19 protocols have been established and will be followed. A collaborative group of local officials and community partners are in weekly discussions on assessing how things are progressing and when it is safe to open to the general public. Current projection is sometime after July 4.

Ready to greet visitors are over 1000 butterflies at the Butterflies Alive exhibit.

Luke complimented MCA as a prodigious watchful guardian for SBMNH and the Botanic Garden.

 - 4.2. Botanic Garden update (Steve)

The Garden has begun a phased reopening. Hours of operation are from Friday through Tuesday from 10AM to 5PM. Currently it is open to Garden members by reservation only. Reservations are for a 2 hour window that allows visitors to enjoy a select area of the Garden. The kids area is closed. Other areas and trails still closed, will open in the weeks to come. Attendance is up by 1/3 with most staying about 1 hour. Steve hopes the Garden will open to the general public on July 5 or the following week.

 - 4.3. Meeting with Das Williams

The meeting was extensively devoted to SCE trail and remediation work. See New Business 5.1 below.

- 4.4. Efforts to add Verizon service to the Canyon (Sandra)
Next week Verizon will visit the Botanic Garden maintenance yard by Las Canoas as a possible tower site. It is a remote location. Even a 50-60 foot fake tower tree will be visible but not that dramatic. We are in the early phase of discussions and need to get buy-in from Botanic staff and neighboring residences before SBBG Board will agree. Steve stated this is a good time for MCA to deliver a letter to SBBG Board in support of a tower site on Botanic grounds. If there is general agreement by Mission Canyon stakeholders, then their Board will consider it. Jason suggested we wait to hear Verizon's response to the site visit.
- 4.5. Historic Bridge/Mission Heritage Trail Association (Erika)
Mission Heritage Trail Association held a virtual annual meeting on May 19, 2020. There was no change to the election of Officers. Directors who were up for election were unanimously voted in for another 3 year term. The membership also voted to move the annual meeting to March vs February.

The Board of Directors met following the annual meeting.

- (a) The progress and public presentation on the Mission Creek Bridge Project is still tentatively scheduled for the fall timeframe.
- (b) MHTA created a committee to look into possible walkway surfaces along Mission Canyon Road. Suggested material included (a) Flexipave Trails and Pathways surfacing that was installed at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden at the Pritzloff Center siting porousness, durability, ADA compliant and slip resistance; (b) decomposed granite surfacing material as used on San Ysidro Rd which is cheaper but does not hold up well in heavy rainfall. Steve commented the Flexipave is not maintenance free. It clogged quickly and can be a challenge to maintain.
- (c) MHTA will continue to support elimination of overhead utilities and pursue state legislation relief to reduce speed limits in the corridor.

Luke commented that the power pole was recently hit again and that a log is being maintained of repeated strikes. City and County officials and departments were advised of the incident. In assessing the structural damage the utility company said it did not warrant replacement.

- 4.6. Insurance update (Nancy/Ray)
Ray will raise the issue at the next Fire Safe Council.

5. New Business

- 5.1 Presentation by the Tunnel trail working group (Nancy)

MCA was invited to comment on SCE's Mission Creek access road Phase 2 application. After extensive review, the working group prepared and presented the draft comment letter for board feedback. In summary, the letter addresses in detail the following:

- (a) ensuring SCE has a detailed vetted plan and performs a good faith effort in restoring and mitigating the extensive ecological impact caused by un-permitted grading activity,
- (b) ensuring SCE's mitigation plan is compatible with MCCP, a fire safety plan and other projects/policies
- (c) ensuring there is independent on-site monitoring and review, oversight coordination with multiple stakeholders/agencies, and inclusion of local specialty consultants (geologist, environmentalist, etc.)
- (d) ensuring full transparency and timely public communication
- (e) ensuring there is an overall construction plan
- (f) ensuring geological restoration preserves and restores chaparral, trees, plants, habitat, and eradication of invasive plants
- (g) ensuring a site plan is developed to accommodate material stockpiling, debris/rock processing, and minimal trucking activity
- (h) ensuring the site when restored is aesthetically appealing to the residents of MC and hikers along the trails

This will be a multiyear project. Nancy has detailed bio report, map of area, etc. available for anyone who needs it.

Comments from the Board:

- (a) Seldon - SCE needs to compensate for damages that can't be mitigated e.g. 4900 sq yds of side cast, damage to aquatic life in creeks.
- (b) Jean - How are the trees affected by the huge rocks?
Steve - Oaks are resilient and can live a long life but the rocks can be abrasive and allow fungus to set in, beetles, etc. The destruction is on the outer cambium area of the tree so it is not an emergency. An independent arborist/ecologist review of SCE remediation plan is appropriate (at SCE expense), however, a tree by tree arborist evaluation is not practical. Any treatment is prohibitively expensive. It would be cheaper for SCE to remove the damaged trees and replant the site.
- (c) Nancy - Bridge/road width is needed for wash trucks to get to power lines.
Ray - Ask what the fire department wants.
Seldon - County should pay for road compaction work.
- (d) Nancy - SCE plan lacks cohesiveness. Coordination with multiple organizations is undefined. There is no documentation on a trucking/site plan. Location/movement of materials, road fill, debris, etc. needs to be defined and can not be situated above or below the gate.
- (e) General comments - Need local independent and on-site monitoring. Priority actions - scaling and rock placement, invasive plants, trees, berm reduction. Public safety is a priority.

- (f) Jason - SCE should pay for 3rd party reviews.
Mark - SCE will perform a more narrow review so it is best to use an outside agency e.g. UCSB.
Steve - Request that MCA selects independent reviewer.
Seldon - Person will need to prepare independent report, not sourced from SCE geologist review.
- (g) Alex - SCE needs to brainstorm safety requirements before hikers go on the trail - possibly better signage.
- (h) How MCA will communicate this project to the public is TBD.

Das Williams made a site visit and was amazed at the amount of damage to the creek and environment. He supports MCA's letter response and recommends that priorities be set on what can be resolved quickly vs those that can wait. Above all, the remedy should not destroy more habitat.

Jason suggested that the final letter be review by the Executive Committee.
Ray moved that the final letter be sent.
Jean seconded.
Unanimously approved by board.

5.2 Parking issues along Tunnel Road - Not discussed.

5.3 Stone Pillars on Tunnel - Sandra ask if anyone had information on the stone pillars going up on Tunnel opposite Montrose. The purpose was unclear. Further monitoring and investigation is needed.

6. Additional Committee Reports - There were no other committee reports.

- 6.1 Mission Canyon Brush Cleanup and Chipping (Ray)
- 6.2 Newsletter (Jean Yamamura)
- 6.3 Architectural Design Review (Hugh Twibell)
- 6.4 Parking & Traffic (Jason Saltoun-Ebin)
- 6.5 Land Use Committee (Kevin Snow)
- 6.6 Membership (Laurie Guitteau)
- 6.7 Fire Committee (Ray Smith)
- 6.8 Website (Alex Feldwinn)

Next Board Meeting: 7:30pm on July 7, 2020 via Zoom