

City of San Diego Park & Recreation Department
Tierrasanta Open Space Maintenance Assessment District (TOSMD)
Tierrasanta Open Space Committee
Tierrasanta Recreation Center • 11220 Clairemont Mesa Blvd.

Agenda for 7 pm Wednesday, February 7, 2018 Meeting

The Tierrasanta Open Space Committee is advisory to the City of San Diego Open Space Division on matters related to the Tierrasanta Open Space Maintenance Assessment District.

Members: Deanna Spehn* (Chair), Jennifer Schultz*, Jerry Bierman, Lee Campbell, John Hopper, Dawn Lostritto-Nielsen* (Secretary), Russ May*, Bob Muldrew, Betty Ogilvie, Mike Ogilvie*, Dick Rees, James Sanders, Rich Thesing*. City Open Space Staff: Loren Boerboom and Ray Garcia

Agenda

7 pm Chair Deanna Spehn will call the meeting to order and establish that a quorum is present

1. Non-agenda public comment. Limited to no more than 2 minutes per subject.

2. Action Item: Update on San Diego Canyonlands project to remove up to 263 palm trees in the south Rueda canyon conditional upon receiving a permit from the FAA to fly and land the helicopter.

3. Update on Tierrasanta Scour Project and potential action; discussion of alternatives to the Scour Project – A proposed County of San Diego mosquito abatement vector control contract to construct at Scour Project in Shepherd Canyon on the east side of Santo Road is under consideration by the Tierrasanta Open Space Committee; the Open Space Committee will make recommendations about the project to be forwarded to the Tierrasanta Community Council. The Tierrasanta Community Council and Planning Group will consider the project and forward on to the County of San Diego recommendations, concerns, etc., about the proposed project. Tonight’s action will be to further discuss the project and content of a draft letter that is in the process of being written. **See 90% proposed plans and January 18, 2017 environmental document attached. See draft letter from the Open Space Committee to the County and City and project applicant.**

4. Staff Report – Loren Boerboom – attached to this agenda.

5. Determination of voting members of the committee per city approved Bylaws of the Tierrasanta Community Council & Planning Group: “Tierrasanta Open Space Committee, also known as the Tierrasanta Open Space Maintenance Assessment District Committee, consisting of thirteen (13) members, seven (7) of which shall be voting members of the Tierrasanta Community Council and Planning Group, which meets as required to provide advice and counsel to the Open Space Division of the Parks and Recreation Department of the City of San Diego.”

A. Committee Bylaws – Draft Bylaws will be presented at a future meeting. Committee established of Deanna Spehn and Mike Ogilvie.

6. New Business

7. Adjournment. Next meeting is Wednesday, March 7, 2018 at 7 pm, Tierrasanta Recreation Center, 11220 Clairemont Mesa Blvd. in Tierrasanta
February xx, 2018

To:

Re: Proposed Tierrasanta Scour Pond Vector Habitat Remediation Project

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Tierrasanta Open Space Committee, we submit the following comments and questions regarding the Proposed Tierrasanta Scour Pond Vector Habitat Remediation Project within the City of San Diego, as proposed by the AHTNA Government Services Corporation.

Questions:

1. The stated purpose of the project is to identify a bio-engineered solution to eliminate and/or reduce mosquito breeding habitat within a scour pond on the down gradient side of a 30-foot long existing 4-48” culvert pipe headwall that discharges storm water routed from North Shepherd Canyon to the north, beneath Antigua Blvd. If the proposed project is designed principally to address water flow from North Shepherd Canyon, why not modify the route of the water from North Shepherd Canyon to the affected area?
2. Was an alternative approach considered to managing water flow from North Shepherd Canyon that would not involve disturbing 19,000 square feet of vegetation and installing a very large dissipater with riprap?
3. Was a “no project alternative” considered that would include:
 - a. removing the sediment that has built up around the headwall
 - b. permitting a program that would allow the removal of debris dams on a regular basis along the maintenance path
 - c. opening a channel through the existing perimeter of built up sediment to the existing stream bed to the Santo Rd. culvert to keep the pond from being more than a few inches deep and therefore likely to evaporate after the rainy season.
 - d. continuing vector control for the area as provided by San Diego County through its mosquito abatement program?
 - e. adding a few inches of gravel in the vicinity of the headwall to facilitate evaporation
4. Based on recent observations it appears that there is a near surface water table in the western (downstream) end of East Shepherd Canyon. Water continues to flow from an unknown source (leak) somewhere between downstream of Dishwasher Pond (a.k.a. Red Pond) and upstream of Bridge #1. That flow, a gallon or two per minute, has run for over three months and has filled the western end stream bed to a stable level with the overflow continuing downstream.
5. Have studies been done to determine the source of this flow of water and whether it is runoff from yards (i.e., treated potable water) or an underground water source (non-potable).
6. The scour pond water level, after evaporating throughout the Summer and part of the Fall, has stabilized with little fluctuation in its size or depth. There are two significant puddles in the deep maintenance path rut just west of Bridge #1 that are not connected to the flowing water, where the water level has remained the same which indicates that there is a near surface water table in the western end of the canyon. The source of the water should be determined.
7. The date of the Biological Assessment (February through April 2016) used for this proposed project is nearing the deadline for its use. Do and City of San Diego and County of San Diego adhere to the 2-year window for use of a Biological Assessment when environmentally sensitive lands are

potentially impacted? It is our understanding that Surveys for state or federally listed sensitive or MSCP-covered species older than 24 months must be updated, as appropriate, to accurately reflect resources on site. Surveys should be done at the appropriate time of year to detect presence/absence of sensitive species. If surveys are not done at the appropriate time of year, and the potential for occurrence is moderate to high (based on historical knowledge, site records, determination by the biologist, etc.), then it will be concluded that their presence exists on the property. In cases where there is a low potential to impact sensitive species, justification should be provided in order to determine whether additional focused surveys are warranted. Biological surveys that are over 24-months would require that the survey and report be updated to reflect the most current conditions affecting the project site.

8. Is it correct that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife may require updated survey data during their review of this project as proposed?

9. Ongoing maintenance is a concern as is the question of whether the proposed design will cause a rapid and deep rush of fast moving water that could endanger youth who regularly frequent the “jogging trail” and path to Dishwasher Pond. Please provide additional analysis regarding the potential for ongoing maintenance responsibilities of the Maintenance Assessment District beyond the initial 5 years maintenance included in the project; and on the safety factor and whether the channelization of the water is cause for concern.

Background from the perspective of the Tierrasanta Open Space Committee

The proposed Scour Pond project is approximately 100 feet from the southeast corner of Antigua Blvd. and Santo Road, just south of an existing maintenance path. There is a headwall downslope and located parallel to the path four large culverts that run under Antigua Blvd. and a smaller one, likely a storm drain. Over the decades, sediment has built up around the headwall. Outflow from the culverts has pushed away sediment from an area 10 feet wide and approximately 30 feet long.

Stagnant water remains in this area all summer. There is a perimeter further away of sediment build up that blocks the channel to the culvert under Santo Road and forms a larger pond several feet deep after a significant rain. The depth of the retained water, currently 18 inches, is only 3 inches lower than the bottom inside of the culvert which explains why the outflow water from the culverts has not scoured the canyon floor but only pushed away the sediment build up.

Mosquito control in the immediate area is regularly provided by the vector control spraying program as managed by San Diego County. There is an ongoing mosquito problem west of Santo Road, but longtime residents who regularly walk in the area of the proposed Scour Pond report that at least in the last 10 years mosquitoes have not been seen in the proposed project area.

The mosquito threat along the maintenance path will not change as long as debris dams continue to form. Stagnant water is retained in numerous locations within 150 yards of the proposed project and remains in some until approximately September each year. If the debris dams that routinely form along the maintenance path cannot be regularly removed or pumped out, the proposed project will be ineffective in its intended purpose of reducing the mosquito population.

The project, using a large rock dissipater, is over engineered for the site. Opening a channel through the existing perimeter of built-up sediment to the existing stream bed to the Santo Road culvert will likely keep the pond from being more than a few inches deep and more likely to evaporate after the rainy season. A few inches of gravel in the vicinity of the headwall would likewise facilitate evaporation.

This project appears to be designed to manage large volumes of water from North Shepherd Canyon discharging from the big pipes under Antigua Blvd. Historically large amounts of water do not flow in that area even when a major storm has hit, or if the large pipe from Mission Trails Regional Park discharges in the area. The water flow under Antigua Blvd. is handled by the existing vegetation.

The relatively small size of the pond area is evidence of high volume and high velocity flow under Antigua Blvd. Further, the blown out sediment is not aligned with the outflow direction from the culverts and clearly only 2 of the 4 large culverts contribute to the sediment removal. A dissipater is not required to manage water flow in this area.

The number of days per year when Tierrasanta may experience a major deluge of rain within a single day are infrequent, occurring only once each year for the past 2 years and in both cases the existing vegetation near the outfall of the culvert endured the flow without damage. During those deluges a lot of water was observed rushing under Antigua Blvd. however at the same time, the amount of water pouring through East Shepherd canyon is massive compared to the flow from North Shepherd Canyon. The East Shepherd Canyon flow consistently floods the western end of the canyon under several feet of water.

The proposed dissipater would be ineffective as it would be entirely submerged with the flow under Antigua running into a back pressure situation. Examination of the existing vegetation in the area of the proposed dissipater indicates that the flow during a deluge is handled adequately.

The project as proposed would disturb over 19,000 square feet of natural vegetation, habitat and ongoing environmental projects. Over many years, local volunteers have worked to eliminate non-native species and to re-plant and preserve the proposed project area.

A healthy plant life has been restored in the wetlands with willows, mulefat, sycamores, cottonwoods, oaks, toyon, lemonadeberry, holly, sages and native grass. Tierrasanta Maintenance Assessment funds and donated funds were used to remove many fully-grown eucalyptus and palms 10 years ago as part of the restoration project.

During heavy rains, the water floods the road up to the wide wetlands, including the cross path and the single track trail, in this area that is basically a meandering wetlands. It then comes together with the flow from the north side to make a diagonal path up to the culvert under Santo Road. At the same time, a great deal of the water spreads out over the entire flat area, getting trapped in little gullies and streamlets. Even if there's a lot of flow, it doesn't roar through the site.

The proposed channeling of the flow will destroy much of this valuable wetland area, sending water speeding toward the other side of Santo and into the storm drain system. A healthy ecology is currently in place with water seeping through the earth down into the groundwater reserves. By planting natives with their long roots, volunteers have created an environment that traps and retains water which in turn fosters healthy plants, which provide a resource for birds, bees, and other wildlife.

The goal for this area should be protecting the hydrology and the filtering qualities of the native plants, not drying them out. The soil in that area remains moist during most of the year which enables the plants to stay healthy, strong, disease-free, as part of a holistic ecology. Some natives even cleanse pollutants. So much of the canyon soil gets dried out and hard; the wetlands is much richer.



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT OPEN SPACE DIVISION
TIERRASANTA MAINTENANCE ASSESSMENT DISTRICT
February 7, 2018 STAFF REPORT

Landscape Maintenance

- Treebeard continues to provide landscape maintenance services in a timely manner and within budget.
- Center islands on Clairemont Mesa Blvd. are scheduled for irrigation upgrades beginning in February.

Tree Maintenance

- Tierrasanta Blvd Right-of-Way trees have been safety pruned from Santo Rd to Rueda Dr.
- Safety pruning and unwanted suckers have been removed off Colina Dorada Dr.
- Safety pruning continues at various locations including Open Space overlooks and culde-sacs.

Open Space Canyons

- Friends of Tierrasanta continue to treat invasive weeds.
- Dishwasher Pond water has been filled and the level has been maintained.
- The Scour Pond in East Shepard Canyon has a potential construction improvement project in the planning phase. This project is still ongoing. No further updates at this time.
- San Diego Canyonlands (SDCL) is still pursuing the Rueda Canyon palm removal project. A drop zone and staging area location in Rueda Canyon was approved by this committee pending FAA approval. SDCL, Heliquest, and WCA are in the process of selecting an appropriate landing/fueling site nearby before seeking FAA approval on both areas.
- Mission Trails Regional Park is still waiting for a Purchase Order to proceed with the repair of the damaged pipe gate and wood pillars at the park entrance on Clairemont Mesa Blvd.
- The maintenance road in Shepherd Canyon has had eleven DG berms installed to help with erosion on the road.

Miscellaneous

- The City of San Diego plans to expand the Tierrasanta Branch Library. No specific details or construction schedule have been given.
- GET-IT-DONE is a valuable tool for reporting many City issues. This form of reporting helps the issue get referred to the correct department to address. I encourage everyone to become familiar with GET-IT-DONE which is available on the City homepage at www.sandiego.gov or available as an application for smartphones.
- Tierrasanta Community Park sports field lighting improvement project will begin soon. No additional information available at this time.
- Some playground structure equipment parts have been ordered. Repairs will be conducted by the City of San Diego Community Parks. Scheduling for repairs will take place soon.

City Telephone Numbers

- Code enforcement (619) 236-5500
- Environmental Services (858) 694-7000
- Park & Recreation (619) 525-8213
- Storm Water (619) 235-1000
- Street Division (619) 527-7500
- Police Non-Emergency (619) 531-2000 (858) 484-3154

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