

CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH
[DRAFT]MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
DECEMBER 11, 2007

1 A Special Meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Manhattan Beach was held on
2 Tuesday, December 11, 2007, at 6:35p.m. in the Police and Fire Facility, City Hall, 420 15th
3 Street.

4
5 **ROLL CALL**

6
7 Chairman Bohner called the meeting to order.

8
9 Members Present: Lesser, Powell, Seville-Jones, Chairman Bohner
10 Members Absent: Schlager
11 Staff: Richard Thompson, Director of Community Development
12 Lindy Coe-Juell, Assistant City Manager
13 Richard Gill, Director of Parks & Recreation
14 Sarah Boesch, Recording Secretary
15

16 Director Thompson said that there has been an opportunity for participation from the community
17 in the past, and there will be an opportunity before the City Council.

18
19 Commissioner Seville-Jones suggested allowing the audience members the opportunity to either
20 speak before the presentation or after it is completed.

21
22 **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

23
24 **Richard Madison**, a resident of the 500 block of 17th Street, said his concern is that some on-
25 street free parking spaces are proposed to be eliminated adjacent to Live Oak Park that are used
26 by residents of the walk-street. He said that the parking is used by people who are visiting the
27 athletic facilities as well as employees from the Metlox development and the downtown area.
28 and is worse on weekends because dozens of cars flow into the neighborhoods around 15th, 17th,
29 18th and 19th Streets. He said he cannot support the plan with the elimination of the on-street
30 parking spaces. He indicated that currently there is not sufficient parking for the area. He urged
31 the Commissioners to think of the impacts of eliminating the parking spaces as proposed.

32
33 **GENERAL**

34
35 **Review of the Steering Committee Recommended Facilities Strategic Plan (FSP) Staff**
36 **Report; (2) FSP Draft Maser Plan Executive Summary (PDF); (3) FSP Outline of Issues for**
37 **Review by the Planning Commission**

38
39 Assistant Manager Coe-Juell said that the City began last fall to look at the City's existing
40 facilities, several of which are near the end of their useful lives. She said that the intent is for a
41 long term vision for where buildings should be placed and how large they should be built to
42 accommodate the needs of the community. She indicated that the consultants have led the City

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1 through a very public process in developing the strategic plan. She stated that a review of all of
2 the comments of the different Commissions will be forwarded to the City Council, and they will
3 adopt the final master plan and then deciding which projects to forward to the voters in 2008.

4
5 **James Favaro, of MDA Johnson Favaro**, said that a Steering Committee was formed in July of
6 2006 of 20 individuals who met for over a year. He indicated that the members represented a
7 variety of constituencies and met monthly beginning in September of 2006 until September of
8 2007. He commented that six general community meetings were also held averaging 100 to 150
9 people per meeting. He indicated that a set of recommendations have been forwarded to the
10 Council, who accepted the recommendations and requested the various City commissions
11 provide input. He indicated that the Parking and Public Improvements Commission; Library and
12 Cultural Arts Commission; and Parks and Recreation Commission has already provided input on
13 the plan. He stated that the Commission is considering with this meeting how the project
14 coincides and fits in the community and adheres to the General Plan. He commented that many
15 of the City's facilities are in a various state of disrepair. He indicated that there are 12 existing
16 facilities that total 70,000 square feet, and about half were built in the 1950s and 1960s and not
17 Code compliant. He said that Begg Pool currently is too narrow and utilizes a great deal of park
18 space. He said that Joslyn, Manhattan Heights Community Center, the Scout House; and Live
19 Oak Park are all in disrepair. He commented that the library needs to expand to over twice its
20 size.

21
22 **Mr. Favaro** commented that they met with various groups including seniors, aquatics teams,
23 boys and girls scouts, and they were very effective in their participation. He stated that they also
24 met several times with various business organizations community organizations and
25 homeowners groups who also have an interest in the community. He indicated that the results of
26 their analysis is that in order to effectively deliver services and programs that are typical of other
27 communities, it is necessary for the City to double the square footage of their existing facilities.
28 He stated that it is necessary for the City to expand the library; expand the amount of community
29 meeting space; expand senior facilities. He said that it is also necessary to provide a gymnasium
30 with intergenerational fitness facilities, a multiple pool facility, a teen center skate park, a visual
31 arts center, and a community theater. He indicated that the community felt the most needed
32 facilities are a library and aquatic center; second in priority were a community center, recreation
33 center, and senior facilities; and lowest of the priorities was a skate park, community theater, and
34 visual arts center. He commented that the community wants to be certain that there is fiscal
35 responsibility in the process, transparency, a clear plan of action, and accountability. He stated
36 that it is not feasible to renovate the existing facilities, as it is very difficult to make up for 30
37 years of neglect. He commented that it would be very expensive and it would not achieve the
38 desired result.

39
40 Commissioner Lesser said that he has been asked by many residents what would be involved in
41 upgrading the existing facilities.

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1
2 **Mr. Favaro** indicated that it would cost approximately \$31.5 million for the library; \$13.3
3 million for the Begg pool; \$22.3 million for the Joslyn Center; and \$11.6 million for the
4 Manhattan Heights Community Center.

5
6 **Mr. Favaro** described the City's regulating and illustrative plans for Live Oak Park and
7 Polliwog Park.

8
9 Commissioner Lesser commended staff for their creative ideas. He said that there are people
10 with conflicting needs, and he praised them for their compromise. He commented that several
11 people have raised concerns to him that the plan is too much for the community. He asked how
12 the plan can be used as a blueprint for going forward for development of the City's facilities.

13
14 **Mr. Favaro** said that the plan does not require that any projects be built, and it will be the
15 decision of the community what if any projects within the plan are constructed. He said that the
16 list has been a compromise with the individual needs of the different constituencies who have
17 provided input.

18
19 **Mr. Steve Johnson, of MDA Johnson Favaro**, indicated that Los Angeles County has
20 standards that are based on square foot per capita for the appropriate size of a library in order to
21 deliver the level of service that is expected in the community. He said that their job was to
22 demonstrate that a library could be done to accommodate the County standard if it were to be
23 constructed.

24
25 Commissioner Seville-Jones asked whether the Council wanted comments on the overall plan.
26 She said she also has a concern with the ambition of the project.

27
28 Assistant Manager Coe-Juell said that the intent of the plan was to develop a long term vision for
29 the City. She indicated that projects would be built as appropriate, and they would not embark to
30 build everything at one time. She said that the intent is to consider the appropriate size, type and
31 placement of facilities for a community the size of Manhattan Beach with its specific needs. She
32 indicated that when the community has the political will to build any of the proposed facilities,
33 that individual project can be considered.

34
35 **Mr. Favaro** said that people mistakenly look at the plan as a description of a project, which it is
36 not. He said that when the City decides to go forward with a project, the strategic plan provides
37 a framework with which to consider moving forward in the future.

38
39 Commissioner Powell commended the consulting firm, Steering Committee, staff, consultants
40 and the members of the community for their work in preparing the plan. He said that he does
41 have a concern whether the most appropriate location for projects would change if it is decided

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1 to go forward with certain projects and not others. He indicated that he also has a concern that
2 facilities are centralized geographically such as the ball parks and the senior area. He asked
3 about the possibility of providing satellite or regional facilities so that seniors do not have to
4 travel across town and children do not have to ride bikes across Sepulveda Boulevard in order to
5 utilize them.

6
7 **Mr. Johnson** pointed out that that the entire Joslyn Center structure would have to be brought to
8 the standards of the current Code, and it would not be possible to fix only certain portions. He
9 pointed out that the estimate is for the total cost and not only construction costs.

10
11 Commissioner Seville-Jones asked if there were any concern with leaving only one little league
12 field if one were moved.

13
14 **Mr. Favaro** commented that concern with removing the field has been raised, as there is a great
15 deal of sentimental attachment in the community. He stated that the board of directors of the
16 little league felt there were higher priorities and that they would accept the location of the fields
17 as proposed. He said that there was also felt to be an advantage of having the field more
18 centralized.

19
20 In response to a question from Commissioner Seville-Jones, Assistant Manager Coe-Juell
21 pointed out that any individual project would include a detailed parking study.

22
23 Mr. Johnson pointed out that the regulating plan allows for the parking to be increased if it is felt
24 appropriate.

25
26 In response to a question from Commissioner Powell, Assistant Manager Coe-Juell said that a
27 decision would be made on the availability of the school district property to the City by next
28 summer.

29
30 In response to a question from Commissioner Powell, **Mr. Favaro** said that the development of
31 Manhattan Heights is undecided. He commented that so much time was devoted to Live Oak
32 Park and Pollywog Park that the Steering Committee did not feel comfortable making a
33 recommendation for Manhattan Heights. He said that it was determined that any development of
34 Manhattan Heights should include open space; it should include sites with community facilities;
35 and should not include residential development.

36
37 In response to a question from Commissioner Powell, **Mr. Favaro** indicated that preventing the
38 use of facilities from becoming a regional rather than local draw is not necessarily a function of
39 planning but rather policy and management such as by establishing differential fee structures.

40
41 **Robert Homan**, a resident of the 500 block of 17th Street, said that it is incomprehensible that

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1 kids playing organized sports should be expected to cross Sepulveda Boulevard in order to go to
2 practice. He said that he would be upset if he had a child that had to cross Sepulveda to practice
3 sports at any time of day or evening. He indicated that because the Joslyn facilities have been
4 limited, the seniors have been diverted to the scout house. He said that the facilities are poor for
5 seniors in the City, and participation has been down. He said that the seniors do not feel that
6 they have been given a fair share. He said that he would like 27,000 square feet of area to be
7 dedicated to seniors, which would greatly increase participation. He said that he did not hear
8 about the plan until he heard people involved with aquatics raise the issue. He said that other
9 groups had an opportunity and raised their concerns early, and many seniors are only now
10 becoming aware of the plan. He said that the priority list is not truly accurate or reflective of the
11 desires of the community.

12
13 **Mr. Favaro** said that eventually all of the City's facilities will need to accommodate seniors
14 because of the demographics of the community.

15
16 **Mr. Homan** commented that if a facility is not specified for seniors, they will not be aware that
17 it is available to them.

18
19 **Stan Johnson**, a resident of the 600 block of 17th Street, said that he lives near Live Oak and
20 said that it is simpler to consider the library and Joslyn Center as separate issues. He commented
21 that there has been an attempt to get more open space by eliminating the diagonal parking on
22 Valley Drive. He said that leaving the parking spaces would eliminate the need for additional
23 underground parking. He stated that the ball field has been excluded from the area of open space
24 in the park. He said that he feels the field is open space even if it is not by definition. He
25 indicated that Veterans Parkway also is not included as part of the open space for the park.

26
27 **Ana Stevenson**, a resident of the 2300 block of The Strand, said that she feels the proposal is a
28 good approach. She said that she would request that the buildings are built with quality.

29
30 **Patrick MacBride** said that when the Joslyn Center was built in 1965, the existing facility was
31 changed from a senior center to a community center. He indicated that the seniors should not
32 have been moved from the Joslyn Center. He said that the swimmers want an Olympic sized
33 pool, and that is the only issue that is important to them. He indicted that the seniors are in a
34 different situation and have to share a space with other uses. He commented that the seniors
35 have been requesting to have someone evaluate what is available in the community, which has
36 not happened. He said that an architect must work properly within the footprint of the plan. He
37 asked how the plan would work if a survey determines that only a library should be built. He
38 said that there are details missing from the plan. He indicated that a question has also been
39 raised regarding providing a shuttle bus. He commented that a shuttle system would reduce the
40 use of the adjacent parking spaces. He said that he is also concerned with parking, and it must
41 be seen in more detail before a decision is made. He said that there is money available from

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1 Proposition C funds that is being wasted and could be used to run buses that would have an
2 impact on the facilities.

3
4 The Commissioners were asked their response to the series of questions attached to the staff
5 report regarding Live Oak Park.

6
7 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that the building site
8 identified in the Live Oak Park regulating plan focuses buildings in an area of the park that
9 minimizes impact on the park and maximizes opportunities for the expansion of open space
10 within the park.

11
12 Commissioner Lesser asked whether the adjacent neighbors immediately to the west of the
13 building site have been polled. He said that he would agree with the statement with the
14 qualifications that he has a concern with the potential impact to the adjacent residents. He said
15 that he would want to be certain that the neighbors are aware with the potential impacts
16 regarding noise and traffic.

17
18 Commissioner Powell, Commissioner Seville-Jones, and Chairman Bohner agreed with the
19 statement.

20
21 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that the setbacks
22 identified for this building site create beneficial relationships between buildings placed there and
23 the park, Valley Drive, 15th Street and the residential neighbors to the west.

24
25 Commissioner Seville-Jones indicated that she agrees with the qualification that she has a
26 concern with minimizing any potential disruption to the neighbors of the traffic going into the
27 underground parking in the setback area.

28
29 Commissioner Powell said that he would agree with the same qualification as Commissioner
30 Seville-Jones with respect to the parking.

31
32 Chairman Bohner and Commissioner Lesser agreed with the statement.

33
34 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that it is proper that the
35 regulating plan requires that any new buildings within the boundaries of the park fit within the
36 prescribed City of Manhattan Beach height limit of 30 feet.

37
38 Commissioner Powell and Chairman Bohner agreed with the statement.

39
40 Commissioner Seville-Jones indicated that she would agree with the qualification that she feels
41 structures that are 30 feet high can appear monolithic, and she would like to ensure that the

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1 massing is being addressed to provide articulation.

2

3 **Mr. Favaro** commented that the Steering Committee expressed the same concern as indicated
4 by Commissioner Seville-Jones.

5

6 Commissioner Lesser said that he would agree with the statement with the qualification that a
7 building could potentially go higher depending on function and articulation.

8

9 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that the footprint,
10 massing, and height of any new buildings within the park should respect relationships with the
11 park and its neighbors and minimize the obstruction of view corridors, the visibility of roofs
12 and/or rooftop mechanical equipment, or any other visually deleterious impacts on the park and
13 its neighbors.

14

15 Commissioner Seville-Jones agreed with the statement with the qualification that consideration
16 is also given to noise impacts from mechanical equipment such as from air conditioning units.

17

18 Commissioner Lesser, Commissioner Powell, and Chairman Bohner agreed and also would add
19 the suggestion of Commissioner Seville-Jones.

20

21 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that pedestrian access
22 into and out of the park, particularly along its west boundary, should be maintained and
23 enhanced in an orderly and aesthetically pleasing way that maximizes beneficial relationships
24 between and minimizes negative impacts on the park and its neighbors.

25

26 Commissioner Seville-Jones said that she would like for access to the park to be maintained and
27 enhanced for bicyclists as well as pedestrians.

28

29 The Commissioners agreed with the qualification as indicated by Commissioner Seville-Jones.

30

31 Commissioner Powell suggested that all building structures include green sustainability best
32 practices.

33

34 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with whether the realignment and
35 reduction in width of Valley Drive improves the roadway system in the vicinity of the park and
36 is beneficial to the park and surrounding areas.

37

38 Commissioner Seville-Jones said that she does not agree, although she does not know if she has
39 a sufficient basis for her opinion. She said that she is not certain that the proposal improves the
40 roadway system. She indicated that the plan appears to maintain access of the two lane road past
41 the facility. She stated that people in the community prefer above ground parking, which would

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1 be reduced under the plan. She commented that the plan is beneficial to the park, but she is not
2 certain that it is beneficial to the surrounding area because the neighbors have indicated that they
3 would prefer more above-ground parking. She stated that she does not have enough to judge the
4 statement.

5
6 Commissioner Lesser indicated that he has a concern and feels the term “roadway system” may
7 be construed as broader than what is intended. He commented that he otherwise agrees with the
8 statement.

9
10 Chairman Bohner and Commissioner Lesser said that they agree with the general principle of the
11 statement.

12
13 Commissioner Lesser said that he would want more information.

14
15 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that the area indicated
16 for vehicular drop-off and pick-up is convenient and beneficial for the facilities to be located in
17 the park and for the park.

18
19 Commissioner Lesser said that he is having difficulty with answering the questions because there
20 is no information provided regarding the alternatives that may have been considered and rejected
21 by the Steering Committee.

22
23 **Mr. Favaro** indicated that the Commissioners should consider answering the questions as
24 similar to making findings for a project.

25
26 Chairman Bohner said that it is difficult to disagree in concept with any of the questions that
27 have been included.

28
29 Commissioner Seville-Jones said that it is important that it is critical that the road be wide
30 enough to allow access for people to be able to drop off passengers and also pull out to exit
31 without being blocked by other vehicles. She stated that she has a concern that the roadway
32 which is a major thoroughfare would become even more congested. She stated that it is also
33 critical that an area be provided for a shuttle. She indicated that she feels providing some sort of
34 shuttle system is going to be important in the next few years.

35
36 The other Commissioners agreed with the comments of Commissioner Seville-Jones.

37
38 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that the plan allows for
39 an efficient and conveniently located mix of at grade and below grade parking that minimizes
40 impacts on the park and neighborhood.

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1 **Mr. Johnson** commented that the alternative to the plan would be to pave over more of the park
2 area in order to provide parking.

3
4 Chairman Bohner said that the community does want to have more open space in the park. He
5 indicated that the plan does not appear out of balance or unreasonable.

6
7 Commissioner Seville-Jones said that she can see the reasons that the plan is a good proposal.

8
9 Commissioner Lesser said that he agrees with the statement.

10
11 Commissioner Powell said that he would agree. He asked whether the parking spaces would
12 also be used by the adjacent residents.

13
14 **Mr. Favaro** commented that whether the residents would be able to use the spaces is a policy
15 question that has been raised.

16
17 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that vehicular access to
18 parking beneath the proposed facilities is properly located at 15th Street west of Valley Drive.

19
20 Commissioner Seville Jones asked if any consideration was given to making Valley Drive two
21 lanes in both directions.

22
23 **Mr. Favaro** said that there is a right hand turn pocket in the location that is being expanded.

24
25 Commissioner Lesser said that he would agree in theory with the statement but would ask that
26 the Traffic Engineer provide input on what he perceives about having only a single driveway and
27 the impact to the neighbors with putting all of the traffic onto 15th Street.

28
29 Chairman Bohner said that the questions that the Commissioners are being asked are very
30 abstract. He indicated that the Commissioners would normally ask questions to an expert
31 regarding whether the proposal would improve access and regarding any tradeoffs. He
32 commented he also would like more information but agrees with the concept.

33
34 Assistant Manager Coe-Juell pointed out that the details would come with specific projects as
35 they are proposed.

36
37 Chairman Bohner indicated that he understands the reasons for going through the questions;
38 however, some of them are general policy questions that are difficult to disagree with unless
39 there is more specific information provided.

40
41 Commissioner Seville-Jones said that it would be a fair comment that the Commissioners are all

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1 giving initial impressions and they do not have the studies and information to reach judgment on
2 any of the questions.

3
4 Commissioner Powell said that he considers the plan that is being presented as general and not
5 specific and their input is the overall considerations that will be incorporated. He said that the
6 specific application would be determined based on the specific plans.

7
8 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that service access,
9 delivery and loading facilities for the multipurpose community center and library should be
10 restricted to a below grade location beneath the facilities and accessed via the 15th Street ramp.

11
12 Commissioner Lesser indicated that he agrees with the statement.

13
14 Commissioner Seville-Jones said that placing the loading area underground would eliminate
15 parking spaces in order to provide for a turning radius. She indicated that she feels there is a
16 tradeoff with placing the loading area underground with respect to the amount of space it would
17 require. She said that another consideration is the type and number of service vehicles that
18 would use the loading area. She indicated that if it were not placed underground, the concerns of
19 the neighbors could be addressed by restricting the hours that access would be permitted.

20
21 Commissioner Powell commented that he would think that the recommendation was included
22 because people did not want the loading to occur above grade with the noise and pollution from
23 idling vehicles. He indicated that he feels locating it underground would be an advantage.

24
25 Chairman Bohner said that placing the loading underground would help prevent delivery
26 vehicles from impacting people in the general area who want to access the structure. He said
27 that he would agree with the statement in principle, but there are tradeoffs that would need to be
28 considered.

29
30 Commissioner Lesser asked whether broadening the plaza in order to accommodate a loading
31 dock was considered by the Steering Committee.

32
33 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that the creation of a
34 buffer between the tot lot, children's playground and dog run and the expansion of park open
35 space within the park are benefits of the Valley Drive realignment and width reduction.

36
37 The Commissioners agreed with the statement.

38
39 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that the potential
40 relocation of the two basketball courts and two of the tennis courts within Live Oak Park for the
41 expansion of park open space is a benefit of the plan.

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1
2 Chairman Bohner said that it would be a benefit to some people for the courts to be placed in one
3 area, but some people would not want their children to need to cross Sepulveda Boulevard to
4 reach the courts and would prefer basketball courts located within different areas within the City.

5
6 **Mr. Favaro** said that the question is simply asking about moving the tennis courts and
7 basketball court within Live Oak park.

8
9 Chairman Bohner said that he feels the statement is a good concept.

10
11 Commissioner Lesser said that he would support the statement to the extent that it helps to create
12 open space.

13
14 Commissioner Seville-Jones said that she would support the statement with the qualification that
15 she would want to be certain that the noise of the basketball court would not impact the adjacent
16 neighbors. She commented that she also would want to ensure that a historical portion of the
17 City it not taken away. She indicated that she is concerned that the plan is taking away or
18 moving some of the existing facilities within the City that have a long history.

19
20 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that should the
21 community decide to do so and as long as it is replaced in a location elsewhere of equivalent
22 benefit to the community, the removal of the little league field from the park is an effective way
23 to expand park open space within the park in a configuration and location that is beneficial to the
24 park and the neighborhood.

25
26 Chairman Bohner said that he would agree with the statement if it were a decision that was made
27 by the community.

28
29 Commissioner Seville-Jones said that she would agree that open space can be space that is
30 visible but not necessarily usable. She said that moving the little league field is eliminating open
31 space from that area and placing it in another location. She said that she feels it is preferable to
32 have two little league fields in the same area rather than one field being on its own.

33
34 Commissioner Powell said that he would like to see the little league fields placed together. He
35 indicated that there should be a regional little league. He indicated that kids also use the fields
36 for playing catch or practicing batting, and everything is located on one side of town would
37 create a problem. He also commented that a baseball field is open space, and he has a concern
38 with it being relocated.

39
40 Commissioner Lesser said that he would support the proposal because there would be a gain of
41 open space. He indicated that the consolidation of the fields on Marine Avenue for soccer as

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1 well as for softball has been a great addition. He said that he understands the concern of
2 Commissioner Seville-Jones of having a field located on its own; however, Dorsey Field is much
3 larger than the other adjacent field. He said that he could support the proposal because moving
4 the field would allow more open space for other uses in the park.

5
6 Commissioner Seville-Jones stated that open space is not as needed in the part of town where it
7 is proposed to be located because of the beach and Veterans Parkway. She said that she is not as
8 concerned with providing the open space as opposed to the recreational opportunity that is
9 provided by the additional ball field.

10
11 Commissioner Lesser commented that there was discussion from the public at one of the
12 Steering Committee meetings that he attended regarding the need to provide more natural open
13 space areas where people could sit and read as opposed to providing open areas that are more
14 restricted in use such as ball fields. He said that seniors cannot take advantage of a baseball field
15 as with other open space areas.

16
17 AT 9:05 a 10 minute recess was taken.

18
19 The Commissioners were asked their response to the series of the following questions attached to
20 the staff report regarding Pollywog Park.

21
22 Regarding Polliwog Park, **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commission agree with the statement
23 that the building site identified in the Polliwog Park regulating plan (the "Peck Corridor site")
24 focuses buildings in an area that maximizes functional relationships with the park and minimizes
25 visual impacts on the park and the surrounding neighborhoods.

26
27 Commissioner Lesser commented that he agrees that it is a preexisting building that takes
28 advantage of the fact that there is a grade. He also said that the plan would not eliminate any
29 park space.

30
31 Commissioner Powell and Chairman Bohner indicated that they agree with the comments of
32 Commissioner Lesser.

33
34 Commissioner Seville-Jones indicated that she does not see a great deal of functional
35 relationship with the park except for an example given by **Mr. Johnson** of using a building for
36 classes relating to the adjacent botanical garden.

37
38 **Mr. Johnson** indicated that as proposed with the facilities joined together, a family with children
39 of many age groups can spend the day and utilize many different activities in the indoor
40 recreation area, aquatic center, ball field, or in the park.

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1 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that the setbacks
2 identified for the building site creates beneficial relationships between buildings placed there and
3 the park and the residential neighbors to the north, south and west.

4
5 Commissioner Lesser commented that greater setbacks are better in terms of reducing any
6 impacts to the neighboring residents from noise of mechanical equipment.

7
8 Commissioner Seville-Jones said that the term “creating beneficial relationships” to her means
9 that it would be mitigating any negative impacts from the building. She said that there would be
10 positive impacts of being able to visit the nearby facility; however, it would be weighted against
11 any impacts from noise and the hours the facility would be open. She indicated that it is difficult
12 to comment on the question without knowing the hours of the facility and the traffic counts
13 particularly during the evening hours of 9:00 p.m. or 10:00 p.m.

14
15 In response to a question from **Mr. Johnson**, Chairman Bohner said that the Commissioners are
16 aware of the setbacks that are suggested, but there are other variables involved that might create
17 impacts such as if there are other residential facilities that might be impacted by noise. He said
18 that the setback appears good in general.

19
20 Commissioner Seville-Jones stated that the Commissioners are being asked to give yes or no
21 answers to questions; however, it is in their nature to consider other variables in evaluating
22 projects.

23
24 In response to a comment from **Mr. Johnson**, Commissioner Seville-Jones commented that with
25 considering the setback for the pool, she would want to know additional details such as the hours
26 the pool would be open; whether there would be 8 foot walls surrounding it to mitigate noise
27 impacts; or whether lights would spill over into the adjacent properties. She indicated that it is
28 difficult to determine without more information whether a setback of 60 feet is appropriate.

29
30 Chairman Bohner said that the Commissioners typically analyze many different factors in
31 determining whether they feel a setback would be appropriate, and what the Commission is
32 being asked to consider with these questions is very different. He indicated that 60 feet does
33 appear to be an appropriate setback in the abstract, but it is difficult to determine without more
34 details.

35
36 Commissioner Powell commented that in general the greater the setback, the more beneficial it
37 would be to the neighbors. He said, however, that there is no information provided regarding the
38 quality open space and whether the specific use mitigates noise and unattractive views.

39
40 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that it is proper that the
41 regulating plan requires that any new buildings in or adjacent to Polliwog Park fit within the

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1 prescribed City of Manhattan Beach height limit of 30 feet.

2
3 Commissioner Seville Jones said that she would agree with the statement but would also be
4 concerned with providing articulation as well as building height.

5
6 The Commissioners agreed with the statement.

7
8 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that the footprint,
9 massing, and height of any new buildings within or adjacent to the park should respect
10 relationships with the park and its neighbors and minimize the obstruction of view corridors, the
11 visibility of roofs and/or rooftop mechanical equipment, or any other visually deleterious
12 impacts on the park and its neighbors.

13
14 The Commissioners agreed with the statement.

15
16 Commissioner Seville-Jones commented that she agrees with the statement, but feels that there
17 must be a balance. She commented that there cannot be a plan where no residences would be
18 impacted. She said that trying to mitigate the impacts is important to consider, but it would
19 never be possible to have a perfect plan. She stated that it important to attempt as much as
20 possible to mitigate impacts. She said that possibly the height of the structure could be lowered
21 below 30 feet where views would be impacted and the mechanical equipment could be placed in
22 an alternative location so that it is not visible from the residences.

23
24 Commissioner Lesser said that he would like for the project to take advantage of the topography
25 of the site to shield any potential impact and respect the neighboring properties.

26
27 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commission feels it is good that the plan calls for friendly
28 pedestrian access across Peck Avenue between the park and the “Peck Corridor” site that will
29 strengthen functional relationships between the park and any indoor recreation and aquatics
30 facilities placed there.

31
32 Commissioner Seville-Jones asked whether bicycle and shuttle bus access would also be
33 considered which will be important because of the anticipated heavy use of the facility. She said
34 that she feels whether people can have access to easily drop off and pick up their children is
35 important.

36
37 Chairman Bohner indicated that the term “pedestrian” should be given a broad definition to not
38 only include access by walking but also by other means such as with bicycles and strollers.

39
40 Commissioner Lesser said that he agrees with the comments of the other Commissioners.

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1 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that pedestrian access
2 into and out of the park should be maintained and enhanced in an orderly and aesthetically
3 pleasing way that maximizes beneficial relationships between and minimizes negative impacts
4 on the park and its neighbors.

5
6 The Commissioners agreed with the statement.

7
8 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that the realignment of
9 Peck Avenue and creation of a landscape buffer along the west side improves the relationship of
10 this street with the residential neighbors to the west.

11
12 Commissioner Seville-Jones said that she would want to know whether the neighbors would feel
13 the buffer of 20 feet would be sufficient to mitigate the effects of the proposal.

14
15 Commissioner Lesser said that he would like the City's Traffic Engineer to study the proposal
16 and provide input.

17
18 Chairman Bohner said that whether or not the statement would be true would depend on the
19 particular circumstances.

20
21 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that the plan allows for
22 an efficient and conveniently located mix of at grade and below grade parking that minimizes
23 impacts on the park and neighborhood.

24
25 Commissioner Seville-Jones said that she does not feel she is able to reach a determination
26 regarding the statement. She indicated that the size of the structure is large, and she does not
27 have a frame of reference in which to determine how much of the parking would be utilized both
28 for the park and the structure and how much more it would encourage people to come to the
29 park.

30
31 Chairman Bohner stated that he agrees with the comments of Commissioner Seville-Jones.

32
33 Commissioner Powell indicated that he would agree with the comments of Commissioner
34 Seville-Jones. He said that the statement is an ideal objective in the abstract but it is hard to
35 determine without a specific plan.

36
37 Commissioner Lesser said that he would disagree with the statement. He commented that having
38 dropped off equipment at the park on a regular basis for games, it is difficult to carry the
39 equipment from the parking lot to the field. He stated that he would want to preserve some sort
40 of loading and unloading space if not permanent parking for the park. He said that he would
41 agree in terms of making use of the parking structure rather than eliminating park space to

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1 provide for parking.
2

3 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commission agrees with the statement that it is good that the
4 plan allows for controlled access at 12th and 18th Streets that minimize impacts on the residential
5 neighbors to the north, west and south.
6

7 Chairman Bohner commented that minimizing traffic impacts to the neighbors is important. He
8 said, however, that attempting to control traffic in one area could result in traffic impacts in other
9 locations.
10

11 Commissioner Lesser said that he would want the City's Traffic Engineer to provide input before
12 he could agree with the statement. He commented that he would have a concern with stacking of
13 cars during busy times with having only one location for egress from the park.
14

15 Commissioner Seville-Jones said that she would disagree with the statement. She stated that
16 there is a high threshold for justification of closing off a street, and it is an extreme measure.
17

18 Commissioner Powell commented that he would want options that would create less of an
19 impact to be considered before a determination is made to close off the street.
20

21 Chairman Bohner said that there are probably options that would result in less of an impact to
22 traffic.
23

24 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commission agrees with the statement that the onsite perimeter
25 road allows for proper emergency vehicle access to the site and vehicular circulation on site that
26 minimizes impacts on the park and the neighborhood.
27

28 Commissioner Seville-Jones stated that she is concerned with the traffic impact with the access
29 strategy given the large size of the proposed structure.
30

31 Commissioner Lesser indicated that he does not know if the onsite perimeter road allows for
32 proper emergency vehicle access. He said that he is concerned by the absence of access to the
33 north, particularly if there was a large amount of traffic.
34

35 The Commissioners indicated that they do not have sufficient information to agree or disagree
36 with the statement.
37

38 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commission agrees with the statement that it is good that the
39 plan allows for the elimination of the Premier field parking lot to relieve existing negative
40 impacts of this facility on the neighbors to the north of Polliwog Park.
41

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1 Commissioner Lesser said that he would disagree with the statement. He stated that he would
2 want a loading area to be provided for the park.

3
4 Commissioner Seville-Jones indicated that she would agree with the comments of Commissioner
5 Lesser. She said that she would want to know if there are any concerns from the neighboring
6 residents regarding the elimination of the parking lot.

7
8 Chairman Bohner stated that there appear to be many residents that do not like the parking lot;
9 however, he cannot say without more information whether removing it would be beneficial. He
10 indicated that moving the parking lot may impact residents in other areas.

11
12 Regarding outdoor facilities and park open space, **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the
13 Commissioners agree with the statement that the location of the skate park provides beneficial
14 relationships with the park, the other community recreation facilities in and adjacent to the park,
15 the middle school and the teen center and minimizes impacts on the park and the neighbors.

16
17 Chairman Bohner stated that it would appear from his knowledge that the proposed location
18 would be appropriate for the skate park. He said that in the past he know that people have
19 supported the idea of a skate park in the City but that they do not want it near their home. He
20 said that the proposed location may be the best that has been considered.

21
22 Commissioner Lesser said that he would have a concern with the noise of skaters during school
23 hours having an impact to the classes at the adjacent school.

24
25 Assistant Manager Coe-Juell said that representatives from the school have indicated that they
26 would much prefer the location of the skate park as proposed rather than to the south of the
27 building. She commented that the physical education teacher indicated that they would possibly
28 use the skate park as part of their classes.

29
30 Commissioner Lesser stated that he would have concerns regarding lighting of the skate park and
31 the potential for crime because it is a removed site. He indicated that he would want information
32 regarding whether it would be fenced in to prevent access after hours. He commented that he is
33 concerned with people who would possibly congregate in the area other than skaters.

34
35 Commissioner Seville-Jones commented that the safety concern is different with a skate park
36 than a sports field. She indicated that kids would use the skate park on their own as opposed to
37 in a group as is typical with a ball field. She said that she is not certain whether she has enough
38 information to determine that the proposed location is appropriate for the skate park as opposed
39 to other potential sites; however, she would support it in the right location.

40
41 Commissioner Powell asked whether the skate area could be used for other purposes in the event

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1 that skateboarding loses its popularity.
2

3 **Mr. Favaro** indicated that the proposed design provides more potential for alternate uses than
4 the old fashioned design of a single cement ramp. He commented that the slope provides for a
5 series of terraces that could potentially function as an amphitheater.
6

7 Commissioner Seville-Jones said that she would not want the City Council to question how the
8 Commission arrived at a determination that the proposed site was a good location for the skate
9 park, as it is the only location that has been presented.
10

11 Commissioner Powell commented that he feels the proposed location for the skate park is
12 appropriate if any noise concerns are mitigated and the lighting is controlled.
13

14 Chairman Bohner said that it is difficult to make a determination on the statement in the abstract
15 without further details. He said that he does not have any information regarding other possible
16 locations. He said that the proposed site appears remote than others he has heard of and more
17 removed from residential areas.
18

19 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that should they become
20 available the location of a new ball field on the site of the existing Begg Field and one on that of
21 the MBUSD maintenance facility is beneficial for the community.
22

23 The Commissioners agreed with the statement.
24

25 **Mr. Favaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that he preservation of
26 the botanical gardens in their current location is beneficial for the gardens, the park, and the
27 community.
28

29 The Commissioners agreed with the statement.
30

31 Commissioner Lesser said that there has been consideration of moving the gardens to a location
32 that might be more quiet and more appropriate for a botanical garden, but the existing location is
33 not going to be changed.
34

35 Chairman Bohner said that there would be a great deal of opposition for moving the botanical
36 garden, as many people are attached to the present location.
37

38 Commissioner Seville-Jones said that she would agree with the statement with the addition of a
39 recommendation that the Parks and Recreation Commission develop additional programs that
40 would utilize the botanical gardens.
41

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1 Regarding the alternative plans included with the plan, **Mr. Fabaro** asked whether the
2 Commissioners agree with the statement that the existing library site within the Civic Center is a
3 reasonable alternate location for a new library.

4
5 Chairman Bohner said that it is reasonable to consider the Civic Center as a site for the library.
6 He indicated that the alternative site would have to be compared, and he would not rule out
7 considering the Civic Center as an appropriate location.

8
9 Commissioner Seville-Jones indicated that depending on its orientation, a library on the existing
10 site could take advantage of the additional open space in the area that is not currently utilized.
11 She said that she feels the existing library site could be reconfigured to take advantage of the
12 plaza area. She said that she feels the existing library site is a very reasonable alternative
13 location.

14
15 Commissioner Lesser said that he would agree with the comments of the other Commissioners.

16
17 Commissioner Seville-Jones commented that having the library next to City Hall possibly
18 interests some kids to become interested in learning more about what occurs at City Hall and the
19 Police and Fire Facility.

20
21 Commissioner Powell indicated that every library he has seen in other areas is located adjacent
22 to the civic center. He said that he would want to ensure that there is sufficient parking and that
23 the site would be adequate to accommodate the library.

24
25 **Mr. Fabaro** pointed out that the City Council could rule against the recommendation of the
26 Steering Committee and choose the existing site for a new library. He said that the Council
27 would like to know whether the Commission feels that the existing site is a reasonable location.

28
29 Assistant Manager Coe-Juell commented that one reason the Steering Committee recommended
30 the location at the Live Oak Park site is that it would allow the existing library site to become a
31 visual arts community theater which would also add life to the plaza area.

32
33 Commissioner Seville-Jones said that the first priority was determined to be rebuilding the
34 library, and the question is whether the location of the library should be moved to Live Oak Park
35 in order to accommodate a theater at the existing library site which is a lower priority.

36
37 **Mr. Johnson** pointed out that the Steering Committee was clear that accommodating a
38 community theater was not the main reason they chose the proposed location for the library. He
39 commented that the City's library manager has a concern that utilization of the library at the
40 Civic Center will decrease if there is a perception that it does not have dedicated parking. He
41 indicated that there would be dedicated parking for the library at the Live Oak Park location.

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1
2 Commissioner Seville-Jones said that the library being located in the downtown area as opposed
3 to in the east side of the City places more pressure on traffic, and utilization is most likely
4 decreased particularly in the summer when people want to avoid driving on the congested
5 streets.

6
7 Commissioner Lesser indicated that he would support the existing location as an alternative for
8 expansion of the library.

9
10 Commissioner Powell stated that he would support the existing site as an alternative with the
11 qualifications that sufficient parking is provided and that there is a contingency plan for a
12 temporary location for the library during construction.

13
14 Chairman Bohner said that there should be a contingency plan for alternative locations during
15 construction of a number of facilities and not only the library.

16
17 **Mr. Fabaro** asked whether the Commissioners agree with the statement that Marine Avenue
18 Park is a reasonable alternate location for community recreation facilities proposed for Polliwog
19 Park and MBUSD owned properties adjacent to Polliwog Park should these properties not
20 become available.

21
22 The Commissioners agreed with the statement.

23
24 Chairman Bohner pointed out that the Commission is only being asked at this phase whether the
25 plan as a whole is reasonable and is not being asked to specifically support building of any of the
26 facilities. He indicated that a specific determination cannot be made on any of the proposals
27 without knowing the particular facts of the project.

28
29 Commissioner Lesser commented that he would hope that the report that is forwarded to the City
30 Council would convey the frustration of the Commissioners in answering the questions without
31 more specific information.

32
33 Commissioner Seville-Jones stated that the opinions of the Commissioners in answering the
34 questions are based on limited information.

35
36 Chairman Bohner indicated that the value of answering the questions is questionable when there
37 is not sufficient detail to provide proper answers.

38
39 Commissioner Powell indicated that the plan is also being considered without specific cost
40 considerations. He recommended that strong consideration be given to determining whether
41 matching funds for any bond initiatives are available from the state and federal governments. He

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1 commented that the Beach Cities Health District had previously expressed interest in funding the
2 construction of a pool, and he suggested that the City look into whether that is still a
3 consideration.

4
5 Director of Parks & Recreation, Richard Gill, said that it would not be a consideration of the
6 Beach Cities Health District.

7
8 Commissioner Seville-Jones indicated that she considers public transportation an essential
9 component of the plan with a shuttle or bus system to allow teens better access to the facilities.
10 She commented staff and the consultants on their work over the past year in arriving at the plan.
11 She indicated, however, that there is a sense in the community that they have not had an
12 opportunity to be involved in the process. She suggested that additional input from members of
13 the public also be considered as it comes forward as the plan moves to the City Council.

14
15 Commissioner Lesser said that there is misunderstanding by many that the plan will result in a
16 bond measure to pay for it as one single project. He said that confusion regarding the plan will
17 result in opposition when there might otherwise be support if they understood the intent. He
18 suggested that at every opportunity members of the public be educated on the purpose and intent
19 of the facilities strategic plan as a blueprint for how the individual projects could be built if it is
20 determined that they should be constructed.

21
22 Commissioner Powell said that he would suggest that a link to the executive summary included
23 in the report be placed on the City's website.

24
25 **ADJOURNMENT**

26
27 The meeting of the Planning Commission was **ADJOURNED** at 10:40 p.m. in the City Council
28 Chambers, City Hall, 1400 Highland Avenue, to Wednesday, December 12, 2007, at 6:30 p.m. in
29 the same chambers.

30
31 _____
32 RICHARD THOMPSON
33 Secretary to the Planning Commission

31 _____
32 SARAH BOESCHEN
33 Recording Secretary