Meeting Notes

Meeting Location and Time:
Gilroy Seniors Center, 7371 Hanna Street, Gilroy, 6:30 pm

Task Force Members Present:
Richard Von Bargen; Brent Bear; Alicia Borowski; Frank Croft; Mary Lou Fitzpatrick; Bill Konle; Kathy Rairden; Doug Reynaud; Carla Ruigh; Fadi Saba; Brian Seifert; Jan Webb

Task Force Members Absent:
San Martin Planning Advisory Committee appointee (not yet selected)

County Staff Present:
Lisa Killough, Parks Deputy Director, Mark Frederick, Parks Planning and Development Manager, Elish Ryan, Park Planner, Antoinette Romeo, Park Planner, Kelly Gibson, Park Planner, Debbie Cedillo, clerk

County Parks Consultants Present:
Lee Steinmetz, Bellinger Foster Steinmetz Planning Consultants

INTRODUCTIONS
Elish Ryan and Lee Steinmetz made welcoming remarks to the Task Force and thanked members of the public for attending. Elish Ryan reviewed the Task Force information packets included in the binders distributed to each member. The Task Force was asked to bring their binders to each meeting and insert succeeding information packets in the binders for reference. Then Lee Steinmetz, Task Force members were asked to introduce themselves, discuss their interest in the project, and what they bring to the Task Force. The following is a summary of each Task Force member’s comments:

Brent Bear
Brent Bear owned the Bear Ranch prior to its sale to the County, and still owns a portion of the Ranch. Brent brings first-hand knowledge of the Ranch, which he wants to share with the Task Force. He is interested in making sure that the Ranch maintains its integrity while accommodating multiple uses.

Jan Webb
Jan lives across the street from the Ranch. She is a former member of the San Martin Horseman’s Association, a member of the Parks Volunteer Coordinating Council, and has been involved with volunteer park patrol. She wants to see the park open to public use as soon as possible.

Bill Konle
Bill has served on the San Martin Planning Advisory Committee, the South County Joint Planning Advisory Board the Advisory Committee of the Santa Clara Valley Water District. He wants to inform these groups as well as park neighbors about the park plan and bring their input back to the Task Force.

Brian Seifert
Brian’s property abuts the park at Church Street, and he represents the property owners of the De Paul Circle area. He has Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Natural Resources Management and is an equestrian and hiker. Brian supports
balanced multi-use of the park while respecting the needs of neighbors adjacent to the park.

Carla Ruigh
Carla is a park planner for the City of San José and lives about 5 minutes from the park. She is a hiker, cyclist and camper and wants to bring the perspective of a potential park user who lives near the park. She also brings her professional expertise in park planning and sees this as an opportunity to give back to her community.

Doug Reynaud
Doug’s family owns the Brigadoon Ranch, which is adjacent to the park property. He is an advocate of ranching, trails, and parks. He is a past member of the Coe Park Trails Advisory Committee. Since the park was purchased with public taxpayer money, it should be used by the public. Since grazing has been part of the park’s history, it can and should be part of the park’s balance. This is an opportunity to enlighten the public about grazing and conservation. Doug is familiar with ranch land and trail building. The park and trails system should respect private property.

Kathy Rairden
Kathy sees an educational opportunity, especially for young people, to preserve ranching history. Perhaps the park could include a small-scale working ranch and opportunities for groups such as FFA and 4H. This is especially important as the agricultural aspects of the County Fair seem to be diminishing and may be lost. She is also an advocate for hiking and riding.

Alicia Borowski
Alicia represents ROMP (Responsible Organized Mountain Pedalers). She supports a multi-use park.

Mary Lou Fitzpatrick
Mary Lou is the Chapter Chair for the Bay Area Ridge Trail and supports multi-use trails. While Mary Lou is from San Jose, she has a great respect and appreciation for the rural qualities of South County.

Dick Von Bargen
Dick is a San Martin resident. He is an advocate for boating and other water sports and golfing.

Frank Croft
Frank has expertise in ecology/natural communities and GIS mapping. He is also a property owner on Roop Road. Frank’s main concern is protecting/restoring the natural environment with an interest in restoring native oaks. Over-grazing is a concern. For example, in areas that are grazed, there are no young oaks growing.

Fadi Saba
Fadi is a Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Commissioner. He grew up in South County and went to Live Oak High School in Morgan Hill, and now lives in San Jose. He is an avid hiker and backpacker. In addition to his experience on the Parks and Recreation Commission, Fadi was formerly a land use and environmental aid to a County Supervisor.

**MASTER PLANNING PROCESS**

Lee gave a brief overview of the Master Planning process. The process is expected to take 18 months. A more detailed schedule will be provided to the Task Force at the upcoming meeting. The Master Plan process will include extensive data collection of existing site conditions of the entire 4500 acre park which will be recorded in a GIS format, environmental review and a Natural Resources Management Plan that will be prepared by separate consultants. The master plan will also include economic analysis of long-
term costs and potential revenues of proposed uses. Back-up information on the economic analysis will be provided. The first step of the process will be to develop overall goals, followed by development of a program document based on opportunities and constraints identified through analysis of the existing conditions.

**TASK FORCE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**
The role of the Task Force in developing the master plan was discussed. It was noted that the Task Force is advisory to the Parks and Recreation Commission, which is in turn advisory to the Board of Supervisors, who will have the final authority to approve the Master Plan. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is also being formed to provide input from the multiple agencies and departments that have a stake in the master plan. The TAC will advise the Task Force on technical issues related to long-term management and implementation of the master plan.

**Actions:**
The Task Force agreed to set the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. as a regular meeting time. County staff will look for an appropriate meeting location. Suggestions included the Lion’s Club or Air Museum in San Martin; the Grange in Morgan Hill; and Old City Hall (managed by Gavilan College) in Gilroy. While the Senior Center is a good location, the City requests that the room be vacated by 9:00 p.m. which could be a problem for some meetings.

It was agreed that if Task Force members miss three meetings, they should be asked to resign so that other members of the community can participate on the Task Force. Members were encouraged to contact Elish Ryan if they cannot attend a meeting.

**TASK FORCE COMMUNICATIONS**
It was noted that all Task Force meetings will be open to the public. Task Force members provided phone numbers and or email addresses that will be released to the public. Regular press releases were encouraged to keep the public informed of the master planning process.

**Actions:**
A public comment period will be noted on the agenda at the beginning of each meeting for items that are not on the agenda. In addition, public comment will be taken on each agenda item where appropriate prior to final Task Force deliberations and decisions.

Notes of the previous meeting will be provided to the Task Force within 7-10 days of each meeting so that members can share the information with the groups they represent prior to the next Task Force meeting. Meeting notes may be emailed. Meeting notes will also be posted on the County Park’s web site at [www.parkhere.org](http://www.parkhere.org).

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Jim Woodward**
Jim Woodward is a hang gliding instructor and suggested that hang gliding/paragliding be considered for the park. Coyote Lake has good wind conditions and launch/landing sites. Currently Ed Levin Park is the only site in the County for hang gliding.

**Reid Fischer**
Reid is a resident of San Martin and has a background in geology and offered to assist the Task Force in this area.
Jim Gwinn

Jim’s family is a long-time landowner in the area. He is an advocate for a golf course. A properly designed and managed golf course can be a revenue producer for the park system and an attractive facility for the area.

**DECISION MAKING / FACILITATION**

**Actions:**

The Task Force decided not to select a chairperson at this time. Lee will facilitate the meetings for now, although the Task Force may choose to select a chairperson at a future meeting.

It was determined to work at least initially on a consensus basis without taking votes. The Task Force will determine at a later time when appropriate whether a simple majority or a super-majority is needed for certain Task Force recommendations.

Meeting notes will be recorded and distributed to Task Force members, but formal meeting minutes will not be taken.

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

Recent articles in the *San Jose Mercury News* and the *Gilroy Dispatch* indicated that all or a part of the County Fair may be moving to South County. Anderson Lake and Bear Ranch were noted in these articles as possible locations. Parks Deputy Director, Lisa Killough, noted that this will be discussed as part of the County Parks and Recreation Department’s ongoing countywide strategic planning process. No decisions have been made, and more information will be provided to the Task Force as it becomes available. Those interested in further information are encouraged to follow the Parks Departments process to develop a long range Strategic Plan for County Parks. Task Force members names will be added to the mailing list for the Strategic Plan. Information is also available on the Parks website: www.parkhere.org

Brent Bear offered to take the Task Force on a tour of the property. This should be done quickly while wildflowers are still blooming and the grass is green. He also noted that he has an extensive collection of slides that can be shown to the Task Force.

**Actions:**

A field trip was scheduled for Friday April 6th at 4:00 p.m. Due to logistical issues, the field trip will be for Task Force members only. We will meet at the barns off of San Martin Road. County staff will provide an aerial map of the property for the field trip. County Parks vehicles will be used.

**Next Meetings:**

Friday April 6th, 4:00 p.m.; Task Force Field Trip
Tuesday May 8th, 7:00 p.m.; Task Force meeting; location to be determined

**Meeting Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.