

Potrero Canyon Trail & Bridge Updates (May 2023)

Information from the office of State Senator Ben Allen:

On March 9, the City of LA CAO's office authorized a Construction Projects Report report [<https://lacity.primegov.com/Portal/viewer?id=426543&type=2>] authorizing BOE to enter into an agreement with Caltrans on the pedestrian bridge (please see pg. 3, section C). To be clear, the actual document that BOE has initiated is the "Project Initiation Document" or PID. The PID is not intended to determine whether or not the bridge project should happen, rather, how the bridge will be built. BOE has confirmed that it IS technically feasible to build a bridge, the PID, which takes approximately 12-18 months, is intended to conduct a geotechnical study for the position of the bridge, basic design elements, among other engineering elements, and includes a comprehensive professional outreach campaign to ensure the community is engaged in project elements and able to weigh in with any views or concerns.

As this PID process is already underway, and a consultant will be selected in the coming months to realize the PID and the community outreach component, we are moving forward with this project. We strongly encourage the PPCC to send us their official position letter by the end of May. Given the project was requested by the community, we have received much strong support for the project, and we have been telling the community about the project for years (including in our 2021 Summer Newsletter [<https://sd24.senate.ca.gov/news/newsletter/2021-summer-newsletter>] which was sent to hundreds of thousands of constituents in the Palisades and beyond), we are operating under the assumption the community still supports the project.

Timelines:

Lateral Trail Project:

- In 2022, BOE requested \$3.4 million in the City's budget to cover their projected cost for the total project
- Thereafter, Congressman Lieu secured \$1.15 million in federal earmarks for the project
- BOE subsequently reduced their budget request to the City's budget office to reflect the difference after the Federal funds were secured
- In April 20, the City budget will be finalized, and if money has been secured for this project, BOE will have access to those funds after July 1st 2023
- BOE is in charge of this project and will commence project plans as soon as they have funds (either after July 1st with City funds or in Fall 23' once the Federal earmark funds have been received)
- Once project begins, there will be:
 - Order for Design (several months)
 - City-Caltrans work to secure encroachment permit or create a Joint Use Agreement
 - Environmental and Design Phase (approx 2 years)
 - Construction Phase (approx 1 year)
 - Completion - estimated 2027

Pedestrian Bridge Overcrossing Project:

- The City has already received the \$11 million in funds secured by Senator Allen's budget request
- BOE and Caltrans are finalizing in the coming weeks an agreement so Caltrans can begin the PSR PDS (Project Study Report Project Development Support)
- Project Steps:
 - PSR - PDS Study which includes community engagement (takes about 1-2 years)
 - Environmental and Design Phase (approx 2 years)
 - Environmental and Coastal Commission permits
 - Construction phase (about 2 years)
 - Completion - estimated 2029/2030

While we know these timelines are much longer than we hoped for, we at least know that both projects are on track and moving along. All of the relevant Caltrans and BOE project managers are working closely together and we will continue to check in with both teams to ensure the projects are moving along. We will also have them reach out directly to the PPCC when they require community engagement.

From PPCC:

- See also, Mayor’s proposed budget: <https://cao.lacity.org/budget/>
- See also, CAO, 2023 Construction Projects Report (Addendum), (page 3, Section C (Discussion)): <https://lacity.primegov.com/Portal/viewer?id=426543&type=2>
- See also, January 2008 Report, “Potrero Canyon Trail Uses & Facilities,” from the former Potrero Canyon Community Advisory Committee (PCCAC): <https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/PCCAC-Final-Report-2008.pdf>

PPCC Past Discussion & Position (re the Park and Bridge Overcrossing Concept):

MINUTES FOR MAY 27th 2004 (yellow highlight not original - added for ease of finding related passage(s))

Members in Attendance [including Alternates]: George Wolfberg, Margaret Goff, Kurt Toppel, Ted Mackie, Larry Jacobs, Norman Kulla, Norma Spak, Stuart Muller, Mark Kremer, Laurie Frost, Marguerite Perkins Mautner, Michael Kane

1. Introduction of Board and Audience. The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Library Community Room. Ted Mackie read the Purpose of the Pacific Palisades Community Council. Members of the Board and audience introduced themselves.
2. Adoption of Minutes. The minutes of May 13th were approved as submitted.
3. Announcements and Concerns.
 - 3.1. Treasurers Report. In the absence of the Treasurer, the Chair reported that the checking account balance is \$10,192 and the savings account balance is \$4,289.

3.2. Announcements from Councilwoman Miscikowski's Office.

Monique Ford:

Asked for community input regarding location of bike racks [contact Laurie Frost our Board liaison]. Stated that De Pauw St. from Swarthmore to Earlham meets criteria for one-side-only parking,

That a request for one-side-only parking on Ravoli Dr. had been withdrawn, but would be considered if so requested by the Fire Department,

That repair of the cement stairway and the wood stairway from Adelaide to Entrada has been approved and work should begin shortly.

Reported that the City would reduce the number of bus benches, which have proliferated along PCH.

3.3. Other Announcements.

S. Muller reported on the 6/18/04 meeting of the Palisades Rec. Center Park Advisory Board, when the concert issue was to be discussed. Only one PAB board member, Chairperson Stacey Feldman, and Park Director Cheryl Grey were present. In response to the question "Did the PAB vote to approve the Concert Series" Chairperson Feldman stated that the PAB doesn't vote to support anything. It exists to serve the Park Director and to provide advice that will help the Director achieve the goals she sets. Muller pointed out that the Director controls the agenda, and that the Board is chosen by, and serves at the discretion of, the Director. Director Grey stated that she felt that she had no need, and was not required by the Brown Act, to publicize the PAB agenda, other than to post a copy of it at the front entrance to the park office, in spite of The Palisadian Post's repeated requests over the years that copies of the agenda be regularly mailed to them for publication. Muller opined that the Rec. Center Director and the PAB are not functioning to protect the community's interests, and that Park Directors do not really want public input in the decision making process, but rather want to operate with bureaucratic autonomy. Muller stated that L.A. Rec. and Parks and the local park have for years exhibited, a pattern of self-serving resistance to community input and involvement in the park management decision-making process that affects us all. Muller also pointed out that the main entrance to the Recreation Center is currently at times being restricted to one lane, creating a traffic and safety hazard. M. Ford will investigate.

S. Muller discussed efforts to include an additional left turn lane going southbound on the PCH from Temescal Canyon Road during the redesign of the Will Rogers State Beach parking lot. County Beaches and Harbors, and L. A. DOT support the project. Caltrans is yet to be heard from. Laurie Newman, Senior deputy to Sen. Sheila Kuehl offered to assist in this effort and will contact appropriate city, county and state officials.

3.4. The Chair reported:

That the nominating committee had made its report per the bylaws on May 6th, and that additional nominations may be made until the election of Council officers on June 10th.

There will be a Coastal Commission hearing on the Bel Air Bay Clubs expansion plans on June 10th. Kurt Toppel will attend and represent the PPCC.

DWP is seeking a community representative to facilitate communication with the Department. After a complaint re vehicles parking on the island in the Library Parking Lot creating a dangerous situation for legally parked vehicles attempting to exit marked spaces, the Library will have the curb painted red.

The City will conduct a training class on the Navigate LA geographic database program if there is sufficient interest. The DOT/watch the road program will be set for a future agenda.

3.5. Filming Issues. Larry Jacobs reported that since the City Attorney's office has recently held that film production companies cannot be compelled to work through the EIDC, some productions may now be getting permits directly from the City. The EIDC now seems to be confused as to what its authority is [as well

it should be]. This may now present us with the opportunity to seek redress through Cindy Miscikowski's office.

4. Old Business.

4.1. Potrero Canyon Development.

Stuart Muller distributed and discussed a map showing the boundaries of three adjacent open spaces in Area 6: Temescal Canyon Park, Potrero Canyon Park and the coastal area between them, from Via de Las Olas to the PCH. Muller urged the creation of the Palisades Bluffs Preserve in this last area, to protect it and maintain it in safe condition, and to create a place where people and nature can gently interact. Muller referred to the entire area as the Pacific Palisades Coastal Parks. Los Angeles City Recreation and Parks representative Jane Adrian began by announcing that her branch of the Department of Recreation and Parks was being transferred to the Bureau of Engineering and that she may no longer be in charge of the Potrero Canyon project. Ms. Adrian went on to explain that Phase II, filling the canyon is complete except for the repair of two landslides, which will require about \$1.2 million. The City, lacking funds, would like to sell the 33 properties it owns on the canyon rim, but is prohibited by the Coastal Commission from selling any of these properties until restoration of the canyon is complete. The City plans to ask the Commission to lift this requirement on the condition that the City agrees to place the proceeds from property sales in a designated account. Ms. Adrian distributed the draft of a motion proposed to be made to the City Council by Cindy Miscikowski to create this separate account.

Board members and the audience pointed out that the draft (a) did not specifically state that the sales proceeds are to be spent in Potrero Canyon, (b) that placing all 33 properties on the market at once would disrupt neighborhoods with dozens of near simultaneous construction projects, (c) that to date the City does not have a plan for the canyon, (d) in the absence of a plan there is a risk that the sales proceeds will vanish leaving the project incomplete.

The following motion of Norman Kulla, seconded by Ted Mackie, passed unanimously:

"The Pacific Palisades Community Council

1. *Opposes the sale of 33 residential lots as presented in the draft motion received by the Board on May 27, 2004, under signature of Councilperson Miscikowski;*
2. *Supports the sale of a sufficient number, but no more, of the City owned developed (improved) lots in Potrero Canyon to fund the completion of Phase II, but not Phase III;*
3. *Supports the sale of such additional City owned lots in Potrero Canyon, incrementally and sequentially taking into account the environmental impact upon the surrounding neighborhood, as is necessary to fund Phase III only after further input from the community is sought by the City regarding the design and plan of Phase III, the PPCC Board approves such design and plan, and such design and plan includes, but is not limited to, the following particulars:*
 - a) *Entrance to the park*
 - b) *Permanent funding for park maintenance*
 - c) *Restoration of riparian habitat*
 - d) *Parking*
 - e) *Bathrooms*
 - f) *Recreational pads*
 - g) *Construction of a walk bridge from the mouth of Potrero Canyon over PCH to beach parking*
 - h) *EIR of project upon abutting neighborhoods*
 - i) *Landscaping*
 - j) *Permissible uses*

4. All funds raised by such lots sales shall be deposited into the proposed escrow account and all such deposits shall be used exclusively for the Potrero Canyon Project until completion of all phases."

4.2. Consideration of Summer Concerts at Pacific Palisades Rec. Center.

A proposal to hold outdoor concerts at the Recreation Center for four hours on four Sunday afternoons is opposed by neighboring residents and the residents on Hampton Place are threatening legal action. A separate proposal has been made by the Chamber of Commerce to show films on eight Saturday nights on the Field of Dreams. The Palisades Rec. Center Director was not in attendance, for the second consecutive council meeting. S. Muller reported on the 6/18/04 meeting of the Palisades Rec. Center Park Advisory Board, as detailed under 3.3 above. A motion by Marguerite Perkins Mautner to oppose both proposals was tabled with her agreement pending receipt of more details of the proposals.

5. New Business.

5.1. Assembly Bill 2702 — Proposed State preemption of local zoning to permit second dwelling units on R1 zoned property.

This proposed legislation is intended to increase the supply of affordable housing by preempting local ordinances that place restrictions on creation of granny flats in areas zoned for single-family residences. Assemblywoman Fran Pavleys' representative Louise Rishoff began the discussion by announcing that although Fran opposes the bill, it has been approved by the Assembly. Laurie Newman, Senator Sheila Kuehl's representative, told the Council that Senator Kuehl remains undecided on the issue. The Board and audience expressed concerns about the bill's impact on the Palisades, particularly that the bill

-Does not require that the property be owner-occupied thus essentially legalizing duplexes in areas now zoned R1.

-Preempts local regulation of such matters as parking.

-In areas such as the Palisades largely zoned R1, the bill would nearly double the number of allowable housing units further stressing our traffic and infrastructure problems.

-By making no mention of CC&Rs the bill leaves these contracts in legal limbo.

No member of the Board or the audience spoke in favor of the bill.

Ted Mackie moved that the Council oppose AB 2702 and that the Council so notify Senator Kuehl, Assemblywoman Pavley and Governor Schwarzenegger. The motion passed with one abstention [Kremer].

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.