

**Alameda Creek Watershed Center in Sunol & Grounds Restoration
Planning Meeting**

***Sunol Yard Conference Room
June 2, 2014
10 a.m.***

Meeting Notes

Attendees:

Irv Tiessen	Jenny Rigby, The Acorn Group
Mary Marshall	Tim Ramirez, SFPUC, Natural Resources and Lands Management
Jim O’Laughlin	Amy Dawson, SFPUC Natural Resources and Lands Management
Molly Barnes, Sunol Glen School District	Carla Schultheis, SFPUC Natural Resources and Lands Management
Suzanne Wilson, EBRPD	Bryan Dessaure, SFPUC Project Management Bureau
Dan Reasor	Emily Powell, SFPUC, Sunol Regional Communications
Aspen Kvicala, SAGE	Betsy L. Rhodes, SFPUC, Sunol Regional Communications
Solveig Shearer	
Ann Dowling	
Nate Gartrell, Tri Valley Times	
Eddie Willis, EBRPD	
Rosemary Chang	
Paul DeFreitas, City and County of SF	
Stanley So, City and County of SF	

- I. Project Updated Schedule – Bryan Dessaure & Betsy L. Rhodes
 - a. The public art proposals for the Center are due June 16, 2014. All six proposals will be displayed at Sunol Glen School from June 18 until July 2, 2014 (12 days) for review and comment. SFPUC will investigate putting the proposals up at the Sunol Post Office as well.
 - b. The Yard and Watershed Center projects will go to the Civic Design Review Phase 2 in July 2014.
 - c. Environmental review is underway, and the team anticipates a Mitigated Negative Declaration being published in November 2014.
 - d. Anticipated schedule:
 - i. Completion of CEQA (environmental review) and design by January 2015.
 - ii. Preliminary archeological work and work at the yard to start July 2015.
 - iii. Construction for the Watershed Center anticipated start in December 2015/January 2016.
- II. Architectural Review - Stanley So & Paul De Freitas, Building Design & Construction, DPW
Please see the presentation at sfwater.org/sunolvalley. Click on the Watershed Center link and scroll down to the information from the meeting on June 2, 2014.
- III. Interpretive Master Plan – Jenny Rigby, The Acorn Group
Please see the presentation at sfwater.org/sunolvalley. Click on the Watershed Center link and scroll down to the information from the meeting on June 2, 2014.

IV. Discussion and Questions

Sunol Yard

- a. There was a concern about the compromised view created by the tall, metal pole/cell tower that is in place near the second driveway entrance to the Yard.
 - ➔ *Staff responded that it is a critical communication tower and cannot be moved. To the team's knowledge, it has been there since before the start of the design for this project. One community member mentioned that it can't be too terrible looking if people had to go to the window during the meeting to check it out.*
- b. Most were pleased to see the improvements to the design for the Yard to include a greener front to the yard to block it from view. They thanked the team for the design.
- c. Will there be solar roofs at the Yard?
 - ➔ *Staff explained that the roofs of the large covered storage structures are pitched to maximize solar exposure, and solar panels may be added to those structures at a later time, but they are not in the current project budget.*
- d. A community member expressed how much she liked the walkway/roadway to the temple and the use of trees along it.
 - ➔ *Staff explained that the goal is to keep the walkway un-disturbed. The only trees will be the existing ones. There will be no new planting along the Temple Road approach to be cognizant of budget and also to minimize any impacts to the view.*

Community Input and Public outreach

- e. Where does the water from the temple go?
 - ➔ *The water passing underneath the Temple goes back into Alameda Creek and the water system.*
- f. The orchard is one of the things you first see when you come into the site. SAGE is working on making it a viable orchard again, and also they plan to plant other fruits such as blueberries.
- g. Will there be a scoping meeting associated with the CEQA process?
 - ➔ *There is only a scoping meeting for an environmental impact report and since this project will be a mitigated negative declaration there will be no need for a scoping meeting. Comments on the CEQA document will be taken in writing at the end of the year.*

Watershed Center

- h. What is the square footage of the building?
 - ➔ *Staff explained the building is about 10,000 square feet.*
- i. What are the hours for the Center?
 - ➔ *The hours are not set yet, but it will definitely be open during the week for schools and during the weekends, but we need for volunteers before we can do that. One*

community member explained that one of the biggest resentments from the Town is that you can't visit the Water Temple on weekends.

- j. Will there be direct access to the creek from the Center?
 - ➔ *The picnic area will be the closest area to the creek. The closest access point to the creek is behind the sycamore trees that border the area. However, the creek at that location does not have water in it year round. There will be future trail connections to the Vargas Plateau and other East Bay Regional Park District Trails in the area in the future as well. Suzanne Wilson confirmed that a feasibility study has begun for a trail up Niles Canyon, as well as a Vargas Plateau connection. There should be more information to share by the end of 2014. Also the RFP is out for the Vargas staging area, so it should be opening soon as well.*
- k. Will you control any fish that might end up in your pond?
 - ➔ *The intent is to let it be natural and let nature take its course.*
- l. Will there be a bridge across the creek there?
 - ➔ *Yes, but right now it is just a conceptual level. This is not part of the current project or environmental document. We will work on it.*

Indoor Elements

- m. Where will the aquarium be located?
 - ➔ *If you look at the site drawing you can see it located creek side of the center, so there is continuity between interior and exterior space.*
- n. One community member asked about working with the Sunol Historical Society to provide content for the multi-touch interactive computer tables. Also the group wondered if the content could be accessed online. This could be photographs, maps, oral histories, three-dimensional objects, etc.
 - ➔ *We would be happy to do so once we get to the programming component of the planning efforts. Some owners of photographs, etc. typically allow for this; others don't. It is a question of copyright protection, licenses, and release of material.*
- o. Will you show what the creek looked like before two dams were put on it?
 - ➔ *We have been working with San Francisco Estuary Institute on the historic ecology of the Creek and the Watershed. The work's been done, we have not decided on how to present it, yet.*
- p. Thank you for thinking about tactile experiences and how kids can interact with the exhibits. If you need children to test out your displays, Sunol Glen can provide some students to help.
- q. Will the community be able to provide input on the displays? The past and present stories are important to share at the Center.
 - ➔ *Staff confirmed that we will take feedback on the displays once we are at that stage of the planning process.*

General Parting Comments

- r. Many expressed their appreciation for the work done by the project team and the professionalism of the architectural and interpretive designing.

VI. Next steps/follow-up items

- Staff will post the staff presentations on the webpage.
- We will convene another meeting together in the fall to review the landscaping plan and drawings for the Center.
- Public Review of the Public art proposals is scheduled to start on June 18 and go through July 2nd. Please tell everyone to look at the proposals and provide comments.
- The group can log on to **sfwater.org/sunolvalley** and review the presentations that contributed to today's discussions.