

MINUTES

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27, 2015
SARATOGA CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
JOINT MEETING OF THE SARATOGA CITY COUNCIL & HAKONE FOUNDATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Miller called the meeting to order at 4:09 p.m. in the Joan Pisani Community Center, Multipurpose Room at 19655 Allendale Avenue in Saratoga, CA.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT Mayor Howard Miller, Vice Mayor Manny Cappello, Council Members Emily Lo, Mary-Lynne Bernald, Rishi Kumar

Hakone Foundation Board of Trustees Ann WaltonSmith, Faramarz Yazdani, Connie Young Yu, Beverly Harada, Sandy Miller

ABSENT: Hakone Foundation Board of Trustees Yuki Hashimoto, Miki Shimabe, and Amy Malaki

ALSO PRESENT: James Lindsay, City Manager
Crystal Bothelio, City Clerk
John Cherbone, Public Works Director
Mainini Cabute, Management Analyst II
Shozo Kagoshima, Hakone Foundation Executive Director
Jacob Kellner, Hakone Gardens Gardener
Paul Sorensen, Portico Group
Dean Runyan, Dean Runyan Associates
Ken Tadashi Oshima, Portico Group
Lianne Humble, Denise Duffy & Associates
Scott Lewis, Oppenheim/Lewis

I. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS

None

II. HAKONE GARDENS MASTER PLAN PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION

Paul Sorenson, with the Portico Group, provided an introduction, background of the master plan process, the current status of the master plan, and described what the final master plan will include. He explained the overall goals and objectives, created with input from the public and Hakone Foundation, used to guide development of the master plan.

Ken Tadashi Oshima, with Portico Group, described some of the concepts of traditional Japanese gardens that have influenced the Hakone Gardens master plan.

Scott Lewis, of Oppenheim/Lewis, described the capital costs associated with the master plan, including how construction cost estimates were developed and how a phased approach will potentially effect construction cost estimates.

Dean Runyan, with Dean Runyan Associates, provided information about how the master plan is expected to impact the business plan of Hakone Gardens. He explained that money to fund improvements for facilities similar to Hakone usually come primarily from outside sources and the master plan can be used to raise funds.

Mayor Miller noted that the City used a similar process with the implementation of the Quarry Park Master Plan. It may take a long time to fully implement the plan, but it can be done in pieces by taking a phased approach.

Ann Waltonsmith, Chair of the Hakone Foundation Board or Trustees, explained that the master plan serves as a road map for improvements at Hakone that will have an impact for years to come and should help facilitate fundraising efforts.

Shozo Kagoshima, Hakone Foundation Executive Director, concurred that after completion of the master plan then the next phase of the process will be to strategize how to fund its implementation. It may include fundraising, as well as other sources, like grants. He added that the improvements proposed in the master plan will significantly enhance visitor experience.

Mayor Miller invited public comment on the master plan.

The following people requested to speak:

Peggy Lynne expressed concerns about comparing Hakone Gardens to the Portland Japanese Garden, which draws people from all over the state of Oregon, as well as from parts of Washington, and is nestled in the middle of a national park.

Jill Hunter raised questions about whether the community would support the many changes proposed by the master plan, citing that many residents expressed opposition to change during the vote on Measure Q. Additionally, she asked if the proposed changes would be in line with requirements of the National Trust of Historic Preservation.

Jackie Welch opposed creation of commercial space at Hakone and stated that she believed the City did not need more space for loud weddings or parties.

John Tauchi suggested that Takao Donuma should evaluate the master plan and stated he felt that the 70 spaces of parking would be insufficient.

Mike Story expressed concerns about whether Hakone could be sustained and asked if the final report would include information about how improvements will affect garden revenues in terms of attendance or events, as well as the potential loss of revenue during construction periods.

Dorothy Marian said she would like to see the issue of wedding noise at Hakone to be addressed.

Jack Tomlinson shared several ideas to improve the garden, including extending the bamboo garden into the parking lot and moving the gift shop entrance.

No one else requested to speak.

Council Member Lo noted that this year Hakone is celebrating its centennial and on August 26, the Foundation learned that Hakone was named the best public garden by *San Francisco Magazine* in the magazine's "2015 Best of the South Bay" contest. Keeping the garden in good condition and sustainable requires capital investment. The master plan serves as a conceptual plan for how to move the garden forward. The improvements will require a lot of private investments and donation, which means that if the community is opposed to the changes outlined in the master plan then that will become clear during the fundraising process.

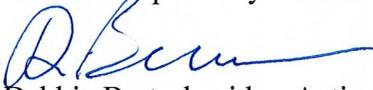
Vice Mayor Cappello expressed support for the master plan, sharing that he thought the master plan reflected Saratoga's standards for parks. He liked the changes proposed for the entry and creating points of surprise and mystery throughout the park. He noted that the master plan calls for a facility to host these types of events indoors, which should diminish noise. He also commented that with most of Hakone's revenues coming from events, it is unrealistic to expect that the organization can be sustained without event revenues even if admission sales increase.

Ann WaltonSmith, Chair of the Hakone Foundation Board or Trustees, added that Hakone is trying to work on noise issues and she believes that the organization is doing a better job of addressing noise concerns. She proposed that after following the proper process to ensure that the Foundation and City are in agreement on the plan, input from Takao Donuma can be sought on the master plan. Additionally, any improvements will comply with requirements for historic buildings.

CAPPELLO/BERNALD MOVED TO AUTHORIZE STAFF TO START THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW REVIEW PROCESS FOR THE HAKONE GARDENS MASTER PLAN. MOTION PASSED. AYES: MILLER, CAPPELLO, LO, BERNALD. NOES: NONE. ABSTAIN: NONE. ABSENT: KUMAR.

Mayor Miller thanked the Portico Group, Hakone Foundation, and members of the public for their efforts on the master plan and then adjourned the meeting at 5:59 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Bretschneider', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Debbie Bretschneider, Acting City Clerk
City of Saratoga