

SUNSET CLIFFS NATURAL PARK AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT

PCPB at its July 2011 meeting approved and recommended implementation of the Coastal Development Permit and Site development permit for the Sunset Cliffs Hillside Park Project #236548, "...while PCPB works collaboratively with the SCNP Committee and cooperatively with the Point Loma Nazarene University to address and resolve drainage concerns...." The Sunset Cliffs Natural Park Council (SCNPC) is the recognized advisory committee for the Park. The ad hoc subcommittee then was appointed.

COLLABORATION WITH SCNPC

The community members of the subcommittee included Ann Swanson, Chair of SCNPC, Cammie Ingram, Director, Capital Programs and Space Management Scripps Institution of Oceanography, Dr. Craig Barilotti, a marine ecologist, all of whom brought a twenty-plus history of dealing with the Park documented in photographs and writings. PCPB members were John Gott, Jay Shumaker, Norm Allenby as subcommittee chair, and PCPB Chair Helen Kinnaird. The subcommittee joined SCNPC, its members, its subcommittees, the Surfrider Foundation and homeowners represented by Suhail Khalil in examining the drainage and erosion issues at the Park. The shared goal was to minimize, if not eliminate, any runoff from PLNU to the Park.

COOPERATION WITH PLNU

At issue for PLNU was compliance with condition 38 e of its Conditional Use Permit (CUP) which states:

"The applicant shall submit a drainage and erosion control plan, to be approved by the Planning Director and City Engineer, which identifies mitigation measures for the sole purpose of correcting future erosion problems which relate directly to the proposed new land use authorized by this CDP/CUP amendment."

Nearly twenty years ago, PLNU developed a drainage and erosion plan that was submitted to the City and approved by staff on July 20, 1992. The City requested that implementation of drainage improvements be deferred, pending development of a Park Master Plan. The Master Plan was finalized in July 2005. With the Master Plan in place, the City's five-year review of the CUP concluded in February 2011 that PNLU's "...approved drainage and erosion control plan has been compared to the current Park Improvement plans and determined to be a suitable interim measure to protect the cliffs below the university until such time that the Park plan is fully implemented."

The Master Plan called for comprehensive storm drainage system to minimize runoff coming onto the Park. When the ad hoc subcommittee was appointed, the PLNU drainage and erosion plan was in ministerial review which precluded public comment. Comments nonetheless were made and received by the City and PLNU. The basic design intent of the drainage and erosion plan was to contain collect, and convey the storm water from PLNU's property to the Park. That intent did not change.

PLNU's drainage and erosion plan was first seen by the ad hoc subcommittee and the collaborating groups in September 2011. The plan appeared to be an updated version of the plan submitted and approved in 1992.

By letter the PCPB Environment/Water committee advised PLNU of a desire to have an integrated solution to the erosion issues with a design intent, "... to minimize if not eliminate any runoff from the PLNU site onto Sunset Cliffs Natural Park", the idea being to collect and beneficially use the water. There followed a meeting in which, after consideration of a variety of suggested improvements to its proposed plan, PLNU stated that it was ready to submit its drawing to the permitting process. PLNU took the position, predicated on a 1992 Superior Court adjudication in a lawsuit brought by PLNU against the City, that the storm water runoff flowing from the PLNU property onto the Park was the City's problem, excepting future erosion directly related to the proposed land use.

Viewing the plans, there are some changes from the earlier iteration, particularly at Young Hall and along Loop Road. Those changes are improvements that will significantly reduce runoff and erosion in portions of the Park, but storm water will continue to be collected from PLNU. Its flow will be concentrated through a series of pipes and ditches, and discharged into a culvert canyon down to the beach, eroding as it goes and spilling sediment into the ocean.

CONCLUSION

If the PLNU drainage improvement plan is implemented, the City as the Park owner will have to deal with storm water coming from PLNU's campus. It will be concentrated at the top of the culvert canyon. Presumably this will be accommodated in the Comprehensive Drainage Plan now in the planning stage.

The design and construction of the planned work of improvement must meet Federal, State and City laws, regulations and policies. During our discussions questions arose regarding legal compliance. An exploration of legal compliance is beyond the scope of this subcommittee's undertaking.

Respectfully submitted,

Norm Allenby, Subcommittee Chair

01/19/12