

April 25, 2008

The Honorable Bill Bogaard
Mayor
City of Pasadena
100 North Garfield, #237
Pasadena, CA 91109

Subject: Hahamongna Watershed Park Master Plan - Oak Grove Area

Dear Mayor Bogaard:

The Environmental Advisory Commission respectfully requests that the City Council examine the alignment of plans for the Oak Grove Area of the Hahamongna Watershed Park with the City's adopted sustainability policies and goals, prior to beginning work on the Oak Grove Area. The Commission's considerations in arriving at this request are as follows:

1. Issue: The plan for the Oak Grove Area in the western portion of the Hahamongna Watershed Park ("Oak Grove Area") includes developing two new, multipurpose play fields and additional parking. The fields are below the flood line, so they will need to be raised by 10 and 30 feet with material from another portion of the Hahamongna.
2. Oak Grove Area: The Oak Grove area is a rare, sensitive and irreplaceable habitat. It is a riparian and alluvial scrub habitat, one of the few that has not been developed locally. It is one of the most environmentally sensitive areas in Pasadena. There is growing recognition and concern for such sensitive habitats.
3. Consistency with City Policy: The plan for the Oak Grove Area may not be consistent with City policies. These policies include:
 - Action 12: Protect critical habitat corridors and other key habitat characteristics from unsustainable development.
 - Action 20: Protect the ecological integrity of the City's primary drinking water sources (i.e., aquifers, rivers, lakes, wetlands and associated ecosystems).
4. The Commission's Role: The Environmental Advisory Commission's primary function is to provide policy advice to City Council for promoting environmental stewardship and urban sustainability in accordance with the City Council's endorsement and adoption of environmental policies. While the Commission has no intention of regularly reviewing individual projects, the project proposed for the Oak Grove Area involves an

utterly unique City resource, involving city-wide impacts, and as such warrants special consideration.

5. Current EIR Requirements: SB 1165, adopted in May 2007, requires additional environmental review and public comment for any EIR over five years old. The Arroyo Seco Master Plan EIR was approved in April 2003.
6. The Recommendation of the Hahamongna Watershed Park Advisory Committee: The following is a motion from the April 3, 2008 meeting of the Committee:

“Ask City Council to re-evaluate the appropriateness of the new soccer fields in Hahamongna in a timely manner and to suspend any spending of these dollars on these activities until an examination has been done.”

M: Commissioner Baum; S: Commissioner Isenberg
9 approved, 1 opposed, 0 abstentions

Based on these considerations, the Environmental Advisory Commission urges City Council to examine whether the plans for the Oak Grove Area (soccer fields and parking) are consistent with the City’s adopted sustainability policies and goals. The following are steps that Council may want to consider:

- Delay the proposed project for the Oak Grove Area until these issues have been resolved.
- Request that the Environmental Advisory Commission review environmental aspects of the Oak Grove project as they pertain to the City’s sustainability goals.
- Consider alternative ways to achieve the City’s goals for multi-purpose recreational fields.

The Commission appreciates the opportunity to bring this matter to the attention of City Council.

Sincerely,

Michael Hurley
Chair, Environmental Advisory Commission