

Message from the President

The South Bay Parkland Conservancy has hit the ground running in 2011 with several initiatives aimed at bringing more parkland and open space to the South Bay.

For anyone who missed it, we sponsored a public meeting in which the Cal Poly 606 Studio, under contract with the California State Coastal Conservancy, gathered public input on our park needs in the South Bay. You'll read more about these activities in this issue of our newsletter, and can always find more information on our website at www.southbayparks.org.

I am also pleased to announce that we have added four new members to our board of directors: Dawn Esser, Jessica Hall, Terrence McCarthy and Paula Tuckerman. These new board members bring unique skill sets and fresh enthusiasm to the board at just the right time...as we enter into this new phase of establishing new parkland in the South Bay. Read about each of them on our website - The talent they bring to our Conservancy is truly impressive.

While we move forward with plans for new parkland and open space, we have a need for two critical resources: volunteers and funds. Please consider donating funds or your time and skills to the Conservancy. Other communities are adding open space, even in these tough times. For example, Newport Harbor has plans to develop a new 16-acre park that will include restored wetlands, walking trails and view opportunities. The residents and elected officials of Chula Vista have also been successful in reclaiming their waterfront by



California poppies, multicolor lupine and white sage at Dominguez Gap (see page 3)

working with a variety of agencies to define an end date for their power plant. With your support, we can do the same right here in Redondo. Vision combined with commitment yields results!

Finally, come visit our Earth Day booths at Polliwog Park in Manhattan Beach and at the SEA Lab in Redondo Beach, which will both be held on April 16th. We'd love for you to meet our board members and learn more about our activities. I hope to see you there!

—Jim Light
President, South Bay Parkland Conservancy

Did You Know?

Many factors point toward the need for a future seaside park at Pacific Coast Highway and Herondo, including official recognition that even including the beaches, Redondo is considered park-poor. Redondo has only 2.45 acres of park per thousand residents in comparison to the national average of 13.6 acres, according to the Trust for Public Land. In fact, a recent report by the USC Center for Sustainable Cities that ranked 10 regions in LA and Ventura Counties designated the South Bay along with East LA and South LA as the most 'park poor' regions.

Student Design Team Master Plan of South Bay Open Spaces in the Works

Graduate students in the Landscape Architecture program at California State Polytechnic University at Pomona initiated The South Bay Waterfront Project with a community meeting on Wednesday, February 23rd to uncover community priorities and needs for open space in coastal South Bay cities. The South Bay Parkland Conservancy hosted the workshop, held at the Veteran's Park Library.

The meeting represented a public "data collection" phase for a vision plan that will recommend enhancements to existing recreational destinations, create new open spaces, and provide concepts for linkages and habitat. "This is a great time to respond to the needs of the regional community by envisioning the role of sustainable infrastructure as a social and environmental asset," said Neal Sharma, one of the graduate students working on the project.

"We are excited to have this opportunity to engage the Cal Poly graduate program in landscape architecture, which has a track record of producing high quality landscape studies as incubators for local planning," said Parkland Conservancy President Jim Light. "Of course, we are particularly interested in incubating concepts for the AES site – the study goes beyond that, however, to consider concepts for the larger coastal South Bay area."

The workshop was well attended with approximately 40 participants including residents, current and former city officials and local business representatives. Attendees

gathered at tables with large maps of the South Bay. After a presentation about the project, attendees were invited to diagram and annotate their favorite destinations on one map, and the places they avoid or don't feel comfortable going to on a second map. Sharma explained, "This gives us valuable information about how members of the community view the places they live, both in terms of public resources and quality of life." The third activity involved a brainstorming exercise of open space priorities. Participants then voted on the priorities they preferred. "The priority brainstorming activity helped the project team develop a better understanding of what resources are valuable and could benefit from improvement. This step rounded out information gathered during the mapping activities and helped formulate the direction of the project," he continued.

Design team member Brian Baldauf explained the next phases of the project: "Following this data collection phase, the design team will develop a series of approaches with phasing alternatives for a comprehensive regional vision plan promoting connectivity and open space through optimization of underutilized land fragments throughout the South Bay. "Team members will then develop typologies and conceptual designs for a large waterfront park and four other smaller sites.

The Cal Poly Team will make a follow-up presentation at the South Coast Chapter of the California Native Plant Society on May 2, and will present the vision plan alternatives and concept plans in June. A completed report will be made available from the Coastal Conservancy in .pdf format shortly thereafter.

The Cal Poly 606 Studio represents the thesis phase of graduate design education. After researching local environmental and open space issues, graduate students Lindsay Acheson, Brian Baldauf, Jennifer Chung and Neal Sharma developed the South Bay Waterfront Project concept and secured the \$50,000 funding to move the study forward. Professor Susan Mulley is their advisor. Progress on the project can be followed at the team's blog, www.southbaywaterfrontproject.blogspot.com.

Thanks to 606 Team members Brian Baldauf and Neal Sharma for contributing to this article.

—Jessica Hall

Board Member, South Bay Parkland Conservancy



606 Studio open space mapping exercise

A World-Class Seaside Park: How Do We Get There?

March 2011 was the sixth anniversary of the advisory vote in which the people of Redondo Beach chose a park vision over a development plan. Since that vote, a number of artists, community members, environmentalists and visionaries have offered glimpses of how the approximately 50 acres on Pacific Coast Highway at Herondo might eventually look.

All of the proposals have one thing in common, and that is creation of a world-class seaside park that offers multiple benefits to a community that is one of L.A.'s most underserved, at least in terms of open space. The vision is sound, and most importantly, is well supported by the intent of public funds that will come into play over the next few years.

So, the question becomes: How do we get there?

In short, we will get there by developing a compelling proposal, demonstrating the support of the community, enlisting the assistance of local and state agencies and assembling the money. Yes, it will take money, lots of money, in addition to the cost of the land, for a quality project.

Most likely, the funding for the park will be passed through the California Coastal Conservancy, which has helped with the project for over seven years now. The Coastal Conservancy, however, is just one of several stakeholders necessary for project synergy.

Consider a recent large-scale multi-agency endeavor located in Long Beach, the Dominguez Gap Wetlands Multiuse Project. The 50-acre site is one of 27 spreading grounds maintained by the L.A. County Department of Public Works for flood control purposes, and it had been in much the same configuration since the 1950s, except without the wetlands hydrology and installation of 50,000 native plants that occurred in 2006 and 2007.

While no money had to be spent on land acquisition, the Gap is nonetheless a stirring example of what can be accomplished when the desire of the community is combined with the cooperation of multiple agencies. The total construction cost of \$7 million dollars was assembled through the following funding sources:

- Proposition 13 CALFED grant - \$2,350,000
- Proposition 40 (Rivers and Mountains Conservancy) - \$200,000
- California Coastal Conservancy - \$400,000
- Los Angeles Flood Control District - \$4,000,000

While these numbers are just for illustration, it is likely that the funding for our Herondo Park proposal would similarly be assembled from a combination of sources. In addition to the funding described, the Dominguez Gap project also had the



The Dominguez Gap Wetlands Multiuse Project in Long Beach

support of the community and in-kind technical expertise from other local and state agencies.

One of our strengths in competition for such park funding is that we have a variety of successful local native plant revegetation projects that feature several habitat types, such as dune, emergent marsh, riparian woodland, and coastal sage scrub. Such projects contribute to our collective experience and serve as supporting models for the Herondo Park proposal.

Specifically, in addition to the aforementioned Dominguez Gap, we have the Bixby Marshland in Carson, the Bolsa Chica Wetlands in Huntington Beach, the Gardena Willows Wetlands Preserve, Madrona Marsh in Torrance, the ongoing restoration of the ocean bluffs by SEA Lab, and several restoration projects of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy, including the Portuguese Bend Reserve.

We also have intimate native plant demonstration projects that are more appropriately scaled for an urban park, such as the Manhattan Beach Botanical Garden, the Mediterranean section of the South Coast Botanic Garden, and the California Native Plant Society's headland bluff garden at the Point Vicente Interpretive Center in Rancho Palos Verdes.

Finally, we have excellent human resources, including local residents with personal memories of the El Segundo dune system, a number of superb local native plant practitioners, and professional consulting firms with impressive accomplishments in the area.

Clearly, our local community has the land models and professional expertise for a winning proposal and a successful outcome, and when the time comes, I am confident we can assemble a great team.

Along with the technical expertise, we also need the support of the community. It is important, therefore, for individuals like you to continue membership in the South Bay Parkland Conservancy and remain engaged to ensure our local project gets the attention it deserves.

We hope for your continued involvement!

—David Sundstrom

Board Member, South Bay Parkland Conservancy



SOUTH BAY PARKLAND CONSERVANCY

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LEAVING A LEGACY OF OPEN SPACE

Special Thanks To...

- Rob and Linda Moffat
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- All of our Donors
- Christine Wike, Newsletter Editor

Please send your tax deductible donation to SBPC, PO Box 7000-408, Redondo Beach, CA 90277

www.southbayparks.org

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UPCOMING EVENTS

19th Annual Earth Day Celebration and Concert at Polliwog Park

1601 Manhattan Beach Boulevard*

Manhattan Beach

Saturday, April 16th

11:00am ~ 4:00pm

**Rain location will be across the street
at Manhattan Heights Community Center,
1600 Manhattan Beach Boulevard*

~

10th Annual Earth Day Celebration at The SEA Lab

1021 North Harbor Drive

Redondo Beach

Saturday, April 16th

10:00am ~ 2:00pm