CITY OF ORANGE COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT PARK PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Minutes of Regular Meeting Held February 28, 2008 Council Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Blanc called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Vice-Chair Davidson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Present:

Chair Blanc

Vice-Chair Davidson

Commissioner Gilmer

Commissioner Hairston (Arrived at 5:40 p.m.)

Commissioner Remland

Adoption of Agenda

Motion: Commissioner Davidson Second: Commissioner Remland

Ayes: Blanc, Davidson, Gilmer, Remland

1.4 Approval of the Minutes for the regular meeting of January 10, 2008

Motion: Commissioner Remland Second: Commissioner Davidson

Ayes: Blanc, Davidson, Gilmer, Remland

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

III. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

None.

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IV. ORAL REPORTS

(Commissioner Hairston arrived at 5:40 p.m.)

V. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

5.1 Santiago Creek Bike Trail: Tustin to Collins – Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 1772-06.

Ms. Hagan reported that all technical studies and preliminary construction documents have been completed for this project. Staff has prepared the necessary environmental documentation that is required, and it has been circulated to the public according to federal guidelines as there is federal funding for this project. Ms. Hagan said that the Commission's actions were to review and consider the information in the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and recommend approval for the City Council as well as recommend approval for the preliminary construction documents which shows the alignment from which the MND was based. The proposed project consists of the construction of a Class I Bike Trail along the Santiago Creek from Tustin Street to Walnut Avenue and the City owned railroad right-of-way from Walnut Avenue to Collins Avenue. There will be a 10 ft. wide paved bike trail with 2ft. on each side graded asphalt shoulders. The bike trail will traverse public property owned by CalTrans, the Orange County Flood Control District, The County of Orange, Metropolitan Water District as well as several privately owned parcels that the City will be working on in the right-of-way process. The project also includes construction of two pedestrian bridges which will be prefabricated similar to the one that has been constructed at Glassell Street as well as two under crossings one at the 55 Freeway and one at Chapman Avenue. The trail will be proposed as a dawn to dusk facility. The City will have signage and code language and make adjustments to the Orange Municipal Code (OMC) to ensure that it is a dawn to dusk facility.

The Park Planning and Development Commission has reviewed this project on several dates in the past, and they have received updates. The Commission has taken formal action to receive and file reports on both April 13, 2006 and on October 13, 2005.

Staff has prepared the MND and has circulated it for public review beginning January 8, 2008 and ended on February 12, 2008. All properties within 300 ft. of the project site were notified as well as City standard publications through the web site, public libraries and local newspapers and at City Hall. The draft MND finds that the project will have less than a significant impact on the environment with implementation of standard conditions and mitigation measures. When the public comment period closed; the City received seven written comment letters. Staff prepared responses to these letters to address environmental comments, and the copies of the staff responses have been included in the Commission's staff report.

Of the seven comments received, five of them were public agency comments regarding their area involvement. Letters were received from the Santiago Creek Greenway Alliance, as well as one from a local resident Ms. Pamela Galera. Staff received additional letters of support this evening, that were directed specifically to the Commission. These four letters were received from the

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Santiago Greenway Alliance, The National Park Service, The Regional Recreational Trails Advisory Committee, and an additional letter of support from Ms. Pamela Galera.

Upon City Council's approval of the MND, staff will begin the right-of-way process which will include finalizing design and approval of resource agency permits.

Ms. Hagan acknowledged members of the team that assisted in getting the work done. Michael Wolfe, Project Manager, with IDS Services, Sharon Baik with the Community Development Department that created the MND, Brad Beyer, from the Police Department with the Crime Prevention Divison, and Paul Tran from Public Works.

Chair Blanc opened the floor to Public Comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ms. Shirley L. Grindle 5021 E. Glen Arran Orange, CA

Ms. Grindle said that she has been a resident of Orange for 46 years. She lives near Santiago Creek and she has been working to get trails along Santiago Creek since 1967. She said they have accomplished more in the last six or seven years than in the previous forty or fifty years because of the sand and gravel mining industry that had to be dealt with. They are gone now; they left a mess, but with the help of City staff we have managed to get trails started up the Creek. Ms. Grindle reported that the Greenway Alliance met with Supervisor Bill Campbell a number of months ago and asked him to help get the trail system put in along the Santiago Creek. Much to our amazement the County wants to allot a huge sum of money for the continuation of the Santiago Creek Trail starting where the project that is to be approved tonight ends and will continue to Santiago Oaks Regional Park. She urged the staff to continue moving this project forward, and assured staff that the Greenway Alliance would be back with their support for the work ahead. Ms. Grindle said that she hoped the City would find a way to bring in a project manager to oversee this huge project because current staff cannot handle a project of this scope.

Mr. John Moore 2707 Killingsworth Orange, CA

Mr. Moore said he would not only be speaking for himself but for those in the Greenway Alliance that could not be attending the meeting. The Greenway Alliance supports the City's efforts to continue with this project. It is a big step in continuing the trail to the Santiago Oaks Regional Park. Some of the benefits are recreation and health. Mr. Moore said in the summer time he spends an hour a week at the eastern end of the restoration trail watering some of the plants there and he is impressed with seeing the number of people who are bicycling, walking, jogging and enjoying the trails. He felt that was a good measure of the trails success. In addition, the recreation the trails will provide a meaningful source for off-road transportation. It connects

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residential areas to business areas, i.e. Main Place Mall, Downtown Orange. It will increase property values. This trail will be a great asset to the City.

Mr. Peter Wetzel 7217 E. La Cumbre Orange, CA

Mr. Wetzel said that a year or two ago Ms. Galera, who was then on City staff, assembled a group of trail advocates to review proposed changes to the Master Plan of Trails and to prioritize trail projects. Despite the fact that this trail project does not service all user groups, being a paved bikeway, the user groups called the project a number one priority. He urged the Commission to move forward with this project. Mr. Wetzel said he was delighted to hear the news from Shirley Gindle about the money that was being allotted for trails. The only concern that Mr. Wetzel expressed is the designation of the trails "from dawn to dusk." That might be fine during the summertime, but to the extent that the bikeway may be used as a commuter route in the winter time, dusk might come before businesses get out and that may be a problem. Mr. Wetzel urged the Commission to approve this project.

Mr. Kirk Winterroth 5912 E. Bryce Avenue Orange, CA

Mr. Winterroth said he was a 45 year resident of Orange and a 1973 graduate of Orange H.S. He said he was for the trails, and he wanted to thank the staff for their doing such a great job for bringing it this far. Mr. Winterroth said one of the benefits of these trails is that residents will be able to enjoy the benefits of the new Grijalva Park.

Mr. Dave Casselman 2924 E. Lomita Avenue Orange, CA

Mr. Casselman has been a resident of Orange for 22 years. Mr. Casselman said he was in favor of the trails. His property backs up to the unincorporated railroad property. In the past, he has had concerns about privacy and security. Mr. Casselman said at other meetings he has alluded to being a victim to a shooting near his property. It has been a lot quieter for quite a while, since a fence was installed at the end of Wanda and at the other end so there has not been public access through. In the interim, the City has been good about putting a street light at the end of his cul-de-sac and also fencing off the street. He has also planted security plants such as Bougainvillea and Cactus. He expressed the desire that the Council honor property owners that border the trail to be able to keep their security plants and maybe provide some lighting along that path for additional security.

Chair Blanc asked Mr. Casselman if he had planted the plants on his property or the right-of-way property. Mr. Casselman said he planted them on the right-of-way property.

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> Mr. Roy Shabbazian 3808 E. Palm Avenue Orange, CA

Mr. Shabbazian said that he supported the project, and that he saw the project as an important component of the Bikeways Master Plan that has been updated a number of times in the last decade. The creek trail along with the Santiago River trail will form a double spine of the network of bikeways thru the City.

Ms. Yolanda Alvarez 552 N. Waverly Street Orange, CA

Ms. Alvarez said she hoped the Commission would vote in favor of the trails. She looks forward to walking with her family and grandchildren once the trail has been established.

Ms. Jeanne Carter El Modena High School

Ms. Carter is part of the Santiago Greenway Alliance. She said that the Santiago Creek is a great asset for the City of Orange. She is extremely pleased that these projects are moving forward after 30 years. It will enhance the lives of the residents of the City of Orange. The bike trail will be a great benefit. Ms. Carter said that she greatly appreciated the work that staff and the Commission has done.

(Chair Blanc asked the Commission for their comments.)

Vice-Chair Tom Davidson thanked staff for everything that they have done. He said that this is a great project and will be a great asset to the City. When people are looking to move into the area one of the greatest perks that they look for is trails. Vice-Chair Davidson asked Ms. Hagan if there were lighting provisions for this project. Ms. Hagan reported that the only lighting is underneath the 55 Freeway and that will be daytime lighting because it is considered a dusk to dawn facility and, therefore, there will be no lighting along the trail. Vice-Chair Davidson referred to Mr. Wetzel's comments regarding those who work from dawn to dusk and that it might be problematic. He asked Ms. Hagan what the City would be doing to enforce this policy. Ms. Hagan said the City will use signage, the police department's bike team will patrol the area, and the decision not to have lights along the path would deter its use.

(Chair Blanc noted that several speakers had arrived to give their comments.)

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> Mr. Joel Robinson 4907 Valley Forge Drive Orange, CA

Mr. Joel Robinson said he was representing the Santiago Creek Watershed Preservation and Restoration Project. He said they were in total support of the Santiago Creek Bike Trail expansion improvement. He said they had some conditions that hopefully could be met.

- Provide 100% appropriate native landscape
 This is important because of its close proximity to the Creek itself.
- He wanted to know if there would be long-term irrigation.
- If there is any native habitat already in occurrence along the trail, they want to make sure that is preserved.
- If at all possible, provide interpretive sign labeling native species, cultural history, and natural history to educate people in a self-guided way.
- In terms of lighting, for the preservation of dark skies we would appreciate minimal or no lighting so people can see the stars.

Mr. Robinson said that the plan calls for a paved surface but they were hoping for a permeable or semi-permeable surface for water recharge purposes. The Water District is already planning to recharge things in the stream bed itself allowing that to happen in the trail itself would be a benefit for groundwater purposes and also for curb runoff. In terms of seating, natural boulders and logs rather than formal benches would be preferable. If the seating is more informal, they might not be vandalized.

Chair Blanc asked Mr. Robinson if he had submitted his comments during the comment period for the MND. Mr. Robinson said he had run out of time, but would be happy to submit his comments presently.

Mr. Howard DeCruyenaire Founder and Board Member of the Santiago Greenway Alliance

Mr. DeCruyenaire said he had photos to share with the Commission of just how popular the existing trail is from Tustin Street to Cambridge Street. He said he enjoys riding, walking, or jogging along the trail. He thanked everyone for their support of the Santiago Greenway Alliance and he feels that it will be one of Orange County's best recreational facilities when it is completed. Mr. DeCruyenaire said some of the best parks could be found in the City of Orange and Santa Ana and connecting them with the bike trail will make it into a beautiful greenway. He said that he hoped the shoulder along the bike trail would be a decomposed granite shoulder and that it is made wide enough to be a running trail. It has been done recently along the Santa Ana River north of the Anaheim Stadium, it was put in as part of Anaheim's landscape trail enhancement. It is really a nice feature.

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(Chair Blanc returned to the Commission for further comments.)

Vice-Chair Davidson thanked the Santiago Greenway Alliance for all their efforts on the trails projects.

Commissioner Gilmer said that he and Commissioner Hairston were one of the original Commissioners when the Park Planning Commission was formed. Among other things the trail system was given to the Commission as part of their responsibility as far as development. He said that he was in favor of moving forward with this project. As far as the lighting was concerned, Commissioner Gilmer said that certain areas might be potential danger spots, i.e. under the 55 Freeway.

Commissioner Remland said he would keep his comments short "Let's get this project going!"

Chair Blanc said that the City in all its infinite wisdom decided to put a Commission in place and move some of these projects forward, and again in their wisdom moved the trails over to what she considers one of the finest Community Services Departments around. She thanked Shirley and Howard and all the people over the years that have kept the Commission focused in the right direction. Chair Blanc said that Ms. Knight would probably want to share some of the same information that Shirley had mentioned earlier.

Ms. Knight said that Shirley Grindle and John Moore have been working with Supervisor Bill Campbell's Office for a long time and they have progressed to the point where next Tuesday, March 4, 2008 there will be an item on the County's agenda to allocate \$4.9 million dollars to the City of Orange to take the trails from Collins to Cannon St. That is 1B money. 1B money will pay for approximately 80 per cent of that segment. The City has a verbal commitment from County Parks that they could fill the gap. It is a very aggressive project. The City would have to have the money spent in three years. Ms. Knight said that Shirley Grindle and John Moore made it happen and she publicly wanted to thank them.

Commissioner Hairston made a motion to recommend that the City Council adopt MND No. 1772-60 and that the City Council approve the preliminary construction documents for the Santiago Creek Bike Trail: Tustin to Collins.

Motion: Hairston Second: Gilmer

Ayes: Blanc, Davidson, Gilmer, Hairston, Remland

5.2 Review Holy Sepulcher Trail Proposal for on-site improvements to Holy Sepulcher Cemetery including dedication of one existing recreational trail and two proposed trails as defined by the City Master Trails map. Holy Sepulcher Cemetery is bordering Orange Park Acres along Santiago Canyon Road.

Commissioner Davidson recused himself from this item since he is associated with Orange Park Acres (OPA).

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Ms. Knight reported that our applicant was the Roman Catholic Bishop of Orange. On March 8, 2007, the Diocese of Orange presented on site improvements and trail related components to the Commission. The Commission voted to recommend approval of the trail related components with three considerations:

- 1. The proposed new trail should be widened from six feet to a consistent ten feet.
- 2. The City's Traffic engineer should review and approve the new location of the proposed signalized crossing.
- 3. The Diocese should enter into conversations with the County of Orange to discuss proposing a decomposed granite alternative to the existing rubberized asphalt on the County's Flood Control easement.

Since that meeting, the Diocese has met with members from the Orange Park Acres Home Owners Association, as well as members of the Park, Planning and Development Commission, and they have had several conversations with the County of Orange. Based on these meetings, they have revised their renovations to include:

- Widening the width of the trail on the west side of Santiago Canyon Road from the proposed six feet to ten feet according to City Standards
- The Diocese has had conversations with the County of Orange and is proposing a decomposed granite alternative to the existing rubberized asphalt on the County's Flood Control easement.
- The Rattlesnake Spur connection to the proposed new trail along Santiago Canyon Road has been lengthened to create a more gradual approach.

Ms. Knight said that the applicant was present at this meeting if anyone had any questions. Staff has reviewed the proposal and feels that the applicant has addressed all the Commissions concerns, and has done an admiral job in doing so.

Chair Blanc called for Public Comments

Mr. Peter Wetzel 7217 E. La Cumbre Orange, CA

Mr. Wetzel said that in evaluating trail proposals, there are three key factors: loops, links and safe crossings. This proposal, after the diocese has come thru with their improvements, establishes a new link between the OPA trail systems and the Santiago Park System of trails. Finally, moving of the traffic signal establishes a safe crossing which really didn't exist before, although there is a demand light there, it operates so infrequently, most motorists hardly notice it. As it is relocated, it will be used quite frequently and will be much more likely to be observed. This will help to tame traffic on Santiago Canyon Road. Mr. Wetzel said that he supported the project as it has been revised.

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> Mr. Mike Forkert 10541 Randall Orange, CA

Mr. Forkert said he was a member of the OPA Board of Directors and has worked with the Diocese on this project. OPA did meet and discuss as a community some additional improvements along the west side of the trail. The trail is supposed to go directly behind the curb line, and the Diocese would provide a small retaining wall and at the top replace a fence, then they would construct a 10 ft. wide trail, although at the location of the power pole the would have to neck down to get around. OPA has prepared a power point presentation and requested that it be passed out. He referred to page 3 and said that they would like to have the Diocese consider placing the trail with a buffer. They suggested a 6ft. buffer which is consistent with the same setback that they are presenting on the east side of Santiago Canyon Road. We would like the Commission to consider recommending that the Diocese continue to work with us on this. Also we have discussed the materials used for the fencing. We would like to recommend that they use a heavy wrought iron material that would basically keep horses from breaking through it. If they install PVC fencing, we believe the horses will break through it.

Ms. Knight asked Mr. Forkert to clarify that when he said he wanted the Dioceses to work with OPA if he meant that he wanted the Diocese to fund this additional buffer. He said yes he was asking the Diocese to pay for the additional improvements.

(Chair Blanc called on the representatives from the Diocese to comment before hearing the Commissioners comments.)

Mr. Joe Novoa Director of Construction Manager of Services for the Diocese of Orange.

In respect to creating a buffer, Mr. Novoa said that there was a large berm and that berm is also a buffer. He said it took a long time to get to where we are today because of the berm and the privacy issue with the diocese's property. Requesting a 6ft buffer would cut considerably more into that berm. It would also necessitate the creation of an 8ft. high retaining wall. Going further into that berm would create a severe impact on their property.

Commissioners comments:

Commissioner Gilmer reported that he had the opportunity on Tuesday to go out to the site at approximately 4:30-5:15 p.m. Mr. Gilmer said that he could not believe the traffic that was generated on Santiago Canyon. He said he did not truly believe that any crossing, unless there was an arm that came down, would stop that traffic. Mr. Gilmer said that he thinks that the relocation of the signal would be better than where it is at present, but he said that anything that could be done to provide a buffer between the curb line back would be a must. He said he

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would envision at least an 8ft. high retaining wall, however that would be extremely expensive, and then as well the type of fencing provided becomes more critical.

Commissioner Remland added that he also walked the property and concurred with all the comments that Commissioner Gilmer had made. He said that when he walked the trail he found it frightening that the trail lets out at the road. Commissioner Remland said that he felt that there should be fencing to prevent the horses from breaking through but not necessarily wrought iron, perhaps a different type of material.

Mr. Mike Padian from the Diocese said that they have had a lot of discussions regarding the fencing with OPA. The Diocese is willing to work with whomever they can to find a suitable material for the fence. He said that using the term wrought iron fence brought to his mind something more decorative than sturdy. The type of fence they had in mind would be a steel pipe corral type fence that we know would hold a horse back. He said that everyone would agree that the road is not the best designed road especially when traveling north bound. That is where most of the accidents are happening.

Ms. Knight asked Mr. Padian to explain urther their plan for the block wall. Mr. Padian said they were planning to use Keystone Block that is more aesthetically pleasing than a concrete wall. The trail will actually be 2ft. high and 2ft back by the time the wall is erected. Ms. Knight said that it would be the City's preference to have the Diocese and OPA continue their discussions as to what type of fence would be acceptable.

Commissioner Hairston said that he was not so concerned about the horses breaking through the fence as he was concerned about the cars going through. It is the visible presence of the motorcycles and the cars that would spook a horse. He thought that a barrier that shielded the horses from hearing and seeing the vehicles is what ultimately will work. Commissioner Hairston addressed the daily traffic at 4:00-5:00 p.m. and noted that most people don't ride their horses at that time of day on the weekdays, but prefer to ride their horses on the weekends and avoid the rush-hour traffic altogether.

Commissioner Gilmer said that after visiting that site he went back out to Meats Avenue and Orange Park Road and he observed several people riding their horses at that time. He said he thought it would create an ideal loop once it is crossed, but once you are in the damn area near Santiago Park the danger is in crossing the street. Commissioner Hairston said those who are not experienced riders would not ride in that area. Commissioner Hairston said in support of the Diocese that he has been to their meetings and they have been open, and supportive and they want to make this project work. It has been a pleasure to work with them.

Chair Blanc said as far as the west side was concerned it would be great to have a six foot planting set back, but in fairness to the Diocese there would be a tremendous cost and they would have to cut way back into the slope. She said maintaining the 10ft. trail is more important. She referred to section C.C. on the design plans and said she was impressed that they increased a safety buffer by creating a curb. Chair Blanc thanked the Diocese for their cooperation.

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Ms. Blanc called for a motion.

Commissioner Gilmer moved for adoption with study being given to the barrier and the set back issue of the proposed trail. Chair Blanc reviewed the recommendation and asked Mr. Reynolds, Assistant City Attorney for clarification on the recommendation. Recommending approval only on the trail components. Chair Blanc asked for Commissioner Gilmer's recommendation of the motion again. Commissioner Gilmer said he was asking to be more specific as to the material that would be used for the fencing and the set-back issue. Chair Blanc asked would they be directing staff to work with those parties to come up with a suitable alternative.

Commissioner Remland seconded the motion for purposes of discussion.

Commissioner Remland said he wanted to understand and discuss the set-back issue. He said from what he had reviewed and heard from the discussion from a financial standpoint that the set-back would not be feasible. Commissioner Gilmer said he was saying that in Section C.C where they have three keystone retaining blocks at the curb level that it is adequate as long as it is accompanied with a barrier that is going to separate, and study should be given as to the materials used in the barrier.

Commissioner Hairston said that they were not recommending a change in dimensions but working with staff to create a barrier for the horses.

Modification of the motion by Commissioner Gilmer:

Commissioner Gilmer proposed the adoption of the recommendation, specifically on C.C. of the proposal with specific direction given to staff as to the material of the barrier to be created.

Mr. Reynolds said for further clarification you would want to delegate to staff to work with the Diocese and make the decision as to the type of material. Chair Blanc said they would incorporate that into the motion.

Motion: Gilmer Second: Hairston

Ayes: Blanc, Gilmer, Hairston, Remland

VI. NEW BUSINESS

None.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

7.1 OCTA – TDA Grant Award for the Santiago Creek Bike Trail: Tustin to Collins, for the Grijalva Bridge Link.

Ms. Strunk shared an awards letter with the Commission that was received from the Orange County Transportation Authority. The City was awarded \$302,963 from the Transportation

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Development Act Program this is for Santiago Creek Bike Trail Bridge that will be located across the Creek from Grijalva also referred to as the Grijalva Link. This application was submitted by staff prior to Ms. Strunk's arrival and was submitted in September of 2007. It was a competitive grant and required a 26% match.

Ms. Knight added that in addition to this grant, staff will be submitting two other grant requests. One has already been sent out, and another is due to be submitted within the next week. Ms. Strunk has been diligently working on the Land and Water Grant.

Ms. Knight thanked Chair Blanc for being present at Tuesday's City Council Meeting. The City Council approved the Grijalva Gymnasium Project and staff is very excited about moving forward with this project. As a reminder, there will be a 15 month construction period. The anticipated opening of the Gymnasium is for fall 2009.

Ms. Knight reported that some of the Community Services staff has been in Long Beach attending our annual state conference this week; they are taking advantage of some of the training opportunities that they offer.

Ms. Knight shared with the Commission a conversation that she and Chair Blanc had with Community Development's Director, Alice Angus, regarding a process with respect to development projects such as Holy Sepulcher and Ridgeline Estates. Since trails and that component is somewhat new in respect to the Commission, there have been some struggles with process. We talked about a better way to lay out the process for the developer and the Commission. Ms. Angus, has agreed to set down a time line. Staff will be bringing it back to the Commission for further comments. The other topic that was discussed was that staff would ask the developers who had trails related to their project, to bring it to the Commission in the concept stage so that the Commission could discuss the types of concerns that might arise.

Commissioner Gilmer asked about the Ridgeline Estates. Ms. Knight said she had been contacted by Mr. Bettencourt several times. They were to submit their CEQA documentation to Planning. Mr. Bettencourt called two weeks ago to agendize the meeting with the Commission, but she told him she would not agendize the meeting until she had heard that they had received the CEQA documents in Planning and until staff had an opportunity to review it, especially the traffic study. It is Ms. Knights understanding that Planning has still not received the documentation. That was another discussion that came up during her conversation with Ms. Angus. Staff wants to make sure when the developers give the staff information that it is passed on to the Commission in a timely manner so that the Commissioners have enough time to go out to the site and study the project.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

8.1

Motion: Hairston Second: Remland

Ayes: Blanc, Gilmer, Hairston, Remland

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Next Regular Meeting is April 10, 2008.

Marie Knight
Park Planning and Development Commission

Lisa Blanc, Chairman Attested on

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