



MEETING MINUTES
LOS ANGELES EQUINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
 Monday September 25, 2023
 6:30 pm
 Hanson Dam Horse Park
 11127 Orcas Avenue
 Lakeview Terrace CA 91342

	Present	Absent
Stefanie Smith, Chair Department of Recreation and Parks	X	
District 1 VACANT		
District 2 VACANT		
District 3 Jill Haber	X	
District 4 Lisa Hanawalt		X
District 5 David Ramey, DVM	X	
District 6 Mary Benson	X	
District 7 Stephanie Saporito		X
District 8 Kevin Atkins		X
District 9 Vacant		
District 10 Todd La Vergne	x	
District 11 Larry Watts	X	
District 12 Stacia Crane	X	
District 13 Gene Gilbert	X	
District 14 Vacant		
District 15 Sabrina Silver	X	
Mayor's Representative, Scott Perez		X

Item No. 1 Call to Order. Member Ramey acted as Chair and called the meeting to order at about 6:45 p.m and led the pledge of allegiance. He then asked the Secretary to call the roll. The Chair briefly.

Item No. 2 Approval of Minutes The Chair called for a discussion of the draft minutes previously circulated for the July 24, 2023 meeting. After discussion and upon a motion duly made and seconded, the draft minutes were approved.

Item No. 3. General Public Comment on non-agenda items. There were several public comments, including concerning the need provide early notice of LAEAC meetings to the public, the sale of Gibson Ranch in Sunland, the impact of ADU's upon adjacent horse properties, and the increase in pop-up of unregulated pony ride operations following the closure of the Griffith Park pony rides. The Chair also recognized Konstantine Anthony, Mayor of Burbank, who explained that Burbank intends to amend its general plan to establish a specific equestrian use zone in the Rancho community. He hopes this will help limit the impact of SB 35 in the future..

Item No. 4 Update of Griffith Park Pony Rides. The Chair next recognized Member Silver to provide a status report on the ongoing Dept. of Recreation & Parks Reimagining the Pony Ride Site. Member Silver noted there was an organized and active campaign in progress by opponents of the pony rides and that it was critical for proponents to share their views by completing the R&P Pony Ride survey.

The Chair next recognized member Stafanie Smith who explained how the Dept. of R&P was expanding its community outreach as part of the Reimagining the Pony Ride Site effort. Several general comments were made by the public.

No action was taken at this time.

Item No. 5. Update on Circle K Project and impact on LA Trails. The Chair presented a report from Member Hanawalt who was absent due to Covid. He indicated that 23 town homes have been approved and construction will last for several years. The Chair also noted the LAEAC in July approved a letter directed to the City of Burbank expressing its concerns about the project, including the dangers to human and animal safety the project presents. He suggested, in view of the approval of the project by the City of Burbank, it would be appropriate to now reiterate the LAEAC's concerns. The Chair discussed a draft letter in that regard, pointing out that SB 35 does not prevent local agencies from requiring a developer to adhere to procedures designed to mitigate public health and safety risks associated with their projects. Member Silver reiterated a number of her safety concerns.

Several members of the public expressed their views concerning the project, including a belief that SB 35 is wrongfully "taking away our rights."

Thereupon a motion duly made and seconded, the Chair was authorized to send a letter in substantially the form of his draft letter to the City of Burbank and to other local and state agencies and officials.

Item No. 6. Rodeo Ordinance. The Chair reported that some city council members are considering some significant changes to the draft ordinance. Specifically, rather than rather than particular items of tack, they are evaluating whether a better approach would be to bar particular rodeo events within the City.

There were several public comments and questions, including from representatives of animal rights groups that have been working with Councilmember Blumenfeld. M. Rossell of the Animal Legal Defense Fund assured the committee that his organization is not anti-equestrian sports, but rather oppose activities that are harmful to animals. He would like to work with LAEAC to improve animal protection.

No action was taken at this time.

Item No. 7. Bike Path Project.... The Chair recognized Member Silver who indicated there have been no significant changes or updates to report. She hopes to get someone from the BOE to actually visit the site. There is a serious concern that the bridle path will become inaccessible for a long period.

There were several public comments on how separate bicyclists and equestrians to minimize conflicts. Some feel bicyclists will simply continue onto the bridle path upon reaching the current proposed terminus of the bike path. Several persons commented that far too many bicyclist will effectively convert the bridle path into a bike path, in part because horse riders will be reluctant to use it with bicyclists out of safety concerns. Similar comments were made about the Mariposa Bridge.

No action was taken on this time..

Item No. 9 (sic) Report on Sepulveda Basis Vision Plan.

The Chair and member Haber reported the Sepulveda Vision Plan which is studying existing land uses, landscape features, habitats, patterns of use, and user groups within the Sepulveda Basin to identify areas that can be enhanced continues to be a work in progress. The Chair noted there has been no decision on whether Olympic equestrian events will take place in Sepulveda Basin in 2028. It's important that the horse community become involved in the Sepulveda Vision Plan process.

No action was taken at this time.

Item No. 10. Hansen Dam. The Chair recognized Marnye Langer, General Manager of Hansen Dam Horse Park. Ms. Langer describe a recent clean-up of the Hansen Dam Recreation Area. She also expressed concerns about safety and public access to the park area resulting from parking restrictions implemented by the Dept. of R&P, primarily on Sunday near the Orcas Avenue entrance.

No action was taken at this time.

Item 11. Report on meeting with BOE and CD-5 Regarding Rim of the Valley Project. The Chair reported he learned there are extensive funds available from local, state and federal sources for horse trail improvements as part of this project. For example, the BOE advised him of funds to build a ¼ mile equestrian trail near the intersection of Mulholland Drive and Beverly Glen Blvd. He said this would not seem to be practical project, but there are obviously many potential sites for new or improved trails. To identify these sites requires a map of existing trails.

Member Benson reported that over 20 years ago the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy recognized Rim of the Valley Corridor as an important network of parks and trails connecting the Santa Monica Mountains to all the mountains surrounding the San Fernando, Simi, Conejo, and La Crescenta Valleys. She also expressed concern that trails are being lost because the city deems them to be "landscape" rather than "public right of ways."

No action was taken at this time.

Item 12. Trail Safety. The Chair recognized Member Silver. She suggested there was a real need for public education concerning safe practices when interacting with persons on horseback, particularly motor vehicle drivers and bicyclists. She has been told by members of law enforcement that existing laws have not kept pace with advances in technology, e.g. electric bike. She said there is a need for more signage to warn people concerning the presence of quines and designating area where bicycles are prohibited. She questioned whether there is a need for more regulations or more enforcement of existing regulations.

A number of public comments were received, including one indicating they are often quickly removed by bicyclists. There was a comment and discussion concerning the horse accident on the North Atwater Bridge and the need to address equestrian safety in connection with infrastructure projects that may have an impact upon equestrian activities. Another person indicated he may be appointed to the LA Bicycle Advisory Committee and, if he is, he wants to work with the LAEAC in resolving conflicts between bicyclists and equestrians.

No action was taken.

Item No. 13. 2028 Olympics. The Chair reported on his recent meeting with Corrine Taylor, Community Relations Manager for the LA Olympic Organizing Committee. He says she is eager to work with LAEAC going forward. She said no decision has been made concerning the equestrian venues for the 2028 Games.

No action was taken at this time.

Item No. 14. Council District Updates.

CD- 12. Member Crane reported that the Chatsworth Day Of The Horse still is looking for equestrians to participate. She requested members to help her locate participants.

Item 15. Adjourn & Next Meeting. The next regular meeting will be held on November 27, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at a TBD location. Upon a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at about 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Watts,
Secretary