

SAN GABRIEL RIVER DISCOVERY CENTER
STAKEHOLDER MEETING

April 23, 2009 1:00 p.m.

LOCATION:

CENTRAL BASIN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
6252 TELEGRAPH ROAD, COMMERCE, CA 90040

AGENDA

1. Introduction and Welcome Sam Pedroza, Chair
2. Quorum Check Amber Slankard
3. Public Comments
Public comments for the committee will be taken at this time. Individuals wishing to comment must fill out a comment card at the meeting for the official record and will be allowed three minute to speak; representatives of organizations and agencies will be allowed five minutes to speak. Speaker time may be reduced depending on the number of speakers.
4. Minutes of December 11, 2008 meeting Committee
5. Update on Past Authority Board Meetings Sam Pedroza, Chair
6. Environmental Review Update Belinda Faustinos
7. Committee members comments Committee
8. Future agenda items Committee
9. Adjournment

Next meeting date: TBA

Public participation is welcome on any agenda item. Members of the public wishing to address the Governing Body on any item should fill out a comment card for the official record in advance of the meeting. Questions about the agenda items should be addressed to Belinda Faustinos, Executive Officer, at (626)815-1019.

Note: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, if you require a disability-related modification or accommodation to attend or participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the Executive Officer at (626)815-1019 at least 3 days prior to the meeting.

San Gabriel River Discovery Center Authority

April 23, 2009

To: Stakeholder Advisory Committee

From: Sam Pedroza, Chair

Subject: Item 4: Minutes of December 11, 2008 Stakeholder Meeting

Recommendation: Adopt the Minutes of December 11, 2008 Stakeholder Meeting.

SAN GABRIEL RIVER DISCOVERY CENTER
STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

December 11, 2008, 10:30 A.M.

LOCATION:

UPPER SAN GABRIEL VALLEY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
11310 VALLEY BLVD.
EL MONTE, CA 91731

1. **Introduction and Welcome** Sam Pedroza, Chair
2. **Quorum Verification**
Quorum verified

Members Present

Sam Pedroza, County Sanitation District of LA County; Dan Horan, Three Valleys Municipal Water District; Jean Robson, Hacienda Heights Improvement Assoc.; Don Bremner, Sierra Club; Mark Moss, Central Basin Municipal Water District; Helen Rahder, Wildlife Corridor Conservation Authority; Grace Allen, Whittier Narrows Nature Center Assoc.; Joan Powell, Whittier Audubon Society; Belinda Faustinos, Rivers and Mountains Conservancy; Cliff Mclean, California Native Plant Society; Nathan Baird, Amigos de los Rios; Mickey Long, LA County Dept. of Parks and Recreation; Deborah Glaser, LA and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council

3. **Public Comments**

None

4. **MINUTES OF September 4, 2008 MEETING (ATTACHED)**

The minutes of the September 4, 2008 stakeholder meeting was unanimously approved.

5. **DISCUSSION ON STAKEHOLDER MEMBER MEETING ATTENDANCE**

Chairman Pedroza stated that during the September 4, 2008 meeting of the Stakeholder Committee, a question was raised about an attendance requirement for committee members, due to the continuous lack of quorum at past stakeholder committee meetings. He stated that San Gabriel River Discovery Center Authority (Authority) staff reviewed attendance listed in the committee minutes and compiled the attached table showing members' attendance for all meetings since the Authority Board approved the revised Stakeholder Agreement on November 16, 2006. He stated that there were a few organizations listed that did not submit a signed stakeholder agreement, but remained on the notification list of meetings. He stated that the committee may discuss attendance and consider whether to recommend any action by the Authority Board.

Ms. Faustinos noted that the revised stakeholder agreement states that a Stakeholder's unexcused failure to participate by attendance of a representative

at four consecutive Advisory Committee meetings shall be considered cause to terminate a Stakeholder's status as a Stakeholder.

Ms. Faustinos stated the Puente Hills Landfill Native Habitat Preservation Authority (Habitat Authority) is one of the main organizations that have not attended a stakeholder meeting since January of 2007 and that they are one of the agencies that count for a quorum. She stated that there is still interest in the Discovery Center project from the Habitat Authority; they just have not been able to have a representative attend these meetings.

Mr. Horan asked Ms. Faustinos about the number of times the Authority staff has sent a reminder notice to these organizations who have not signed the revised stakeholder agreement. Ms. Faustinos stated that the reminders have always been verbally with these organizations to get their stakeholder agreement turned in and not officially in writing. Ms. Faustinos suggested that Authority staff prepare a letter to be sent to these organizations asking for their formally executed stakeholder agreement and to confirm if they would still like to be members of the stakeholder committee. She stated that if they do not answer within 60 days, then Authority staff will consider them to be non-active participants and have the stakeholder committee recommend to the Authority Board to remove the non-respondent entity from the committee.

6. UPDATE ON PAST AUTHORITY BOARD MEETINGS

Chairman Pedroza stated that the Authority Board approved a contract with Young Communications Group for professional services related to communications, planning, brand development, graphic design and web development services. He stated that VMA Communications Inc. gave a presentation to the Authority Board on the firm's scope of work and initial communications plan. He stated that the Authority Board also approved an increase in the contract amount for Sohagi Law Group for additional review of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) document for the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR).

7. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW UPDATE

Ms. Faustinos called attention to the updated Environmental Process Milestones chart on page 12 of the stakeholder packet. She stated that the new proposed schedule for release of the DEIR for the 60 period is sometime in January of 2009. She stated that once the DEIR is released, everything under that in the milestone chart will be adjusted accordingly. Ms. Faustinos stated that Authority staff is currently trying to finalize the location and the timing for the two public meeting dates where the public would give comments on the DEIR. She stated one meeting would be on a Saturday and the other would be on a weekday in the evening. She stated that one location that they had discussed was South El Monte High School and the other at a location north of the 710 Freeway near the south east cities. She stated that the public comments taken from these will be included in the CEQA document. She asked the Stakeholder Members to provide input regarding the public meetings.

Ms. Rahder commented that having one of the public meetings on a Saturday is always ideal and that it is always good to get more of the community involved instead of being inclusive.

Ms. Faustinos noted that there will be two public hearings. She stated that Authority is considering having one hearing at an Authority board meeting were the board members can hear comments.

8. DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN

Chairman Pedroza introduced Mr. Worley and stated that he would be giving a presentation on the Draft Strategic Plan.

Mr. Worley stated that in 2007, Metropolitan Group (MG) was retained to advise the SGRDCA on fundraising strategy. He stated that before launching a capital fundraising campaign, the Discovery Center organization needed additional development. He stated that working with a core strategic plan team and the concepts previously articulated in the schematic design report and other planning documents, MG shaped a strategic plan with sufficient detail to guide the organization through the new few years. He stated that the final draft, representing many hours of input from the strategic planning team, was attached to the stakeholder packet as Exhibit A.

Mr. Worley noted that there are several key points to understanding the strategic plan. He stated that first; the focus is on the organization as a whole, not exclusively on the proposed building or the site. He stated that the strategic plan examines and answers questions regarding the need for a Discovery Center type facility and program in the region, and the social impact the organization can have. He stated it reaffirms that having a significant social impact is the primary goal of the Discovery Center. That goal is to change people's behaviors so that environmental stewardship is more widely embraced and practiced.

Mr. Worley stated that the Discovery Center intends to adopt several methods for achieving the desired impacts, including to inspire people to learn, to engage all audiences, to be collaborative in its approach, and to model environmentally sustainable practices.

Mr. Worley stated that the proposed facility, exhibits, and programs of the Discovery Center are then strategies for achieving the social change goal, along with necessary supporting strategies, such as actively pursuing partnerships around mutually shared objectives, and structuring operations in a way that enable certain objectives to be affordable.

Mr. Worley stated that the strategic plan was developed in this way for several important reasons. He stated that the Discovery Center effort is a huge undertaking that requires the support of a strong focused, and well-structured organization. He stated that the entirety of the program, embarking on a \$27 million project, necessitated a strategic approach that accounted for all the things that should be considered. He stated that finally, the collaborative relationship of the joint powers authority (JPA) required addressing some operational questions, such as who will be running it, how it will be staffed, and what the organization is specifically going to do. He stated that the plan does not address each and every one of the many operational questions in detail,

but provides direction for resolving them in an implementation framework.

Mr. Worley stated that the core planning team structure was derived with action and implementation in mind, so that it represented key agencies as well as vital community links. He stated that this composition was to ensure that the consensus reached among the team would truly represent the best way forward. He stated that the team members of the Stakeholder Committee and staff from JPA agencies, as well as individuals with a long history of involvement in the development of the Discovery Center. He stated that plan, while it stays true to the relevant content of the schematic design report and other early efforts, provides the vision and foundation to maximize the potential for realizing those goals.

Mr. Worley stated that the strategic plan is organized around four goals: Inspiration, Engagement, Collaboration, and Sustainability. He stated that for each goal, two to three measurable objectives are stated, with specific strategies and designed to implement each objective. He stated that to further assist the organization in implementing the plan, each strategy and action is assigned a priority and proposed timing.

Mr. Worley stated that the final draft strategic plan will be presented to the Authority Board on December 18, with a recommendation to formally adopt the plan. He stated that any comments made at this stakeholder meeting would be presented to the Authority Board.

Ms. Powell stated that there should be a statement in the inspirational portion of the strategic plan that focuses on the needs of the community.

Ms. Faustinos stated that once the Authority Board has adopted the strategic plan, this document will help attract potential funders.

Ms. Rahder commented that the JPA has done an excellent job putting the strategic plan together.

Ms. Miller asked Ms. Faustinos how the Whittier Narrows Natural Area (Natural Area) is defined in the draft strategic plan. Ms. Faustinos responded by stating that in the strategic plan, the Natural Area is defined as the 300 acres and the Discovery Center site. She stated that in general, the Natural Area would be defined as those areas that have not been altered by human hands.

Ms. Miller asked Ms. Faustinos about public transportation to the site. Ms. Faustinos responded by stating that looking at more opportunities for connecting transportation is definitely something that will be addressed more thoroughly.

Mr. Barba stated that building the Discovery Center at the Nature Center site will destroy the habitat and the trees that have been there for over 70 years.

Ms. Young commented that on page 13 on the stakeholder packet, the staff report suggests that the draft strategic plan has blended into on the proposed building and the people. She stated that the people should be the education and not the building. She stated that reading through the draft strategic plan, it was suggested throughout the document that the building made up the education and not the people.

Ms. Rahder stated that it is essential to build the facility first because without the facility there would not be the education. She stated that once the facility is in place, then that's when the programs can start.

Ms. Allen stated that you do not have to build a big building in order to

education people.

Mr. Worley noted that this was not an either or situation and that the draft strategic plan talks about meeting the needs of both the people and the building.

Mr. Bremner noted that adding staffing and volunteers to the sentence on page 13 of the stakeholder packet would also help the Discovery Center achieve the social change goal.

Mr. Mclean stated that the Discovery Center should be the people and the building is the tool to help education the people.

Ms. Faustinos stated the draft strategic plan is not about the size of the building or the design, but what the Discovery Center wants to achieve.

Ms. Powell asked if there had been any discussions with different organizations to maintain and restore the access to the Natural Area beyond the Discovery Center site. Mr. Worley responded by stating that in the scope the Discovery Center would not have jurisdiction beyond the 11 acres of the site in regards to the maintenance and restoration of the Natural Area. He stated that the Discovery Center should work with those entities that do manage those grounds.

Ms. Faustinos suggested that Ms. Powell's comment regarding the maintenance and restoration of the access to the Natural Area should be incorporated into the stewardship portion of the draft strategic plan.

9. DISCUSSION ON ROLE AND PURPOSE OF THE STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE

Chairman Pedroza stated that the stakeholder involvement in the Discovery Center as a concept and project predates the formalization of the committee. He stated that the concept of the proposed Discovery Center program and facility, was the product of extensive discussion by stakeholders, initially facilitated and documented by Jeff Yann as the program manager for the Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District, and later by Thomas Hacker Architects.

Chairman Pedroza stated that the after the Discovery Center as a "project" had taken shape as currently proposed and the environmental analysis process begun, the stakeholder committee's role and purpose sometimes has seemed uncertain. Committee members' comments at each stakeholder meeting often reflected a position of waiting for the DEIR.

Chairman Pedroza stated that if a decision is made at this stakeholder meeting to seek new voices and experience, the stakeholder committee could either be expanded, reorganized, or new committees created.

Chairman Pedroza suggested inviting more environmental and water district groups to the stakeholder committee.

Mr. Worley stated that committee members may want to consider both the composition and function of the committee. He stated that while the final decisions about the proposed project cannot be known for certain, during 2009 and 2010 the Discovery Center's focus would be expected to expand to new ideas. He stated that matters to be taken up may include more thorough planning of the education/interpretive programs, and implementation of some early action programs and events, final design of LEED building and construction design, community engagement and communication, staffing and business/operations planning, and fundraising via an organized capital

campaign.

Mr. Worley stated that with these issues facing the Discovery Center in the coming years, the Authority Board and staff might benefit greatly from expertise and involvement that additional stakeholders could offer. He stated that although the education communities represent vital constituency for the Discovery Center, it is not represented as a stakeholder. He stated that many cities from the surrounding region have formally supported the Discovery Center but are not represented on the committee. He stated that many important design questions that will arise suggest a need for technical expertise in architecture and construction of a LEED building.

Ms. Rahder stated that it should be the Authority Board's decision to establish what the role of the stakeholder committee should be in the future.

Mr. Donovan suggested that the stakeholder committee be more involved with the programming and fundraising aspect of the project.

Mr. Mclean suggested inviting more educators or school representatives to the stakeholder committee.

10. COMMITTEE MEMBERS COMMENTS

None

11. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

12. ADJOURNMENT WAS AT 12:10PM

Next Scheduled Stakeholder Advisory Meeting: TBA

Next Scheduled Governing Board Meeting: December 18, 2008 at 1:30 PM at Central Basin office

San Gabriel River Discovery Center Authority

April 23, 2009

To: Stakeholder Advisory Committee

From: Sam Pedroza, Chair

Subject: Item 5: Update on Past Authority Board Meetings

Background & Discussion:

There will be a verbal report by the Chair of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee on the activities of the Past Authority Board Meetings.

San Gabriel River Discovery Center Authority

April 23, 2009

To: Stakeholder Advisory Committee

From: Sam Pedroza, Chair

Subject: Item 6: Environmental Review Update

Background & Discussion:

This item will be covered by Belinda Faustinos for the San Gabriel River Discovery Center Authority.

- The Milestone Chart is attached as Exhibit A.

Item 6, Exhibit A
 April 23, 2009
 Environmental Process Milestones

ACTION	Original Schedule	Revised Schedule (1-08)	Revised Schedule (3-08)	Schedule Proposed as of 1-1-09
Project Description	Jun 2006 Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Initial Study Notice of Preparation Notice of Intent	Aug 2006 Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed
Technical Reports	Aug 2006 – Dec 2006	Completed	Completed	Completed
Significant Ecological Area Technical Advisory Committee (SEATAC) - 1st Review of Biological Report	*	Completed	Completed	Completed
Screencheck Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment Report	*	Completed	Completed	Completed
SEATAC - 2nd Review of Biological Report	*	Completed	Completed	Completed
Screencheck Draft 2 EIR/EA	*	Completed	Completed	Completed
SEATAC-3rd Review of Biological Report	*	Jan 2008	Completed	Completed
Revised Screencheck Draft EIR/EA	*	Dec 2007- Feb 2008	Dec 2007- June 2008	Dec 2007- February 2009
SEATAC-4th Review of Biological Report	*		April 2008	<u>Completed</u> <u>May 5, 2008</u>
Public Review - Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment Report (45 60 days)	Feb 2007 – Mar 2007	Mar 2008- April 2008	May 2008- June 2008	May 2009- July 2009
Public Meetings (two) (date to be selected)	Mar 2007	Mar 2008	June 2008	May 2009 – June 2009
Final Environmental Impact Report (CEQA) Final Environmental Assessment (NEPA)	Aug 2007	May 2008- June 2008	August 2008	Fall 2009
SGRDCA Board Review & Discretionary Action: Final Environmental Impact Report Findings, Mitigation, Monitoring & Reporting Program (CEQA)	Oct 2007	July 2008	September 2008	Fall 2009
Final Environmental Assessment (NEPA) (US Army Corps of Engineers is lead agency for NEPA)	Oct 2007	July 2008	September 2008	Fall 2009

* Not included in Original Milestones