



**OPEN SPACE ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
THURSDAY, JULY 7, 2022, 3:00 P.M.
VIRTUAL MEETING**

**THE LOCAL HEALTH AUTHORITY STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THE USE OF
MASKS IN ALL CITY FACILITIES AND INDOOR SPACES**

Notice is hereby given that a Meeting of the Open Space Advisory Board will be conducted virtually at the above date and time.

In compliance with the requirement that the City provide two-way communication for members of the public, members of the public may communicate with the Board during public comment and regarding agenda items by calling the following number:

Members of the public are encouraged to participate virtually by calling **1-915-213 4096**

At the prompt please enter the Conference ID: 308 812 559#

Via the City's website. <http://www.elpasotexas.gov/videos>

The following members of the Open Space Advisory Board will be present: 8

Mark Wanch, Vice-Chairwoman Alyssa Cervantes-Benavides

Isela Castañon-Williams, Dr. Sharon Miles-Bonart

Yvonne "Bonnie" Cacho (late arrival), Sarah Elena Dillabough

Romaree Friedman Herbert, Stephen Tures

The following members of the Open Space Advisory Board absent: 1

Chairman Joe Garibay

Vacancy: 0

A quorum of the Open Space Advisory Board must participate in the meeting.

Recording of the meeting will begin prior to roll call

Establish a Quorum

A quorum of the Open Space Advisory Board was present.

Meeting Called to Order

Meeting called to order.

Members Present (online): 8

Vice-Chairwoman Alyssa Cervantes Benavides and Board Members Mark Wancho, Isela Castañon-Williams, Dr. Sharon Miles-Bonart, Yvonne “Bonnie” Cacho (late arrival), Sarah Elena Dillabough, Romaree Friedman Herbert, Stephen Tures

Members Absent: 1

Chairman Joe Garibay

Vacant: 0**Planning & Inspections Department (online):**

Kevin Smith, Assistant Director-Planning; Luis Zamora, Senior Planner

Other City Staff Present/Other Presenters (online):

Russell Abeln, Assistant City Attorney I, City Attorney’s Office; Alejandro Vidales, Jr., Real Estate Manager, El Paso Water; Eugenio Mesta, Architect

Members of the public (online):

Marilyn Guida, Judy Ackerman

Board Duties:

The Open Space Advisory Board shall act as an advisory board and provide recommendations to the City Council in efforts to preserve and acquire open space as identified in the Towards a Bright Future: A Green Infrastructure Plan for El Paso, Texas, commonly referred to as the open space master plan. The Open Space Advisory Board shall provide recommendations on the implementation of the open space master plan.

Time Limits for Information Presentations:

There is a 15 minute time limit for presentations, with additional time granted at the discretion of the presiding officer. This limitation is applicable only to the presentation itself and does not include discussion and action elements of an item.

There were no Information Presentations.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Discussion and Action: Changes to the Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

2. Call to the Public (items not listed on the Agenda):

Members of the public will be allowed 3 minutes to present, with additional time granted at the discretion of the presiding officer.

There were no speakers.

3. Discussion and Action: Minutes for the May 11, 2022 Open Space Advisory Board meeting

Contact: Kevin Smith, smithkw@elpasotexas.gov

Comments from Mr. Smith.

MOTION:

Motion made by Board Member Tures, seconded by Board Member Wancho AND CARRIED TO APPROVE. (Voice vote) (Motion passed 6-2)

ABSTAIN: *Vice-Chairwoman Alyssa Cervantes Benavides and Board Member Dillabough*

4. Discussion and Action: Minutes for the June 8, 2022 Open Space Advisory Board meeting

Contact: Kevin Smith, smithkw@elpasotexas.gov

MOTION:

Motion made by Board Member Herbert, seconded by Board Member Castañon-Williams AND CARRIED TO ACCEPT THE JUNE MINUTES. (Voice vote) (Motion passed 7-1)

ABSTAIN: *Board Member Tures*

5. Discussion and Action: Review and recommendation of the following rezoning application in the Hillside Development Area

PZRZ22-00007:	Lot 1, Block 1, Shadow Mountain, and Lot 1, Block 1, Shadow Mountain Unit 2, City of El Paso, El Paso County, Texas
Location:	201 Shadow Mountain Dr.
Zoning:	G-MU/c (General Mixed Use/conditions) and C-1 (Commercial)
Request:	To rezone from C-1 (Commercial) to G-MU (General Mixed Use) and approval of a Master Zoning Plan
Existing Use:	Vacant/Parking Lot
Proposed Use:	Mixed Use
Property Owner:	MG Shadow Mountain LLC
Representative:	Eugenio Mesta

District: 8
Staff Contact: Luis Zamora, (915) 212-1552, ZamoraLF@elpasotexas.gov

Presentation by Luis Zamora.

Comments from Vice-Chairwoman Cervantes Benavides and Board Members Tures, Dr. Miles-Bonart and Wancho.

Comments from Mr. Smith.

Comments from Eugenio Mesta, Architect.

Motion made by Board Member Tures, seconded by Board Member Dr. Miles-Bonart AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO RECOMMEND THE APPROVAL OF THE CHANGES TO THE MASTER ZONING PLAN THAT THEY HAVE REQUESTED. (Voice vote, all Ayes) (Motion passed 8-0)

- 6. Information, Discussion, and Action:** Recommendation to use the Palisades to allow recreational activities that was previously done at Billy Rogers Arroyo
Contact: Open Space Advisory Board

Discussion from Vice-Chairwoman Cervantes Benavides and Board Members Dillabough, Dr. Miles-Bonart, Wancho and Tures.

Comments from Mr. Smith and Mr. Abeln. Mr. Smith read into the record the three emails he received from the members of the public:

Marshall Carter-Tripp

I may not be able to attend the virtual meeting of the OSAB tomorrow as I have a previous medical engagement.

Therefore I wish to express my total opposition to any proposal to create "recreational activities" in the Palisades, along the lines of the now-banned projects in the Billy Rogers Arroyo Nature Preserve. Recreation in open space properties is certainly possible - walking, hiking, guided hikes to learn about the area, bike riding on specified trails. Building "jumps" and multiple trails is not acceptable...these actions destroy part of the natural open space, and are very disturbing to most recreational users. Not to mention the disturbance to the animals that frequent parts of the Palisades, such as the mule deer. Bicycle jumps and the like should be reserved for city parks, which are not part of the open space master plan.

Thank you for your consideration.

*Marshall Carter-Tripp
Current District 8 resident, previous to redistricting District 1*

Dick Tripp

The City has previously declared that they are not responsible for maintaining the trails in the Palisades. Recall several years ago when there was graffiti and the City declared they were not responsible for cleanup.

If the City permits jumps and multiple trails, which already exist, the city must assume responsibility for maintenance and liability for injuries. In particular, none of the trails are designated for bicycles only; therefore they are by default and past practice, for pedestrians as well as cyclists and should be marked as such.

Our home backs on the road/path leading into the center of the Palisades. We see bikes on the trail day and night. We also see people, including families with children, walking up the trails. We can see the far trails across the lower drainage. We have seen families with children on all of them although most people with children stick to the main trail. There are runners, some in groups and others as individuals. Many people walking their dogs. The sign at the entrance has not been maintained and many of the rules are totally ignored. Therefore I have no faith that any rules the City sets forth concerning the jumps or trails come up with be adhered to.

At times several boulderers will show up and walk back along the lower drainage with their bouldering mats and practice bouldering.

If the city is going to allow cyclists to set up jumps in an uncontrolled manner it will prevent many people from enjoying the outdoor life.

The city needs to encourage those police officers who ride bikes to make irregular passes through the trails. I know Border Patrol has bike patrols too but I have never seen any in the Palisades.

I personally favor having the area designated as a nature preserve. The more "improvements" added, the more difficult it is for deer, foxes and other critters to survive in a harsh environment.

Eric Pearson

Mr. Smith and Dr. Bonart,

As a citizen and a homeowner in the Kern Place area, I am just letting you know that, in my opinion, allowing construction of bike ramps to open space makes it "formerly open space."

*The petition from the folks who want to build on our mountain (not our foothills) and Arroyo Park **Nature Preserve** should not be considered. I am a frequent hiker in the area, and I can assure you that mountain bikers have the mountain to use, along with hikers, climbers, runners, and others. Those who want to disrupt what has been, up to now, a shared space, are in the minority of users of the Palisades area, and should not be able to impinge on the rights of the majority of other users, who are there to enjoy the natural space and majesty of the mountain. There is an incredible amount of flora and fauna to protect, and there is a viewscape that needs to be preserved for all.*

Mountain bikers are one thing. Ramps and races are another. Those who want to add to the "activities" represent a small faction of people.

Furthermore, any proposed construction of ramps, etc., constitutes a safety and liability issue for the city.

I urge you and the open space advisory board to recommend no additional uses for the Palisades, and to avoid "recreational actions that was previously done [sic] at Bill Rogers Arroyo [sic]."

As I am unable to attend the meeting, I appreciate your consideration of my concerns, and I hope that this will be shared with the OSAB.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

*Sincerely,
Eric Pearson*

For the Record

For the record, Board Member Wanchow stated he was not a mountain biker although he is on the Borderland Mountain Bike Association.

Marilyn Guida, member of the public, spoke.

No action was taken.

7. Information, Discussion, and Action: Overview on Northeast Conservation Easement
Contact: Kevin Smith

Comments from Mr. Smith.

Discussion from Vice-Chairwoman Cervantes Benavides and Board Members Wanchow, Tures and Dr. Miles-Bonart.

No action was taken.

8. Information, Discussion, and Action: Overview on Northeast land costs
Contact: EPWater

Brief overview on the Northeast land by Alejandro Vidales, Jr.

Discussion from Vice-Chairwoman Cervantes Benavides and Board Member Dr. Miles-Bonart.

Presentation by Board Member Dr. Miles-Bonart.

Comments from Mr. Vidales, Jr., Mr. Abeln and Mr. Smith.

Member of the public, Judy Ackerman, spoke.

Point of Clarification

Mr. Vidales, Jr., clarified the last payment for Lost Dog is going to be in 23-24 for \$1.3 million, so it doesn't continue after that.

No action was taken.

- 9. Information, Discussion, and Action:** Maintenance activities for the access roadway to the Roundhouse Trailhead **Contact:** Open Space Advisory Board

Comments from Mr. Smith.

Discussion from Vice-Chairwoman Cervantes Benavides and Board Member Wanchow.

Point of Clarification

Board Member Wanchow clarified the agenda item is not the Maintenance activities for the access roadway to the Roundhouse Trailhead but the Maintenance activities for the access roadway to the Roundhouse property itself.

No action was taken.

- 10. Information and Discussion:** Quarterly report from the Planning Division, Subdivisions Section, regarding land studies and plat approved in the Mountain and Hillside Development Areas pursuant to City Code Section 22.050 (B) (2).

Contact: Adriana Martinez, Planning and Inspections, martinezad@elpasotexas.gov

Comments from Mr. Smith.

Comments from Board Member Tures.

MOTION:

Motion made by Board Member Wanchow, seconded by Board Members Dr. Miles-Bonart, Cacho and Dillabough AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO POSTPONE ITEM 10 FOR THE NEXT BOARD MEETING. (Voice vote, all Ayes) (Motion passed 8-0)

CLOSED SESSION

TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF OPEN MEETINGS LAWS DUE TO EMERGENCY

The Texas Governor has temporarily suspended specified provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act to allow telephonic or videoconference meetings and to avoid congregate settings in physical locations.

The following members of the Open Space Advisory Board will be present: 8

Mark Wanch, Vice-Chairwoman Alyssa Cervantes-Benavides

Isela Castañon-Williams, Dr. Sharon Miles-Bonart

Yvonne "Bonnie" Cacho, Sarah Elena Dillabough

Romaree Friedman Herbert, Stephen Tures

The Open Space Advisory Board of the City of El Paso may retire into CLOSED SESSION pursuant to Section 3.5A of the El Paso City Charter and the Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, Subchapter D, to discuss any of the items on this agenda, consistent with the terms of the Open Meetings Act. The Open Space Advisory Board will return to open session to take any final action.

SECTION 551.071 CONSULTATION WITH ATTORNEY

SECTION 551.072 DELIBERATION REGARDING REAL PROPERTY

SECTION 551.073 DELIBERATION REGARDING PROSPECTIVE GIFTS

SECTION 551.074 PERSONNEL MATTERS

SECTION 551.076 DELIBERATION REGARDING SECURITY DEVICES

SECTION 551.087 DELIBERATION REGARDING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEGOTIATIONS

11. Discussion: Identify items for future agendas.

1. Board Member Dr. Miles-Bonart would like the answers to her questions raised during her presentation on agenda item #8, Overview on Northeast land costs.
2. Maintenance activities for the access roadway to the Roundhouse property.

12. Adjournment

MOTION:

Motion made by Board Member Dr. Miles-Bonart, seconded by Board Member Castañon-Williams AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ADJOURN. (Voice vote, all Ayes) (Motion passed 8-0)