

**Pima County Conservation Acquisition Commission
Meeting**

**Tucson Association of Realtors
Monday June 8, 2009
9:30 a.m.**

MOTIONS

MOTION: Commissioner Hare moved, seconded by Commissioner Marian to approve the April 9, 2009 meeting summary. Motion approved 7-0 (Commissioners Marshall, Pettis, Shattuck and Wilson absent).

MOTION: Commissioner Prouty moved, seconded by Commissioner Sheridan to recommend approval to purchase the Empirita package, including the remaining 2,700-acre Empirita Ranch, the 50-acre Cortaro and Hartman property and the 160-acre Bloom property, located east of Cienega Creek Preserve, Cortaro Farms Road and Hartman Lane, and adjacent to Saguaro National Park West's eastern boundary, respectively. Motion approved 6-1, Commissioner Hare denied; (Commissioners Marshall, Pettis, Shattuck and Wilson absent).

MOTION: Commissioner Sheridan moved, seconded by Commissioner Marian to recommend approval to purchase 60 acres of the Dos Picos property, located in the Tucson Mountain Park Camino de Oeste area. Motion approved 6-1 (Commissioner Hare abstained; Commissioners Marshall, Pettis, Shattuck and Wilson absent).

MOTION: Commissioner Prouty moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson to recommend approval of an amendment to the 1997 Bond Ordinance to reallocate the remaining funds in both SD-4 Los Morteros and SD-10 Tumamoc Hill to SD-1 Tucson Mountain Park General for the purchase of 60 acres of Dos Picos. Motion approved 7-0 (Commissioners Marshall, Pettis, Shattuck and Wilson absent).

MOTION: Commissioner Johnson moved, seconded by Commissioner Hare to recommend that the County continue to seek funds for acquisition of the Stonehaven property, located east of I-10 and south of Tangerine Road. Motion approved 7-0 (Commissioners Marshall, Pettis, Shattuck and Wilson absent).

DIRECTION TO STAFF

Provide map of the Avra/I-10 corridor.

SUMMARY OF MEETING

The following is a summary of the June 8, 2009 meeting.

1. Roll Call

The Commission meeting began at 9:35 am.

Commissioners Present

Les Corey
Trevor Hare
Jan Johnson, Vice Chair
Jim Marian

Commissioners Absent

Rob Marshall
Chuck Pettis
Wanda Shattuck
Helen Wilson

Tim Prouty
Bill Roe, Chairman
Tom Sheridan

2. Executive Session

None.

Video on wildlife corridors was shown.

3. Approval of the April 9, 2009 Meeting Summary

MOTION: Commissioner Hare moved, seconded by Commissioner Marian to approve the April 9, 2009 meeting summary. Motion approved 7-0 (Commissioners Marshall, Pettis, Shattuck and Wilson absent).

4. Update on 1997/2004 Conservation Bond Program Expenditures

Nicole Fyffe reported that the \$20 million for the Marley Ranch acquisition was the only major expense since the last meeting. Currently, \$137.3 million is committed, leaving \$26.9 million. Of this amount, \$14.9 million is under Community Open Space and \$12.1 million is under Jurisdictional monies for 2004.

In the 1997 bond program, just over \$3 million remain. Commissioner Hare asked about the status of the Valencia Site and Boa Sorte properties. Diana Durazo responded that staff met with Councilmember Romero to inquire about the possibility of adding the Valencia Site property to the 36th Street Corridor Project area under the City's Jurisdictional projects. Councilmember Romero was very supportive and our understanding is that this matter will be heard by Mayor and Council on June 23rd. Nicole Fyffe reported that the City may be interested in supporting a bond ordinance amendment to acquire a portion of the Boa Sorte property, but only if they can get credit for the Tucson shovel-nosed snake. The County and the City are currently exploring the possibility of sharing credit.

Commissioner Johnson asked about the Arroyo Grande project's status, and Ms. Fyffe reported that the State Land Department has brought this project to a halt due to lack of funding. Commissioner Roe indicated that a new bill in the State legislature proposes to forbid the use of impact fees and should be tracked. Commissioner Roe also stated that the State Parks Sustainability Task Force is proposing a new approach prescribing closer relations with local jurisdictions, and asked that people think of possible project recommendations.

5. Proposal from Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection on Alternatives to Staff's Recommendations for Acquisitions

Nicole Fyffe explained that staff has been working on the Empirita package, Clyne Ranch and Dos Picos properties, based on the Commission's direction at the last meeting. Staff proposes to bring the Clyne Ranch to the Commission at the July meeting. Recently, the Coalition brought forward the 78-acre Stonehaven property, located east of I-10 and south of Tangerine Road. Two years ago, the County offered them \$3.7 million, which the owner thought was fair, but turned down the offer. In April of this year, the owner asked for \$3.5 million. The Coalition discussed the possibility of buying 48 acres. Ms. Fyffe said that any monies deferred to this property will directly impact the County's ability to purchase the properties currently being considered. Ms.

Fyffe noted a few discrepancies in the numbers shown in the Coalition's 3 alternative scenarios.

Carolyn Campbell, with the Coalition, stated that she agrees with all of the priorities staff is working on, pointing out that all of the alternative scenarios provided by the Coalition reflect all properties being acquired. However, Ms. Campbell notes that not all properties can be purchased in full now, but would require that some owners take partial payment now and wait for a future bond election for their second payment. Ms. Campbell feels the Stonehaven property is valuable given its location in Paul Beier's mapped Avra/I-10 wildlife corridor. The Coalition also offered a fourth alternative scenario, in which all other properties are acquired, and the County commits to make Stonehaven a priority in the future if an initial payment is made for a portion of the property now with pooled developer mitigation monies and whatever remains after the other acquisitions.

6. Acquisition of Empirita, Cortaro and Hartman and Bloom Properties

Nicole Fyffe presented the Empirita package to the Commission. The acquisition consists of the remaining 2,700 acres of the Empirita Ranch property, located east of Cienega Creek Preserve, the 50-acre Cortaro and Hartman property, located on Cortaro Farms Road and Hartman Lane, and the 160-acre Bloom property, located adjacent to Saguaro National Park West's eastern boundary, for a cost of \$12.82 million. The seller paid \$14.7 million. Half of the Bloom property is being donated. As part of this acquisition, the County will also acquire 1,600-acre feet of water rights associated with the Empirita property.

Ms. Fyffe noted that Empirita is eligible to purchase as a Habitat Protection Priority under the 2004 Bond program. The Bloom property will be partially donated, and partially paid for from monies the County will receive from the Malcolmson property auction. The Cortaro and Hartman property is eligible under both the 1997 and 2004 Bond programs. Staff recommends using funds from 1997 bond program and mitigation monies from the Saguaro Ranch Development Agreement.

Kerry Baldwin discussed the biological resources of each property, noting the importance of Empirita's role in the linkage to Cienega Creek Preserve, Bloom's size and adjacency to the Park, and Cortaro and Hartman's contribution to protecting a segment of Hardy Wash. Of the three, Cortaro and Hartman will present more challenges in management, due to its accessibility and use by off-road vehicles and proximity to residential area.

A motion was made by Commissioner Marian, seconded by Commissioner Sheridan to acquire the Empirita, Cortaro and Hartman, and Bloom properties. Commissioner Hare then introduced a substitute motion to approve the Coalition's second alternative. The motion failed for lack of a second.

MOTION: Commissioner Prouty moved, seconded by Commissioner Sheridan to recommend approval to purchase the Empirita package, including the remaining 2,700-acre Empirita Ranch, the 50-acre Cortaro and Hartman property and the 160-acre Bloom property, located east of Cienega Creek Preserve, Cortaro Farms Road and Hartman Lane, and adjacent to Saguaro National Park West's eastern boundary, respectively. Motion approved 6-1 (Commissioners Marshall, Pettis, Shattuck and Wilson absent).

7. Dos Picos

Nicole Fyffe explained that the County, under court order, must buy 60 acres of the Dos Picos property located in the Tucson Mountain Park Camino de Oeste area. These 60 acres are south of the ridgeline. In order to prevent any further accrual of interest, County Attorneys advised staff to move forward with the acquisition. The purchase price is \$1.4 million. The property is eligible under 1997 SD-1 TMP General, but there are no funds remaining in this project. Staff recommends that the remaining funds in 1997 project SD-4 Los Morteros and 1997 project SD-10 Tumamoc Hill be allocated to SD-1.

Jeff Shephard, representative for Dos Picos owners, indicated that the eastern portion of the property would be developed at its current SR zoning.

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8. Amendments to the 1997 Bond Ordinance

MOTION: Commissioner Prouty moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson to recommend approval of an amendment to the 1997 Bond Ordinance to reallocate the remaining funds in both SD-4 Los Morteros and SD-10 Tumamoc Hill to SD-1 Tucson Mountain Park General for the purchase of 60 acres of Dos Picos. Motion approved 7-0 (Commissioners Marshall, Pettis, Shattuck and Wilson absent).

MOTION: Commissioner Johnson moved, seconded by Commissioner Hare to recommend that the County continue to seek funds for acquisition of the Stonehaven property, located east of I-10 and south of Tangerine Road. Motion approved 7-0 (Commissioners Marshall, Pettis, Shattuck and Wilson absent).

9. Updates

- Proposed Development Activities on Bond Parcels: No new activity.
- Arroyo Grande Conceptual Land Use Plan – Discussed earlier.
- Tumamoc Hill: On May 19th, both the County and the City entered into an IGA, whereby the County will convey title to the landfill to the City. The County has received the patent to Tumamoc Hill from the State Land Department, and all documents should be recorded by the end of this month.
- Valencia Archaeological Site: Discussed earlier.
- Boa Sorte: Discussed earlier.
- Los Morteros: No update.
- Saguaro National Park Boundary Adjustment Act H.R. 715: Congressman' Grijalva's office said they are still looking for a mark-up session to hear this item within the next 3 months.
- Catalina/Tortolita Connection: A proposal is being prepared for the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) wildlife corridor funds, in conjunction with Game and Fish, ADOT, and Pima County, for two underpasses and vegetated land bridge over and under Oracle Road.
- Rosemont Mine: The County sent a letter to both Congressman Grijalva and Congresswoman Giffords offices concerning an interpretation of Federal regulation impacting the Forest Service's mining oversight authority with respect to selecting a "no action" alternative.

- Ownership of railroad spur under I-10 at Avra Valley Road: It was determined that ADOT owns the land under the Interstate underpass, but the railroad spur itself is privately owned and will be abandoned per a development agreement.
- 2009 Bond Election Update: Bond Advisory Committee met on the Sewer Election and deferred it until 2010. Sometime in the fall, the Committee will begin to look at project lists again. At the next Conservation Acquisition Commission meeting, additional requests from the public will be presented to the Commission for possible addition to the future bond program.

10. Next Commission Meeting

The next Conservation Acquisition Commission meeting is scheduled for July 9, 2009 at 2:00 p.m. at the Tucson Association of Realtors, small conference room.

11. Call to the Public

No speakers.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 am.

Reminder:

Scheduled Conservation Acquisition Commission meeting dates:

July 9, 2009

September 24, 2009

October 29, 2009

November 19, 2009

Tucson Association of Realtors

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Randolph Golf Course

Randolph Golf Course