

**Pima County Conservation Acquisition Commission
Meeting**

**Manning House
450 West Paseo Redondo
Thursday, November 10, 2005
3:00 p.m.**

MOTIONS

MOTION: Commissioner Arnold moved, seconded by Commissioner Pettis, to move forward with due diligence on the Cienega Corridor parcels located in the Southeast Corridor Project Area, east of Sonoita Highway, and north and south of I-10. Motion approved 10-0.

MOTION: Commissioner Corey moved, seconded by Commissioner Shattuck, to invite a representative from the Town of Marana to brief the Commission members on development activity on identified Habitat Protection Priority parcels within the Town. Motion approved 10-0.

DIRECTION TO STAFF

Chairman Roe asked that staff prepare a list in chart format of every property in the Priority 1 and Priority 2 areas that were contacted in the Northwest Area. Information should include all methods of contact and results. He also asked that staff bring a map showing projected road projects that will impact this area. Staff will bring the Regional Transportation Authority map layout.

Commissioners Wilson and Corey asked that staff provide a report on Habitat Protection Priority parcels in the Northwest Area that have been subdivided. They asked that a map be developed showing HPP parcels that have already been subdivided and those that are pending, or any other type of development activity.

SUMMARY OF MEETING

The following is a summary of the November 10, 2005 meeting. Audiotapes of the meeting are available upon request.

1. Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 p.m. with a quorum.

Commissioners Present

- Bill Arnold
- Les Corey
- Trevor Hare
- Jan Johnson, Vice-Chair
- Rob Marshall
- Chuck Pettis
- Bill Roe, Chair
- Wanda Shattuck (arrived after meeting summary approval)

Commissioners Absent

- Tim Prouty

Tom Sheridan
Helen Wilson

2. Approval of September 8, 2005 Meeting Summary

Meeting summary was approved 9-0.

3. Update on 1997/2004 Conservation Bond Program Expenditures

Prior to the meeting, the Commission was mailed an update of the 1997/2004 Conservation Bond Program Expenditures as of September 30, 2005.

Nicole Fyffe updated the Commission of the recent closing of the Granite property (Sahuarita Jurisdiction request) and the approval of the Selective Marketing and Matesich properties (Camino de Oeste project area) by the Board.

4. Interested Sellers in the Cienega Corridor – Habitat Protection Priorities in the Southeast Sub-area

Nicole Fyffe provided an update on recent applications for the sale of open space to Pima County, for properties located in the Southeast Corridor Project Area, east of Sonoita Highway and north and south of I-10. All parcels have been identified as primary and secondary Habitat Protection Priorities.

Two members of the audience spoke in support of acquiring the Cienega Corridor parcels.

MOTION: Commissioner Arnold moved, seconded by Commissioner Pettis, to move forward with due diligence on the Cienega Corridor parcels located in the Southeast Corridor Project Area, east of Sonoita Highway and north and south of I-10. Motion approved 10-0.

5. Applications for the Sale of Open Space to Pima County

Diana Durazo summarized the applications for the sale of open space from the Whitehurst Trust, which is 40 acres, the Daly parcels, which total 110 acres, and the Clyne parcels, which total 910 acres. These parcels are not identified in the 2004 Bond Ordinance. Staff did not recommend the acquisition of these parcels with Bond funds. Ms. Durazo noted that the Bureau of Land Management and the Trust for Public Lands have looked at the Daly and Clyne properties for possible acquisition as part of the extended Empire Cienega property buffer. However, at this time, BLM did not have funding to purchase these parcels. Staff will continue to monitor their progress.

The Commission took no action.

6. Conservation Opportunities in the Tortolitas Sub-area

Sherry Ruther updated the Commission on development activities in the Northwest. There were three comprehensive plan amendments near Arthur Pack Park. Two withdrew their applications, and one request for a 10-acre parcel was approved by

the Planning Commission with modifications and was scheduled for the November 15, Board of Supervisors meeting. Ms. Fyffe explained that staff sent out letters to all owners within the Priority 1 area in the Catalina/Tortolita area. There were no willing sellers and biologists later recommended against purchasing private parcels in this area. Staff was then directed to contact owners in the Priority 2 area northwest Arthur Pack Park. Two owners contacted Pima County with questions that were quickly answered by staff, but no other responses were received.

Commissioners Wilson and Corey asked for more information on the status of development activities in Marana. They would like to see a map showing HPP parcels that have already been subdivided and those that are pending, or any other type of development activity. Commissioner Corey would like to have someone from the Town of Marana come speak to the Commission on these issues. Chairman Roe asked that staff prepare a list in chart format of every property in the Priority 1 and Priority 2 areas that were contacted in the Northwest Area. Information should include all methods of contact and results. He also asked that staff bring a map showing projected road projects that will impact this area. Staff should bring the Regional Transportation Authority map layout.

Nicole Fyffe noted recent discussions with the State Land Department regarding the possibility of the County purchasing development rights on State land. In past years, the State Land Department was not willing to do that, but the current administration is more willing to discuss this option. Pima County is currently trying to negotiate purchasing development rights on State land south of the County's Madera Highlands property. Ms. Fyffe suggested that the County would try to pursue the same in the Northwest area. However, the State Land Department may not be as receptive in areas with higher development potential.

MOTION: Commissioner Corey moved, seconded by Commissioner Shattuck, to invite a representative from the Town of Marana to brief the Commission members on development activity on identified Habitat Protection Priority parcels within the Town. Motion approved 10-0. (Note: This item heard out of sequence after item #9 at the hearing.)

7. Habitat Protection Priorities in the Sabino Creek Area

Nicole Fyffe explained that Commissioner Shattuck had requested that this item be placed on the agenda. Ms. Fyffe briefly summarized the Habitat Protection Priority parcels found in this area. Linda Mayro discussed the significant archaeological ruin encompassing most of the area, known as the Sabino Canyon Ruin. Ms. Mayro explained that it is relatively undisturbed. Diana Durazo met with Dr. McGettigan, who owns two parcels north of the County-owned parcel. However, in the past, Dr. McGettigan was interested in purchasing the County's property or acquiring an easement through it. He is not sure what he wants to do with his parcels, but staff will continue to discuss options with him. Commissioner Sheridan asked if there should be a group meeting in the area.

Chairman Roe asked Commissioners Shattuck and Pettis to strategize about a concerted effort to bring together the property owners in the Sabino Creek Area.

8. Coordination of Transportation Mitigation Acquisitions

Nicole Fyffe explained that the Town of Marana, Arizona Department of Transportation and other jurisdictions mitigate for certain impacts. Pima County Department of Transportation completed the I-19 mitigation for Pima Pineapple Cactus impact. One Pima Pineapple Cactus was impacted, so one credit was required. Another example was for the Town of Marana's mitigation for Willow Ridge in the Avra/I-10 corridor area. The Stevens property was the last mitigation project for Pima County. Ms. Fyffe noted that Pima County and other jurisdictions work with the open space bond program to spend mitigation dollars. (Note: This item heard out of sequence after item #5 at the hearing)

9. Section 15 Mitigation Bank Exchange

Nicole Fyffe explained that in 2002, Pima County established a Pima Pineapple cactus mitigation bank on 640 acres south of Tucson. Over 28 cactus were present at the time. In a recent inventory, required by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, it was found that only 3 cactus were alive without any development in the area. Development will be occurring north and east of the current mitigation bank. Ms. Fyffe summarized that Pima County would like to move the current mitigation bank to the recently acquired 366-acre Madera Highlands property, which contains 48 cactus, and other properties with Pima Pineapple cactus that would be acquired through an exchange.

Commissioner Hare expressed concerns that these other properties do not have the same genetic Pima Pineapple cactus present in Section 15. He recommended that the County look east of Canoa Ranch and north of the Santa Rita Experimental Range.

10. Pima County Board of Supervisors Policy: Acquisition of Partial Interests in Real Property for Resource Conservation

Sherry Ruther briefly discussed the status of the draft Real Property acquisition policy regarding purchasing partial interests in property. The draft will apply for the purposes of protecting watersheds, conserving open space, habitats, working ranches, and cultural resources. If adopted, it will establish the procedures the County will use. The policy will be heard by the Board of Supervisors in January 2006.

11. Updates:

South Corridor: Nicole Fyffe reported that the Firkins and Pacheco property acquisitions were approved by the Board on 10/4. The Hyntington property is pending closing. Staff is currently looking at property adjacent to Tucson Mountain Park and BLM land to make a wider connection between the two for a potential trailhead into the park.

TEP Parcel: Diana Durazo reported that staff again attempted to contact Martin Roush, with the Town of Sahuarita regarding this parcel, but to no avail. Staff will continue attempts to contact him on the viability of this acquisition.

Camino de Oeste Project Area: Nicole Fyffe reported that Matesich and Selective Marketing were approved by the Board on 10/4. Serr is scheduled to go before the Board on 11/15. The Route 606 acquisition agreement is being renegotiated at this time due to some unforeseen circumstances relating to the owner's ability to retain a portion of the property for a homesite. Staff has identified the remaining parcels in this project area, and AOLT will begin making contact with owners.

Belvedere: The County is working towards closing on this property.

Diocese Parcel: Nicole Fyffe reported that negotiations are ongoing with Dr. Moussa about the potential for an exchange. The County is moving forward on the Welter properties also.

Habitat for Humanity Parcel: Nicole Fyffe reported that Commissioner Pettis pointed out that the property is now in escrow with KB Homes.

Green Valley Hills: No update at this time.

Federal Land Exchange involving Tumamoc Hill: Nicole Fyffe reported that this matter would not be heard by Congress until at least January or February. The Planning and Zoning Commission recently approved a comprehensive plan amendment on a BLM parcel involved in this exchange, to further the exchange.

Resolution Copper Exchange: No update at this time.

Double X Ranch: (Non-Bond property) Nicole Fyffe reported that no alternative funding has been found yet.

Critical Landscape Linkages – Catalina/Tortolita connection across Oracle, Avra/I-10 connection across I-10, and the Garcia Strip connection across CAP canal: Nicole Fyffe reported that the County has asked ADOT to include wildlife corridors when designing their improvements along Oracle Road. Regarding the Avra I-10 connection, Ms. Fyffe indicated that an acquisition agreement has been forwarded for the northern portion of Wexler's property and that negotiations are ongoing with the Parson's property representatives. Ms. Fyffe explained that the properties in the Garcia Strip connection would be acquired with Flood Control monies. Negotiations are ongoing with property owners.

Granite: Pima County acquired this property in the Town of Sahuarita on 10/13/05.

Rail X Ranch: (Non-Bond property) Nicole Fyffe reported that staff did some further research and found that this ranch is not in the same watershed as Carpenter Ranch or in a watershed that impacts Pima County. Staff has not found alternative funding yet. Commissioner Sheridan asked that staff provide more information on the biological value of this property. Commissioners Marshall and Pettis do not feel the Bond ordinance should be amended for this property. Commissioner Sheridan and Vice-Chair Johnson asked to go see the property. Chairman Roe asked Commissioner Arnold to coordinate a field trip for interested Commission members. Chairman Roe also asked that Commissioners Hare, Marshall, and Sheridan coordinate the biological information for Rail X Ranch, possibly using the Heritage

Data Management System or data alternatives. Commissioner Shattuck asked if the Rail X Ranch contained unique characteristics not found in Pima County. Kerry Baldwin explained that it most likely contains high biological value but nothing that cannot be found in Pima County.

Proposed Development Activities on Bond Parcels: Sherry Ruther reported that there were no new activities on the Desert Rose Canyon or Ranch Grande projects. Ms. Ruther informed the Commission that the Sumpter Road rezoning request for a cluster subdivision was denied by the Board of Supervisors.

12. Next Commission Meeting, January 12, 2006

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2006 at 3p.m.

13. Call to the Public

No members of the public spoke at this time.

14. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.