



MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, BUILDING AND CODE ENFORCEMENT

DATE: SEPTEMBER 16, 2008

SUBJECT: DONOR RECOGNITION SITE AT DEL CERRO PARK

REVIEWED: CAROLYN LEHR, CITY MANAGER

Project Manager: Ara Michael Mihranian, AICP, Principal Planner

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the primary donor recognition site design scheme, as identified in the Council adopted Vision Plan, and authorize the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy to construct the proposed site improvements at Del Cerro Park.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In January 2005, the City Council conceptually approved allowing a portion of Del Cerro Park to serve as a primary donor recognition site for donors who make significant monetary contributions toward the City/PVPLC open space acquisition efforts. The conceptual approval of the donor recognition site was intended to assist the PVPLC in its fundraising efforts. The concept of developing a portion of Del Cerro Park as a donor recognition site was incorporated into the Rancho Palos Verdes Coast Vision Plan. Del Cerro Park was identified as one of the five key sites in the Vision Plan because of its connectivity to the Palos Verdes Nature Preserve and its relationship to the remaining four key sites.

In advance of the adoption of the Vision Plan, the City Council was scheduled to approve the design scheme for the donor recognition site and authorize the PVPLC to construct the improvement at its October 16, 2007 meeting. But because of neighbor concerns, City Staff and PVPLC Staff decided to pull the item off the agenda to address the neighbors' concerns. The design scheme for the donor recognition site was revised based on neighbors' comments and public input at the various Vision Plan workshops. The revised plans were presented to the neighbors at an informal site visit at Del Cerro Park on July 14, 2008.

As a result of the Council's adoption of the Vision Plan at its September 2, 2008 meeting, the PVPLC, sponsors of the donor recognition site at Del Cerro Park, are now requesting that the City Council approve the final design scheme and authorize the construction of the primary donor recognition site at Del Cerro Park.

BACKGROUND

Since 2004, one of the City Council's tactical goals has been to complete the City's Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP) and acquire additional acreage for the NCCP Preserve from willing sellers. The City Council approved NCCP calls for the acquisition of privately owned land, using a combination of federal, state, county and city lands, along with private funding to be raised by the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy (PVPLC).

As a means of supporting the PVPLC's efforts to raise the needed private funds for land acquisition, at its January 24, 2005 meeting, the City Council approved the concept of allowing portions of the City owned Palos Verdes Nature Preserve (previously known as the Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve) to be named after donors who make significant monetary contributions toward the acquisition of the privately owned parcels that make up the greater Preserve. Additionally at that time, the Council also approved the concept of allowing a portion of Del Cerro Park to serve as a primary donor recognition site for donors who significantly contribute toward the City/PVPLC open space acquisition efforts.

Based on the Council's January 24, 2005 approval, the concept of developing a portion of Del Cerro Park as a donor recognition site was incorporated into the Rancho Palos Verdes Coast Vision Plan, which was adopted by the City Council at its September 2, 2008 meeting. Related to this effort, the PVPLC, sponsors of the donor recognition site at Del Cerro Park, has been working with Melendrez and Associates (the consultant preparing the Vision Plan) to develop conceptual designs for the donor recognition site at Del Cerro Park and other recognition sites located throughout the Preserve. The PVPLC contracted separately with Melendrez to develop actual plans and specifications for these improvements.

An item was placed on the Council's October 16, 2007 agenda to consider the design schemes for the Donor Recognition Site at Del Cerro Park along with the design schemes for the recognition sites throughout the Preserve. However, in light of concerns raised by the neighbors residing next to Del Cerro Park, City Staff and PVPLC Staff agreed to remove this item from the October 16th agenda to allow additional time to address the neighbors' concerns. As a result of the neighbor concerns, the PVPLC requested that Melendrez revise the design scheme for the donor recognition site to address the neighbors concerns. The revised plans were presented to the neighbors by PVPLC Staff and City Staff at an informal site visit at Del Cerro Park on July 14, 2008. To help visualize the proposal, the PVPLC staked the project site including the location of the proposed overlooks and the proposed pathway. The purpose of the site visit was to provide an opportunity for the neighbors of the park to listen to an explanation of the proposal, to visualize where the proposed recognition site will be, and to provide feedback on the proposal to Staff in advance of the completion of the final design scheme.

While the Vision Plan was being prepared, the PVPLC moved forward with the design schemes to construct donor recognition overlooks, vista points, and trail markers throughout the Preserve. On April 1, 2008, the City Council approved the design schemes for the Preserve donor recognition improvements. The design scheme for the primary donor recognition site at Del Cerro Park (outside the Preserve) was not advanced since it was part of the Vision Plan and the Vision Plan had not been acted upon by the City Council. Now that the City Council has approved the Vision Plan, the PVPLC is now seeking City Council approval to construct the donor recognition improvements at Del Cerro Park.

DISCUSSION

In January 2005, the City Council conceptually approved a primary donor recognition site on a small portion of Del Cerro Park that overlooks the Palos Verdes Nature Preserve. Approval of the donor recognition site was intended to assist the PVPLC in its fundraising efforts by providing a means to recognize donors for their monetary contributions towards the acquisition of Preserve properties. As the City Council is aware, the PVPLC was successful in its 2005 capital campaign of raising about \$4 million in private contributions to help purchase 463 acres of open space from Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Holdings (Barry Hon) in 2005. This land is now part of the City's current 1,210-acre Preserve.

At the time the Council conceptually approved the donor recognition site at Del Cerro in 2005, the Council was told that prior to construction, formal design schemes would be brought back to the Council for its approval, along with cost estimates for construction and maintenance of the site. As such, during the development process of the Rancho Palos Verdes Coast Vision Plan, the proposed donor recognition site at Del Cerro Park was identified as one of the five key sites because of its connectivity to the Palos Verdes Nature Preserve and its relationship to the remaining four key sites. Through the Vision Plan process, the design scheme for Del Cerro Park was developed and refined based on public input at the various Vision Plan workshops and the neighborhood meetings, most recently held on July 14, 2008.

The design of this donor recognition site involves a permanent installation of improvements that utilize vernacular materials so as to keep with the natural setting of the site. Such materials include the use of a decomposed granite pathway and natural stone clad seating. A site plan of the proposed recognition site layout is attached. Specifically, the improvement plan consists of the following:

- The construction of two circular overlooks (approximately 18-feet in diameter with a concrete pad and stone edge banding) at the southern edge of the park consisting of a donor recognition concrete wall sign (18-inches in height; curved in shape and roughly 20-feet long) with engraved metal signs, stone clad bench seating (roughly 8-feet in length and 21-inches in height), and minor low profile landscaping.
- The construction of a decomposed granite pedestrian trail, designed in accordance to ADA guidelines, connecting the existing parking area to the proposed overlooks.
- The installation of an "entry welcome" sign and a donor recognition sign.

The overlook will be perched above the slope utilizing the natural terrain so as to minimize the amount of grading while maximizing unobstructed views of the Preserve, the Pacific Ocean, and Catalina Island.

As proposed, there will be no retaining walls and minimal earth movement. The park's existing vehicular ingress and egress and parking lot configuration will not be changed. However, the parking lot may be re-stripped to add a parking stall for persons with disabilities. The proposed trail is designed to follow the natural contours of the site so as to minimize grading while providing views and the grades required for ADA access. There will be no removal of existing mature trees and the large grassy play area will remain intact. Minor native landscaping may be planted around the two overlooks depending on the availability and condition of the existing irrigation system (which is currently being repaired by Public Works).

During the design development stage, concerns were raised with the proposed site improvements and potential conflicts with the existing use of the park by the Silent Flyers and the Fire Department. In response to these concerns, City Staff and PVPLC Staff met with representatives from the Fire Department and the Silent Flyers. Both groups reviewed the proposed plans and do not believe the site improvements, including the two overlooks, will adversely impact their use of the site. A letter from the Fire Department is attached (see attachment).

FISCAL IMPACTS

In regards to costs, as indicated in the attached letter from the PVPLC, the construction and maintenance of this overlook will be provided by the PVPLC. However, the Conservancy is requesting that the City incur some costs associated with Staff's review of the improvement plans (approximately 8 hours of time for the combined Principal Planner, Building Official, and City Engineer), as well as some on-going maintenance costs for watering the minor landscaping adjacent to the overlook (if irrigation is extended to the overlook by the PVPLC) and graffiti removal (consistent with the City's current graffiti removal program implemented at other City parks). Otherwise, the on-going general maintenance of the recognition site will be conducted by the PVPLC. It is unknown how much Staff involvement will be needed to review the improvement plans for the remaining donor recognition improvements, but it is expected to be minimal since the installations are quite small. Staff believes that the maintenance costs are nominal for the typical upkeep of Del Cerro Park and the greater Preserve.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Environmental Review

In accordance to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the approval and construction of the primary donor recognition site improvements at the existing Del Cerro Park is considered to be a Categorical Exemption from CEQA based on Class 1 (Existing Facilities - Section 15301), Class 3 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures – Section 15303) and Class 4 (Minor Alterations to Land – Section 15304). The proposed site improvements at the existing City-owned Del Cerro Park, consists of the construction of two overlooks, low profile walls to be used as stone clad seating with engraved signs, minor earth movement (less than 50 cubic yards), and an ADA accessible decomposed granite trail connecting the existing parking area to the two

overlooks. The proposed improvements, as described herein, will not cause a significant negative effect on the environment in that the improvements are minor in nature and intended to enhance the existing parking facilities.

Public Notice

On September 3, 2008, a public notice announcing the Council's review of the proposed donor recognition site was sent to interested parties and property owners within a 500-foot radius of Del Cerro Park, including the adjacent property owners on Park Place and Burrell Lane. Furthermore, an electronic notice was also sent to the Vision Plan list-serve subscribers on September 5, 2008.

Public Comments

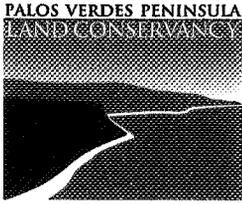
At this time, the City has not received any public correspondence in regards to the donor recognition site project. If written letters are received after the transmittal of this Staff Report, Staff will provide the Council with the comment letters at the September 16th meeting. It should be noted that a comment letter was submitted by Dr. Olsen (1 Park Place) during the comment period on the Vision Plan. This letter was originally included in the Vision Plan Staff Report, and is also being attached to this Staff Report as added information for the Council's review.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the design scheme and authorize the construction of the primary donor recognition overlook improvements at Del Cerro Park.

ATTACHMENTS

- PVPLC Request Letter
- Del Cerro Improvement Plan
- Fire Department Letter
- Dr. Olson's Vision Plan Comment Letter



PRESERVING LAND AND RESTORING HABITAT FOR THE EDUCATION AND ENJOYMENT OF ALL

September 2, 2008

City of Rancho Palos Verdes
Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement
30940 Hawthorne Boulevard
Rancho Palos Verdes, Ca90275
Attn: Ara Miharmanian

Subject: PVPLC Request for Authorization to Proceed with Del Cerro Recognition Site Construction.

Dear Mr. Miharmanian,

The Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy (PVPLC) would like to formally request authorization to proceed with improvements at Del Cerro Park indentified with the donor recognition site noted in the Vision Plan.

In January of 2005, the City Council conceptually approved naming opportunities and locations within what is now the Palos Verdes Nature Preserve (PVNP). During the Community Campaign in 2005, PVPLC published a "Naming Opportunities" brochure that detailed the commitments that were being made regarding these naming opportunities.

PVPLC has been working with Melendrez and Associates through the Vision Plan to develop a concept for the recognition sites. PVPLC has also contracted separately with Melendrez to develop more detailed plans so that construction can be completed.

The project consists of the following components:

- Construction of an ADA decomposed granite trail leading from the parking lot to the recognition site
- Restriping of the parking lot to accommodate an ADA parking space
- Construction of a sitting wall with a view of the PVNP
- Construction of a naming wall opposite the sitting wall

PVPLC will fully fund the cost of construction of this recognition site with funds designated for this purpose. Additionally, PVPLC will maintain the site as part of its Preserve management obligations.

Thank you very much for your consideration of our request for authorization to proceed. We look forward to moving forward with this project.

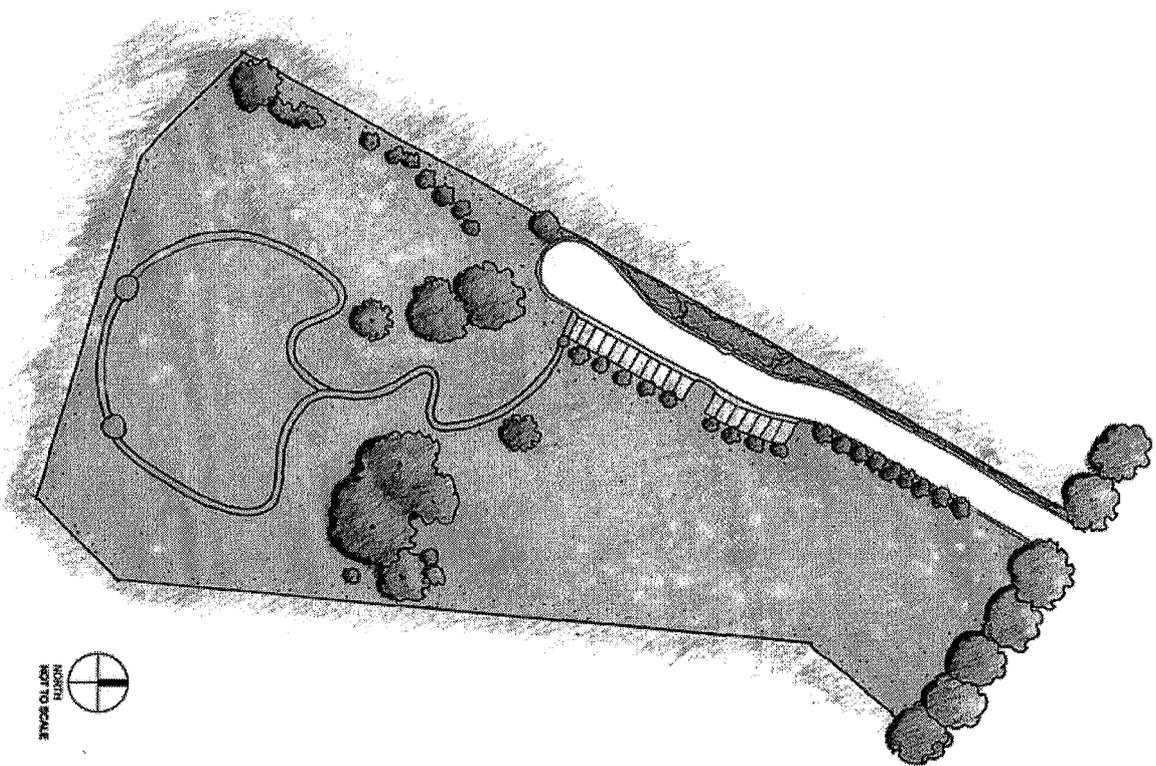
Sincerely,



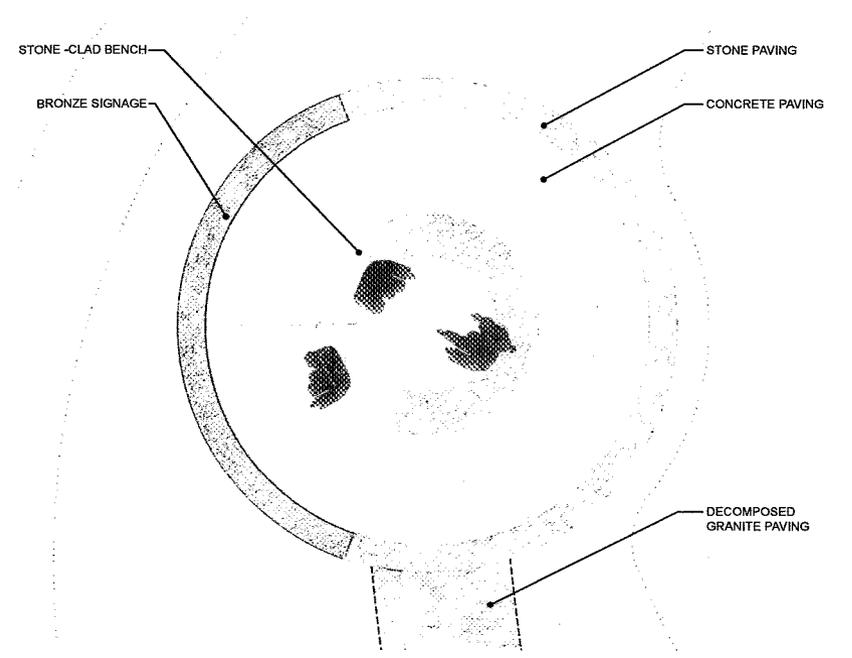
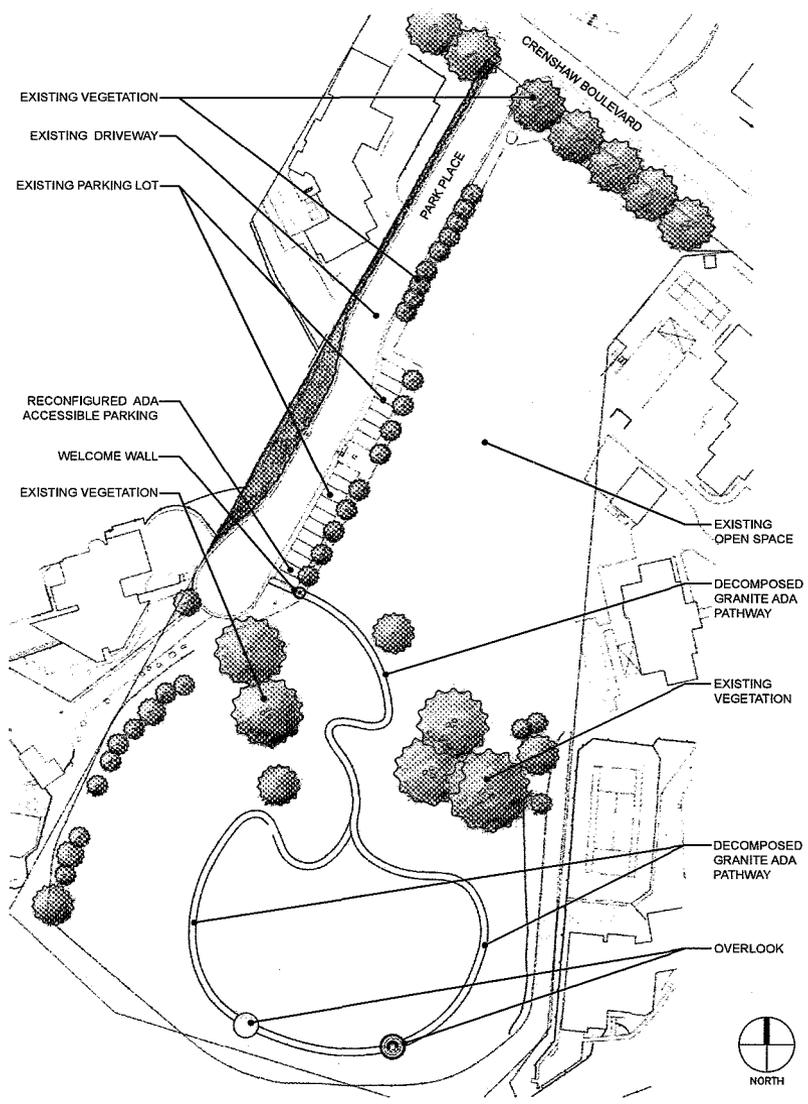
Henry Jurgens
President of the Board of Directors

916 SILVER SPUR ROAD # 207. ROLLING HILLS ESTATES. CA 90274-3826 T 310.541.7613
WWW.PVPLC.ORG

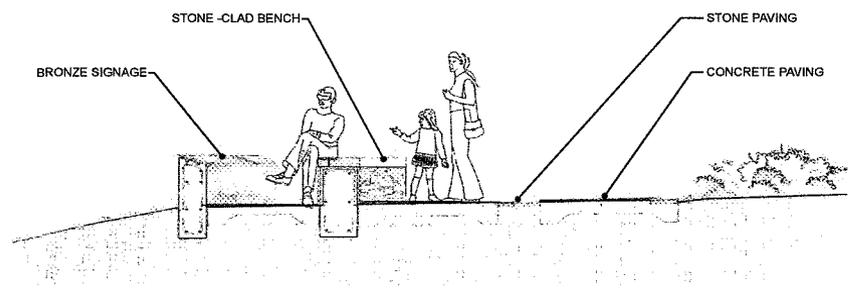
Overall Site Layout



CR SHEET	L-100 A	DATE: 08/27/08 DRAWN BY: [blank] CHECKED BY: [blank] JOB NO.: 03.08.008	<h3 style="text-align: center;">Del Cerro Park</h3> <h4 style="text-align: center;">Donor Recognition Site</h4>	<p>MELÉNDRIZ <small>General Contracting, EIR Firm 111 South Olive Street Los Angeles, California, 90012</small></p>	<div style="text-align: right; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">17-7</div>	11/20/2008 Date
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OVERLOOK PLAN ENLARGEMENT SCALE: 1/2" = 1' - 0"



OVERLOOK SECTION / ELEVATION SCALE: 1/2" = 1' - 0"

OVERALL SITE PLAN

SCALE: 1" = 40'

DEL CERRO PARK
DONOR RECOGNITION SITE

MELENDEZ

REVISIONS	DATE

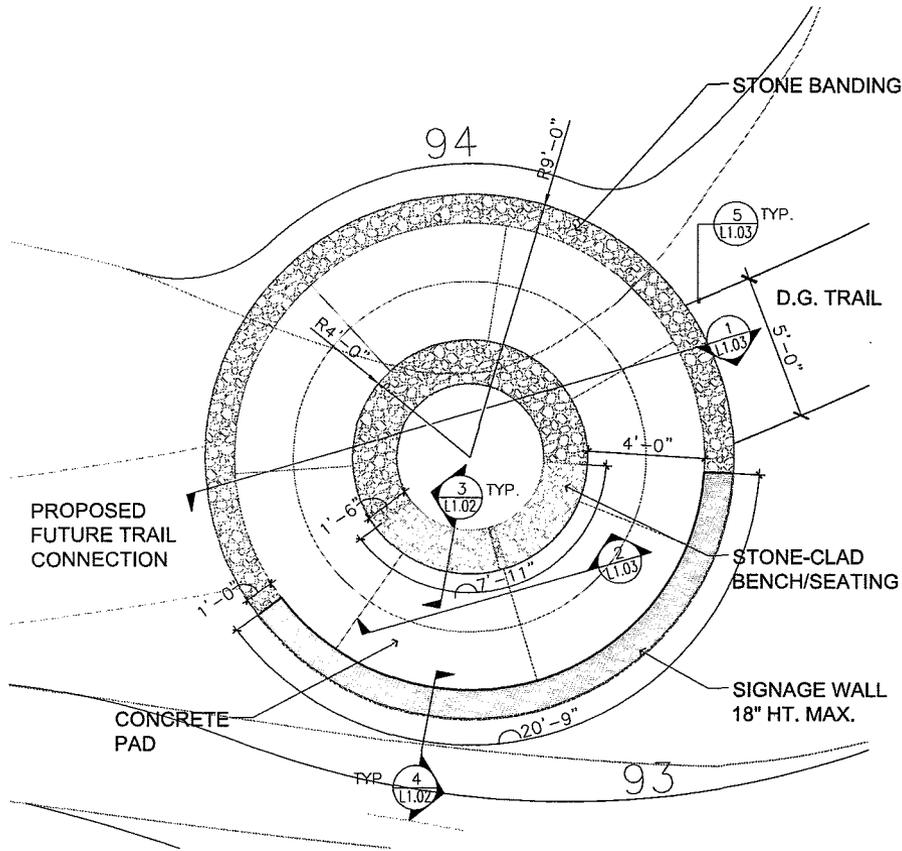
MELÉNDREZ
 Landscape Architecture
 11100 N. 19th Ave., Suite 100
 Aurora, CO 80012
 Phone: (303) 751-1100
 Fax: (303) 751-1101
 Email: info@melendez.com

SITE PLAN

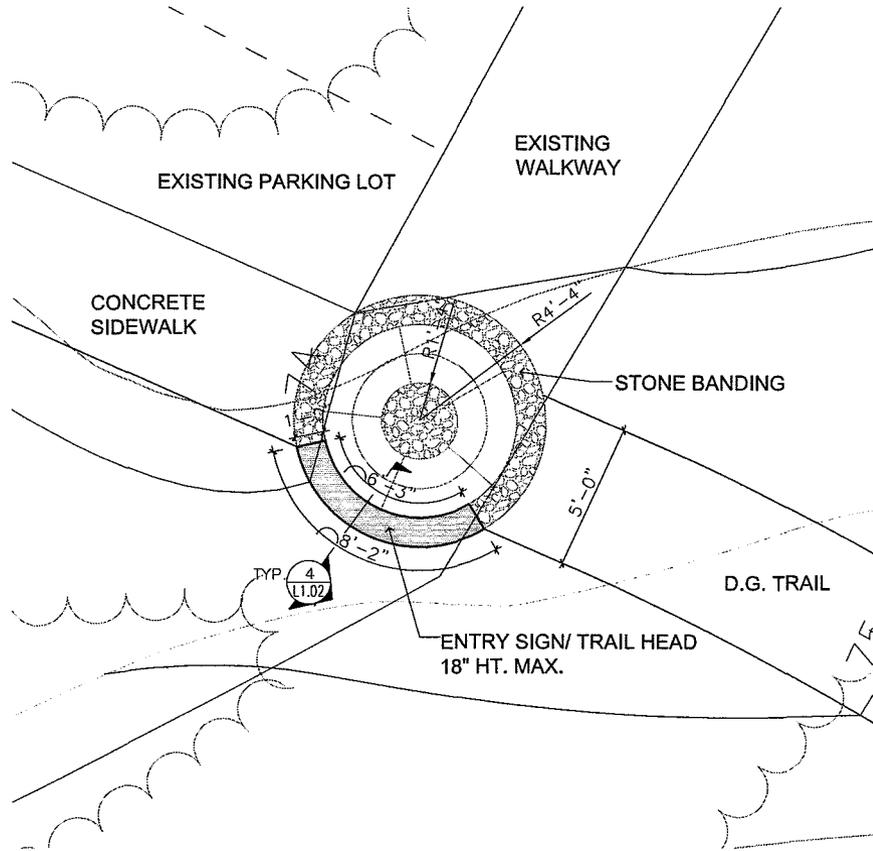
Del Cerro Park Donor Recognition Site

Date: 09/05/08
 Scale: -
 Drawn: -
 Job No.: 00000009
 Sheet: L-100
 of 101 Sheets





A OVERLOOK ENLARGEMENT
1/2" = 1'-0"



B ENTRY SIGN ENLARGEMENT
1/2" = 1'-0"



REVISIONS	DATE

MELÉNDRÉZ
 213024000
 4770 University Dr. #100
 San Diego, California 92161
 www.melendrez.com

ENLARGEMENT
PLANS

Del Cerro Park
Donor Recognition Site

Date:	09/05/08
Scale:	-
Drawn:	-
Job No.:	03.06.009
Sheet:	L-101
Of	Sheets

Enlargement Layout

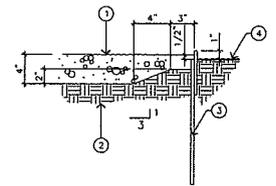
REVISIONS	DATE

MELÉNDRÉZ
 11100 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1000
 Los Angeles, California 90025
 www.melendrez.com

CONSTRUCTION
 DETAILS

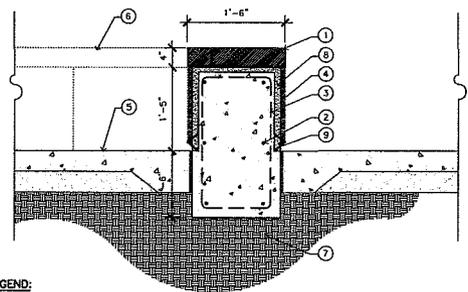
Del Cerro Park
 Donor Recognition Site

Date:	09/05/08
Scale:	-
Drawn:	-
Job No.:	03.06.009
Sheet:	L-102
Of	Sheets



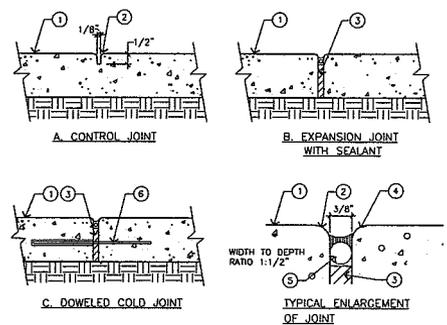
- LEGEND:**
1. STABILIZED DECOMPOSED GRANITE
 2. COMPACTED SUBGRADE PER SOILS REPORT
 3. METAL EDGING
 4. 1" IN TURF AND 1 1/2" IN SHRUB/ GROUND COVER AREAS.

5 DECOMPOSED GRANITE PAVING
 1 1/2"=1'-0" 02835-09



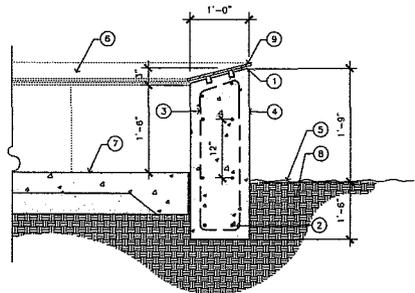
- LEGEND:**
1. 4" THICK STONE
 2. # 4 BARS CONTINUOUS
 3. # 3 BARS @ 32" O.C.
 4. 1" THICK STONE VENEER FINISH. ALL EXPOSED SURFACE
 5. FINISH SURFACE - SEE PLANS
 6. BENCH SEATING BEYOND
 7. 95% COMPACTED SUBGRADE
 8. MORTAR BED
 9. RIDGEL
- NOTE:**
1. PROVIDE EXPANSION JOINTS AT 30' O.C. MAX AND TOOLED CONTROL JOINT @ MAXIMUM 10'-0" O.C. ON ALL SURFACES

3 STONE-CLAD BENCH
 1"=1'-0"



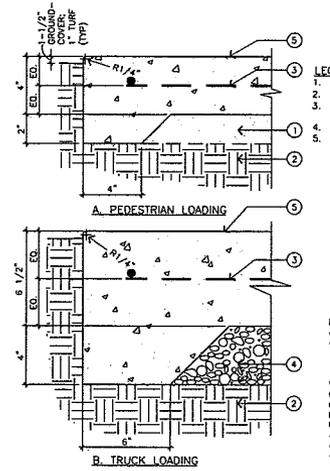
- LEGEND:**
1. CONC. PAVING
 2. 1/4" RADIUS TOOLED JOINT
 3. PREMOILED EXP. JOINT FILLER
 4. SEALANT W/ SAND FINISH - COLOR TO BE SELECTED BY LAND. ARCH. SUBMIT COLOR SAMPLES PRIOR TO INSTALLATION
 5. BACKER ROD
 6. 16" SUP. DOWEL @ 36" O.C. CTR. IN CONC. PROVIDE DOWELS ON EACH SIDE OF ALL COLORED BANDS. SEE PLANS FOR THE COLORED BAND LOCATION.
- NOTE:**
1. PROVIDE EXPANSION JOINTS AT 30' O.C. MAX AND TOOLED CONTROL JOINT @ MAXIMUM 10'-0" O.C. ON ALL SURFACES
- WIDTH TO DEPTH RATIO 1:1/2"**

1 PAVING JOINTS
 NOT TO SCALE



- LEGEND:**
1. EASED CORNER
 2. # 4 BARS CONTINUOUS
 3. # 3 BARS @ 32" O.C.
 4. NATURAL COLOR CONCRETE W/ LIGHT SANDBLAST FINISH. ALL EXPOSED SURFACE
 5. FINISH GRADE
 6. WALL/SIGNAGE BEYOND
 7. FINISHED SURFACE - SEE PLANS
 8. 95% COMPACTED SUBGRADE
 9. BRONZE SIGNAGE BY OTHERS
- NOTE:**
1. PROVIDE EXPANSION JOINTS AT 30' O.C. MAX AND TOOLED CONTROL JOINT @ MAXIMUM 10'-0" O.C. ON ALL SURFACES

4 CONCRETE SIGNAGE WALL
 1"=1'-0"



- LEGEND:**
1. SAND
 2. 95% COMPACTED SUBGRADE
 3. # 4 REBAR @ 30" O.C. EACH WAY
 4. BASE COURSE-REFER TO GEOTECH REPORT
 5. CONC. PAVING AS NOTED ON PLAN
- NOTE:** SEE SHEETS L1.01 & L1.02 FOR SCORING AND JOINT PATTERN.
- NOTE:** VERIFY PAVEMENT THICKNESS, BASE COURSE AND REINFORCEMENT WITH GEOTECHNICAL SOILS ENGINEER'S LATEST RECOMMENDATIONS PER GEOTECHNICAL REPORT. SUBMIT ANY CHANGES TO LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT FOR REVIEW AND ACCEPTANCE.

2 CONCRETE PAVING
 3"=1'-0"

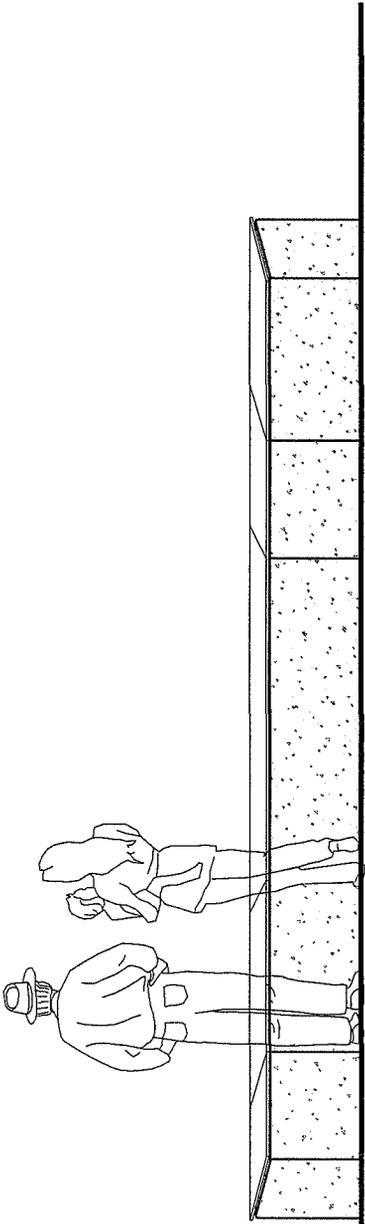
REVISIONS	DATE

MELENDRÉZ
 ARCHITECTS
 10101 Camino del Rio South
 Suite 400
 San Diego, CA 92108
 (619) 594-9200
 www.melendrez.com

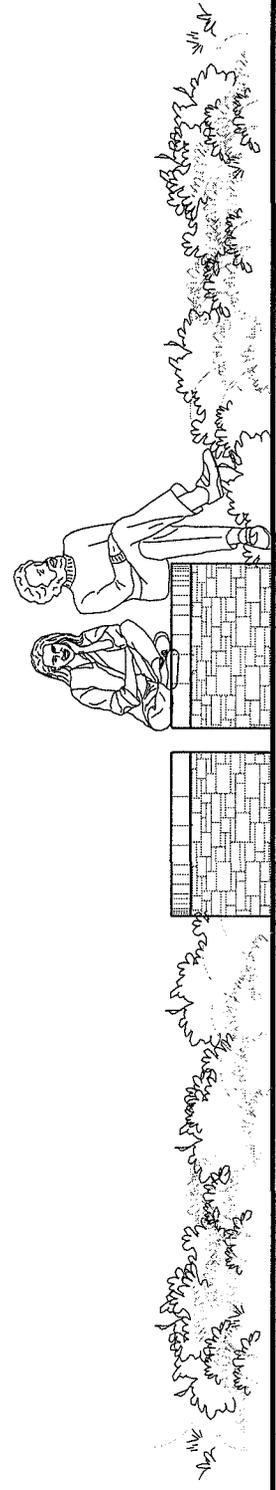
DETAIL
 ELEVATION

**Del Cerro Park
 Donor Recognition Site**

Date: 09/05/08
 Scale: -
 Drawn: -
 Job No.: 03.08.009
 Sheet:
L-103
 of Sheets



1 CONCRETE SIGNAGE WALL ELEVATION
 1"=1'-0"



2 STONE-CLAD BENCH ELEVATION
 1"=1'-0"



County Of Los Angeles
Fire Department

Date: August 7, 2008

To: Becky Harper, Conservation Director
Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy

From: Battalion Fire Chief Anthony J. Iacono
Battalion 14, Division I, Los Angeles County Fire Station 106
27413 Indian Peak Rd., Rolling Hills Estates 90274

**Subject: APPROVAL OF THE DEL CERRO PARK
DONOR RECOGNITION SITE**

Dear Ms. Harper,

This memo is to confirm my approval of your plan to install the monuments for the Donor Recognition Site adjacent to the Los Angeles County Fire Department's pre-designated Helispot, Helispot 56-A, located at Del Cerro park.

After review of your plans, several onsite inspections, and meetings conducted with your staff and City Officials, and discussions with our Air Operations Chief, it has been determined that your plan will not interfere with helicopter landing and take-off operations at the site.

At our onsite meetings, I requested that since this work is being done, improvements be made to the Helispot area. We are not requesting any dirt to be removed rather grading the area to produce a flatter helispot. This would not alter the landscape or terrain and would make the helispot safer to use. This is only about a fifty foot in diameter circle that would satisfy the need for a safer landing spot. It seems appropriate to do this work at the same time your project proceeds.

The Los Angeles County Fire Department appreciates all you do to protect our valuable land and the beauty of its landscape. Anything we can do to assist you in succeeding with your mission is our goal as your team player.

Very truly yours,

Anthony J. Iacono

CC: Andrea Vona

Ara M

From: Thomas Olson [pvpprof@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, August 28, 2008 12:35 PM
To: Ara M
Cc: cc@rpv.com
Subject: Re: Del Cerro proposed construction project

Honorable Mayor and Councilmen, City of Rancho Palos Verdes

Mr. Mihranian and others of the City of RPV,

Thank you for your response. I am writing the following, with input from Park Place Homeowners Association members.

We have been told that "*Adoption of the (Vision) Plan ... does not necessarily mean that any of the projects are approved.*"

However, the reality certainly is that the PVPLC and City have been co-planning the construction of a memorial at Del Cerro for years. And it would seem much of the co-planning at Del Cerro has not been shared with the public in the scope and detail that arguably it should have been.

In a way the statement from the PVPLC brochure (prepared many months ago with City knowledge) provides all that needs to be said to understand what is actually occurring. This statement is: "A donor recognition site will be created at Del Cerro Park to recognize all contributions of \$37,000 or more with permanent markers overlooking the magnificent slopes of Portuguese Bend."

As you know, at the time of this PVPLC publication, the City Vision Plan was in its infancy AND there was no construction plan - let alone a publicly presented proposal - that the public could review and on which it could comment. It would seem apparent that some 'arrangement' was struck between the PVPLC and City to allow the PVPLC to make this statement. And it would, therefore, seem to be a kind of quid pro quo between the City and the PVPLC. It is a fact that there has been a public promise made by the City's co-partner, the PVPLC, that if enough dollars are donated, people's names will be inscribed in what is now proposed to be large bronze letters on two circular shaped concrete walls—each 30 foot in diameter by 3 feet tall, to be built at Del Cerro Park.

This statement, of offering City land for use by the PVPLC, flies in the face of the City Staff Report wherein it is stated that "*Adoption of the (Vision) Plan ... does not necessarily mean that any of the projects are approved*". How is it possible to have it both ways - on the one hand to pledge City land for an arguably huge memorial without citizen knowledge (a la the PVPLC brochure) and on the other hand to suggest that this is now merely an element of a Vision Plan? I will tell you that there are many persons who are disturbed by the process that has occurred; I have heard it suggested that this is some (to quote one neighbor) sleight-of-hand by the City and the PVPLC to (and to quote another neighbor) 'put one over on the public'.

Specific to the proposed project, it is not significantly changed in scope from what was proposed in November, 2007. The same 'grand circle' around the western portion of Del Cerro is still there – albeit in two phases – just as in the first proposal. However, there has been one significant change that is of

concern and unprecedented. The entry has been moved to the curb near the entrance to a property drive way with a proposal that wheel chair access would occur there. This is very problematic for only one handicapped parking place is planned, yet when the PVPLC Board Member Bruce Biesman Simons has described the project, he has indicated there would be room for at least 2 wheelchairs on the path at the same time. Or even if there are more than one handicapped parking place allotted, chairs would need to be pushed on a City street, Park Place, in order to access the entry. (Please note that the access to the parking spaces at Del Cerro is a public street, Park Place, and this area IS NOT A PARKING LOT as described repeatedly in proposed plans. Clearly, there would need to be a pathway along the entire row of park stalls just inside the park (where grass is now) to allow for wheel chair access from any of the parking stalls. City code limits the use of City streets for wheel chairs. And the proposed plan would not meet code in this regard. This would require that the length of the path be extended to essentially the same length that was originally proposed. All in all then, the 'new proposed plan' is essentially the same as the former proposed plan. There has been no actually downsizing of the scope of the project since proposed in November 2007.

These issues are ongoing concerns that have not been addressed. Even so, they pale in comparison to the most glaring issue here, which is that of open space. As you know, the PVPLC's mission is to preserve open space. This project does just the opposite! THIS IS A KEY PROBLEM. This fact is not made evident in the PVPLC brochure that advertised for donors for this "recognition site." Did the average big contributor realize he or she was part of a design to encroach upon one of our last remaining and singularly beautiful patches of open space?

In what is now proposed, the Vision Plan states that: "The goal of the Vision Plan is to create a coordinated master plan for the areas noted below (including Del Cerro), with public access, interpretive materials, recreational amenities, and other facilities **to improve the experience of the coast and open space** (emphasis added) for residents of and visitors to the Peninsula. The Plan will identify program, design and linkage concepts for the entire area." There are many residents who do not see how the 'experience of open space' can be enhanced in any way by constructing a huge project with hundreds of feet of walkway, and 30' diameter, 3' tall, walls just waiting for graffiti.

The donation of monies to help purchase land to maintain it in its natural state is laudable. However, to build a huge memorial to the donors and take away the open space is contrary to purpose of the City's Vision Plan and to the Mission Statement of the PVPLC. It is hard to see how this meets the needs of the majority of RPV residents, those folks who couldn't afford to pay for a place on the monument.

Should the City recognize the donors who helped preserve our open spaces? The PPHA believes the answer is 'Absolutely' BUT in keeping with other donor sites already in place. The project needs to be significantly and substantially downsized to a plaque or two that could be placed in Del Cerro and / or elsewhere to commemorate the donators and still preserve the land. This would not require adverse impact (initial) studies per CEQA.

Mr. Mihranian observes that law pertaining to CEQA would need to be followed if any larger project (such as that now proposed) would be pursued. And it goes without saying that this process could be quite costly and potentially filled with legal minefields. It would seemingly be a project that could acquire much scrutiny for adverse impact (as noted by many in many other letters / testimony before the City Council). And the process of following CEQA will be closely followed by many who would need to feel assured that all steps are / were pursued as prescribed by law.

Let us do the right thing – preserve the open space. Don't give public land away to build a monument to a few wealthy donors and take away the land that they donated to protect. Scale down this project just

like all other recognitions around the peninsula.

Thank you,

Thomas Olson

On Thu, Aug 21, 2008 at 5:28 PM, Ara M <aram@rpv.com> wrote:

Dr. Olson,

The donor recognition site identified in the Vision Plan is a design concept proposed at Del Cerro Park based on the Council's conceptual approval in 2005.

As stated in the November 10th City Council Staff Report on the Vision Plan (as posted on the City's website - http://palosverdes.com/rpv/planning/planning-zoning/Vision_Plan/workshop.cfm):

Adoption of the Plan at that time does not necessarily mean that any of the projects are approved. Adoption of the Plan would only signal to Staff and the various groups that have a stake in any of the proposals that they can take the proposals to their respective next step. The next step being to demonstrate to the City Council that a project is financially feasible, including a project's financial implications on City resources. If deemed acceptable, a project would then be required to go through the City's planning entitlement process (condition use permit, grading permit, etc.), including environmental review to determine a project's potential impacts to the surrounding environment.

In regards to the donor recognition site proposed at Del Cerro Park (which is what I am assuming your email essentially pertains to), this project is being sponsored by the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy (PVPLC). In other words, the PVPLC will be covering all construction and maintenance costs associated with the donor recognition site including the preparation of the construction plans. Since the City will be issuing the entitlement for the proposal, pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) the City would be the Lead Agency.

As for CEQA, since the Vision Plan is a planning tool to guide future development it is exempt from CEQA.

However, as stated above, individual projects that move forward in the planning process will require the analysis of CEQA. The level of CEQA will depend on the project and will be treated on a case-by-case basis. The PVPLC will be seeking Council authorizing to construct the improvements at Del Cerro park at a future meeting (tentatively scheduled for September 16, 2008). It is at that time that CEQA will be addressed.

Ara

Ara Michael Mihranian

Principal Planner

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aram@rpv.com

From: Thomas Olson [<mailto:pvpprof@gmail.com>]

Sent: Monday, August 18, 2008 5:21 PM

To: Ara M

Subject: Del Cerro proposed construction project

Hello Ara,

My neighbors and I of the Park Place Homeowners Association have just received a written notice stating that the City of Rancho Palos Verdes (City) will conduct a public hearing on Tuesday, September 2, 2008 to consider the adoption of the Vision Plan for the Rancho Palos Verdes Coast. On review of the Vision Plan on the City's website and the past few years minutes of the City Council meetings, the PPHA has a number of clarification questions / inquires regarding the proposed construction project.

To clarify whether to request information from the City or the Palos Verdes Land Conservancy, PVLC:

First, we understand from you that the City is the lead Public Agency regarding this project.

Second, we understand from you that the PVLC is the responsible agency.

Third, we understand from your comments and those of Bruce Biesman-Simons from the PVLC that there is no initial study regarding any environmental effects for this project. When asked in writing and in person on July 14th about such a study, you and Mr. Beisman-Simons each responded that there were no effects and hence no study.

Is each of the above correct? If not, please respond with what is accurate.

We request this confirmation for, following a full review of City Council meeting minutes and the Vision Plan website, we are unable to identify any mention of: 1. any entity being the Public Agency or 2. any entity being the responsible agency or 3. any initial study.

Inquiry:

Given the legal requirements of this project, we would like to know where in the City Council Minutes it is stated and in what words it is stated that the City has observed that it will not identify the lead or responsible agency or do any kind of an initial study.

Because of likely follow-up questions and the need to prepare statements for submission to the City in advance of the scheduled meeting on September 2, and in keeping with schedules given to the PPHA by the City, the PPHA respectfully requests that the City respond to us no later than Wednesday, 8/20.

Thank you in advance for your response.

Regards,

Thomas Olson