



County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD: (831) 454-7978

JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

Monday, April 2, 2018
7:00 pm
Regular Meeting

Simpkins Family Swim Center
979 17th Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

III. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS

C. Maintenance Section Status Report (Page 5)

- Aptos Village County Park got new flags and a new LED flagpole light. Installed LED lights at Aptos Village County Park community building, built by the Cabrillo Host Lions
- Seacliff Village Neighborhood Park was over seeded with native wild flowers to germinate and have a colorful show for this spring and summer. Added some additional split rail fencing to help guide visitors
- Santa Cruz County Court House Annex has on-going landscape projects associated with construction of new HSA building
- Plumbing repairs @ Bert Scott Estate house

Facilities Section Status Report (Page 7)

- Rio Del Mar Esplanade Concessions Opportunity is located at 105 Esplanade in Aptos. Assessor's Parcel Numbers 042-151-21 and 042-151-22

VIII. REGULAR AGENDA – Action Items

- a. Minor correction to Parks and Recreation Commission 2016-2017 Biennial Report
- c. Addition of two maps to report on Harper Street Access to Jose Avenue Park

IX. WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE

Additional written correspondence included at the request of Barbara Knapp:

From: Terry Stockwell <tbsserv@sbcglobal.net>
Subject: Re: Jose Avenue park bridge gates
Date: March 9, 2018 at 1:40:53 PM PST
To: Barbara Knapp <barbara.knapp@gmail.com>, Jeff Gaffney <jeff.gaffney@santacruzcounty.us>
Cc: Karen Nolan <karen.nolandesigns@gmail.com>, John Leopold <John.Leopold@santacruzcounty.us>, Lew Knapp <drknapp@corybantwest.com>, Eric Sturm <Eric.Sturm@santacruzcounty.us>, Claudia Caudle <claudiamarler@yahoo.com>, Jim Danaher <danaher@cruzio.com>, Jeanette Miller <durabug@netzero.com>, "Karen D. Nolan" <nolan@cruzio.com>, Michael Lesh <michae1lg123@yahoo.com>, Terry Welsh <terrywelsh100@comcast.net>, Eric Antonicic <eant1@comcast.net>, Lisa Litten <elizabeth@jsco.net>, Christina Dietrich <crisdietrich@comcast.net>, Jim Anastas <carolvb@earthlink.net>, Jean Brocklebank <jeanbean@baymoon.com>, Michael Lewis <malewis@calcentral.com>, Ron Williams <Hosounds@got.net>, Tanya Haberman <clovergiffen@yahoo.com>, Alice Stockwell <alstockwell@sbcglobal.net>, Kathy Jacobs <1360kathy@gmail.com>, Terri Ryan <Playtime@sbcglobal.net>
Reply-To: Terry Stockwell <tbsserv@sbcglobal.net>

Good Afternoon Mr. John Leopold and Mr. Jeff Gaffney,

My name is Terry Stockwell and I live at the end of Eddy Lane. I have worked with the county parks staff and the county police department since the park opened reporting illegal activity at Jose Avenue Park. The park opened in and around 2002. There are many great items about this park but there is some new disturbing news.

I recently learned that the Jose Ave Park gates allowing access from Harper Court are now being left unlocked and one of the expensive gates was removed by the park staff because of a broken gate hinge. This is amazing and troubling information as these gates have reduced the number of drug and gang activities in the park.

- **The Drug and Gang Problem:** The problem is that during drug and gang activity, the police would be called and the dealers or gang members could exit from the Harper Court Bridge when the police arrived from Eddy Lane and visa versus. This continually happened so no one was ever caught, until the gates were installed in 2007 to assist in policing the park. There was an abundant of illegal activity that occurred at dusk when the park is closed. We found that the gates stopped this activity in the dusk to dawn hours.
- **Noise problem:** It was noted in the past that this bridge is a noisy area caused by the bridge itself and the riparian below. There is a rubber mat that was installed to assist with the noise reduction. There was also the problem of people consuming and selling drugs. When people are on this bridge after dark it echoes into the riparian and into the adjacent homes. When the gates were installed it again stopped this noise problem.
- **The Approval:** Back in 2007 the Live Oak community worked with Jan Beautz, the County Supervisor and Barry Samuels, the County Parks Director and these set of gates were approved of along with the cost of locking and unlocking these gates. This took time to go through the process. This is already a pre - approved project.
- **The Cost:** The county parks pays **\$2,200.00 Per Year to First Alarm** to lock and unlock these gates. **That comes to \$6.27 per day.** It is well worth the cost for community security and safety along with assisting law enforcement.
- **The Costs Moving Forward:** This is already a pre - approved project. It is hard for the Live Oak community to think that the county parks system can not afford \$6.27 a day to take care of an existing park. The county parks has project improvements slated for the coming years and maybe they could scale those projects back so that the parks that exist today are taken care of properly. Here is the link for slated improvements - <http://www.scparks.com/Home/Parks/ParkProjects.aspx>

I along with other neighbors are requesting that the gates be reinstalled as we were never informed of the gate change. I spoke with Eric Sturm, the parks superintendent on 3/5 and it seems as though the decision was made to save \$2,200. First Alarm still locks and unlocks the public restrooms every day so it is not an additional trip for them. Eric and the Director of SC Parks, Jeff Gaffney, together decided that the gates didn't need to be locked without any research. This is not acceptable to the Live Oak Community as this was an approved of item by a past County Supervisor. Jan Beautz was very concerned about public safety. I am hoping Mr. Leopold would honor her legacy.

In conclusion, we all want to work with the county park system to make sure that we have a safe and secure park for everyone to use. The county should be working directly with the Live Oak

Community on issues such as this. It would be in the best interest of everyone in the Live Oak Community that the gate get reinstalled on the park side and that both gates remain locked during the dusk to dawn hours. It is rather odd that the county can not budget \$6.27 per day. If everyone has been watching the news cycle lately they will find that gang activity is on the rise with shootings nearby. I have personally seen a large gang party at Jose Avenue Park on 2/25/2018 at about 2:30PM. I feel that they are staking out their territory. I spoke with an officer on 3/8 and they are patrolling Jose Avenue Park daily for that reason and others as well.

I look forward to hearing from Mr. Leopold and Mr. Gaffney on this matter. I have already heard directly from Mr. Strum and I still feel this was a big mistake without any research.

Sincerely,

Terry B Stockwell and Alice L Stockwell - Residents at 872 Eddy Lane since 2000 - 18 Years

On Friday, March 9, 2018 11:40 AM, Barbara Knapp <barbara.knapp@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Director Gaffney and Supervisor Leopold,

My main concern about the Jose Avenue Park footpath is the noise at night.

The footpath goes between, and very close to, two house on Harper Court. All of the bedrooms in our house are 5 feet from the path; our neighbor has one bedroom close to the path. County code clearly restricts noise at night near buildings used for sleeping and any foot and bike traffic at night disturbs our sleep. The gates on the path decrease foot traffic at night and are necessary for us to get a good nights sleep.

I look forward to a meeting to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Barbara Knapp

On Mar 6, 2018, at 7:09 PM, Jeff Gaffney <jeff.gaffney@santacruzcounty.us> wrote:

Hello Ms. Nolan,

This was not going to be a Parks Commission item but we could look at it being put on their agenda. As for your request for a meeting date, I am out of the state and was not able to give a solid date because of that fact.

I will check schedules for all of the appropriate personnel when I come back to California and plan a meeting date.

Thank you,

Jeff

Jeff Gaffney

Director of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services

On Mar 6, 2018, at 3:25 PM, Karen Nolan <karen.nolandesigns@gmail.com> wrote:

Hello Mr. Leopold & Mr. Gaffney,

It saddens me to know the gate closing between Harper Court and Jose Park are scheduled to be terminated without proper notification to the Live Oak community. This is not a luxury, but rather a public safety that has deterred vandalism, rapes, stabbings, drug dealings, etc. since the gates were approved and installed around 2007. Mr. Leopold's previous predecessor, Jan Beautz, was very instrumental in approving of the gates for public safety! She held public hearings that were highly attended. She went the extra mile during her tenure.

In fact, here is Mr. Leopold's tribute to Jan Beautz.

“Jan was fiercely committed to the 1st district,” Leopold wrote in a tribute that he posted on Facebook. “She ensured that resources were there for the people who live here and fought bad development both before her tenure as supervisor and while on the board.”
“He added, “She leaves an impressive legacy and she will be missed.”

Mrs. Beautz even used her own money to sue the county and won! I admired this level of commitment and not saying you should do the same by any means.

The community of Live Oak is entitled to know the charges for locking these two gates. It is my understanding that First Alarm charges \$40/hour. Years of living next to the path, seeing First Alarm come and go from locking the gates, it takes approximately 10 minutes - 2 times a day to accomplish the task. We know this as First Alarm often parks in the court while locking the gates/public bathrooms to Jose Park before/after locking the bathrooms at Hestwood Park located on Harper Street, one block away from Harper Court.

My point. This is not just a park budget problem. Removing the gates and passing the buck to the sheriff ignores the historical effort put forth by the community and the supervisor to address the community's problem.

Mr. Gaffney, your recent email to Dr. Knapp mentions a meeting you plan on pulling together for all concerned...a ball park date would be appreciated! Will this be before the **7 pm - April 2 meeting of the Parks Commission?**

Kind Regards,

Karen D. Nolan, P.E.

Nolan Designs

karen.nolandesigns@gmail.com

[831-476-4197](tel:831-476-4197)

On Mon, Mar 5, 2018 at 10:51 AM, Jeff Gaffney <Jeff.Gaffney@santacruzcounty.us> wrote:
Hello Mr. Knapp,

I was unaware you left our meeting with expectations that we had the resources to continue to open and close the gates (and repair them) in perpetuity. I shared with you that we have had to make significant cuts for the upcoming budget cycle and specifically said we did not have the resources to continue to pay for your gate services. We have many priorities throughout the county, both financially and physically when it comes to maintaining our parks for the entire community. I do appreciate that you noticed we committed as much of our limited resources for this budget cycle to repair and maintain Jose Park and your advocacy has been successful.

We will continue to work closely with the Sheriff's Office to increase and improve patrols in your community and cul de sac. I will also pull together a meeting with everyone on this email in the coming weeks and so we can discuss other creative options.

Thank you again for your interest and for trying to make our parks better for everyone.

Best regards,

Jeff

Jeff Gaffney

Director of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services

> On Mar 5, 2018, at 9:21 AM, Lewis Knapp <drknapp@corybantwest.com> wrote:

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> Gentlemen,

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> Background:

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> After hearing that the gates closing access to Jose Avenue park from Harper Court at night were to be removed at the order of the Parks Director, Michael Lesh and I met with Parks Director Gaffney to provide historical information as to why the gates were installed and to request that they not be removed and the nightly locking/unlocking not be discontinued.

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> A group of neighbors of Jose Avenue Park attended Supervisor Leopold's Constituent Meeting on Wednesday, February 14th and requested help from him with the Santa Cruz County Department of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services to reconsider this abrupt termination of a practice which deterred vandalism and unauthorized use of the park when the park is closed.

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> While there has been marked activity in repairing deferred maintenance on the bridge and path and removal of bushes which attract and hide unhealthy behavior in the park, there seems to be no change in the gate situation. The parkside gate which was removed is still gone and the Harper Court gate is sporadically attended to by First Alarm.

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> The neighbors of the path would like the broken gate repaired and reinstalled and the gates to continue to be locked as they have been since 2007. The park is closed at night and we would like to continue to discourage traffic through the path to the closed park.

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> My point:

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> It has been over two weeks since this conversation was started and we have not heard from either of you about the situation. The neighbors of the park are still concerned about this issue and wonder what, if anything is happening or is going to happen.

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> Would you please share your current thoughts on this subject with us?

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> Sincerely,

>

> Lewis Knapp

Jose Avenue Park

Legend

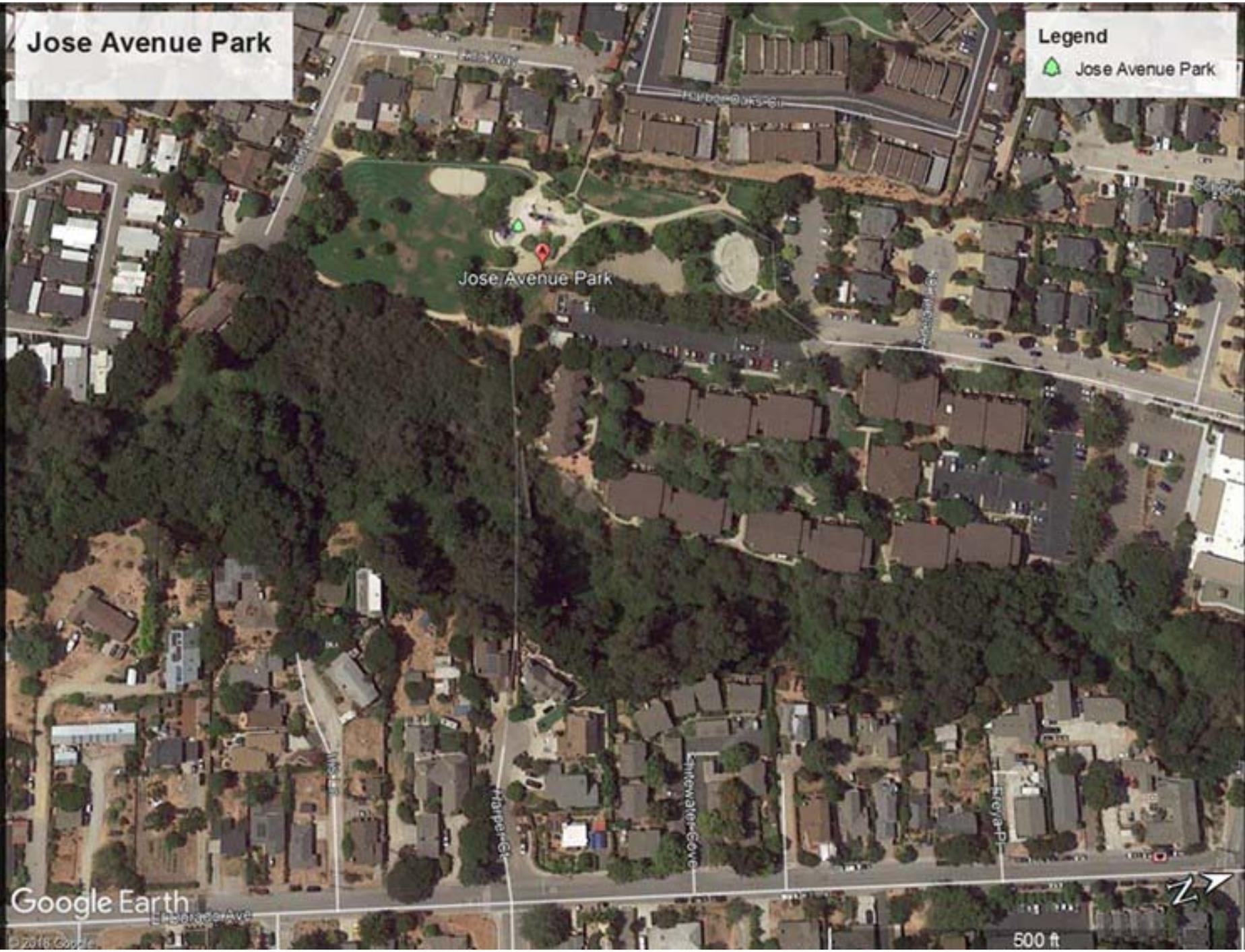
 Jose Avenue Park

Jose Avenue Park

Google Earth

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500 ft



Jose Avenue Park

