

Stakeholders trim down options for trail

BY ALIA WILSON

Options are narrowing as discussions move forward to determine feasible and preferred alternatives to complete a multi-use trail in the Stevens Creek corridor from Mountain View to Cupertino.

The cities of Los Altos, Mountain View, Sunnyvale and Cupertino are all participating in the Stevens Creek Trail Joint Cities Feasibility Study with the goal of linking existing trails and creating some new ones.

The Sunnyvale City Council decided in October 2011 to accept funding for a study that would explore alternative trail alignments.

The total funding for the study is \$155,000 and is coming from a variety of sources, including the cities of involved; Santa Clara Valley Transportation

Authority project readiness initiative funds; and a private donation from the Friends of Stevens Creek Trail.

It was standing-room only at a public meeting Jan. 30, when nearly 200 people filled the Sunnyvale Community Center ballroom.

The meeting was for residents to weigh the best trail options and investigate in more depth the alignments that will go north of The Dalles Avenue. A second meeting in February in Cupertino will address alignments south of The Dalles.

Jack Whitthaus, Sunnyvale transportation and traffic manager, and Jana Sokale, principal environmental planner, as well as city council members and members of the trail's citizens advisory committee, were all present at the meeting to answer questions. Consultants and

policy makers have been meeting since November, evaluating ownership and availability of land, as well as habitat preservation and restoration opportunities.

Discussions at the meeting highlighted possible alignments between Fremont Avenue and Homestead Road, including routes along Fallen Leaf Lane in Los Altos, which would feature bike lanes or perhaps a trail; along Stevens Creek/Bedford Avenue/West Valley Elementary School/Fallen Leaf Lane, which may have a bike boulevard treatment for roadways; along Belleville Way, which would likely have bike lanes with parking removal; and along S. Bernardo Avenue, with bike trail and parking removal plus possible bridges over Fremont Avenue, under Homestead Road and over Highway 280 along Homestead Road.

"Most of the work we

are proposing is on publicly owned land or city right of ways," Sokale said. "What we're bringing to you are those types of treatments that we think are most dear to your hearts that we would like feedback on. If it's not feasible at all, it's not on this map."

Certain challenges with this stretch, according to Sokale, come from crossing the Permanente Creek bypass channel, crossing Highway 85, connecting to neighborhoods and needing to connect to areas that are in the Caltrans right of way.

The next community outreach meeting is scheduled for Feb. 25 at the Cupertino Senior Center, 21251 Stevens Creek Blvd.

For more information about the Stevens Creek Trail study, visit sunnyvale.ca.gov/Departments/PublicWorks/

Dog park

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and this most recent public hearing was no different, as approximately 40 residents took to the microphone to voice one last bit of opposition to the nearly one-acre park. Nearly all residents in opposition were neighbors from nearby housing units.

Public comment lasted more than two hours and the council did not deliberate on the issue until just before 11:30 p.m. The majority of public comments centered on worries about sanitation, traffic, parking, noise, odor, safety and proximity to homes.

"This dog park is right next to the Casa De Anza condos, and for that rea-

son alone I oppose the rezoning," resident Sudhakar Reddy said.

Leelavathy Dhanasekaran and Thyagarajan Radhakrishnan live at Casa De Anza and estimate their home will be roughly 30 feet from the new dog park. The family is worried the proximity of the dog park is going to adversely affect their home life.

"It's going to be a living hell," Dhanasekaran told the Courier before the public hearing. "Every day that [dog] smell is going to be coming into our living room."

The site is located on the west side of Mary Avenue, roughly halfway between the Oaks Shopping Center and the Don Burnett Bicycle-Pedestrian Bridge. The site is an unused triangular parcel of land owned by the

city, which is bordered by the Casa De Anza condominiums and Highway 85 soundwall and is situated across the street from the Glenbrook Apartments.

The park will be approximately 19,000 square feet, with two separate areas for big and small dogs to play. The surrounding chain-link fence will be about 4 feet high. The park will also be double-gated to further prevent dog escapes.

Dogs owners will be required to pick up feces immediately. Disposable mitts, and a covered receptacle will be provided at the park.

The council funded the project during last year's budget creation. The total project will cost no more than \$450,000. Councilman Mark Santoro and Vice Mayor Gilber Wong

successfully convinced enough council colleagues to earmark an additional \$50,000 in project funds to find ways to mitigate the effect on neighbors. City staff will investigate wall construction or other ways to buffer noise and potential odors.

The soil remediation process will see workers remove the lead-contaminated soil and replace it with clean fill, according to a city staff report. The soil will be tested as work progresses to identify the actual boundaries.

Councilman Rod Sinks cast the lone dissenting vote on the matter. Sinks did not feel the site would get enough use and was dismayed that only three residents came to the meeting in support of the dog park in the face of overwhelming opposition.

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