

Hiddenbrooke Maintenance District Advisory Committee (HMDAC)  
Meeting at 2378 Lansdowne Place, May 8, 2013, 7 pm.

In attendance – Mike Baldwin, Joyce Estes, Jane McWhorter, Paul Norberg, Robert Schussel, Charlotte Krastof (guest). Apologies for absence were received from Ginger Bryant and Richard Tirrell.  
Also present for the City of Vallejo, Don Burton

1. Mike welcomed Don and thanked him for attending the HMDAC meeting. Don explained the background to the changes within the LMD whereby it has been subsumed into the City Engineer's Department and is no longer an independent entity within Public Works. Late last year Don was appointed as the Acting Manager and he is currently overseeing a staff of 4, made up of an administrative assistant and 3 Landscape Inspectors. He reports to the City Engineer Jill Mercurio. In outlining his approach to managing the LMD he stated that he would be more "hands on" than his predecessor, more in evidence on site, more proactive in ensuring that the contractor fulfill the precise terms of the contract, and insistent that the landscape inspectors adhere to the same standards. He emphasized that the City Engineer required more transparency and more adherence to the written contract by all parties, including the HMD.
2. Mike stated that there were a number of topics that were of concern to the committee. Foremost was dissatisfaction with the performance of the landscaping contractor Coast Landscape Management Inc. Very many specific complaints have been made by Joyce and Jane, often with photographs. When HMDAC suggested at a meeting in April that Coast's contract not be renewed on July 1, it was stated that Coast should have received warnings of this possibility more than 3 months ahead of the renewal date, i.e. it was too late to initiate a change for 2013/14. We were very disappointed that we had not been advised of this deadline, and that the LMD had not taken the initiative in issuing warnings of possible non-renewal of the contract. It is essential we have better cooperation in the future. Don replied that Coast had received several warnings but his appointment as Manager was relatively recent and by the 3-month deadline he was still monitoring the situation with Hiddenbrooke landscaping. He stated that in future years there would be detailed scrutiny of the performance of the landscapers and extensive discussion with the HMDAC in good time to take any action that was called for.
3. We had heard reports that HMD would no longer maintain the St Andrews monument as it is on Golf Course property. HMD has maintained it for several years and it was the subject of a written agreement between HMDAC, LMD and the GC, though this was probably not signed. We want to continue to maintain this monument and to maintain other high-visibility GC parcels that the Golf Course might otherwise neglect. Don responded that HMD had no authority to undertake work that was not on City-owned land and that was not defined as HMD's responsibility. This is an example of the City Engineer requiring all parties to adhere to their contractual obligations and not to commit HMD to additional expense. There was some discussion as to whether we might recommend HPOA to provide funds for modest landscaping outside HMD, or arrange for a vote by homeowners to include certain additional parcels within HMD. No decision was made.
4. HMDAC has been frustrated at the length of time it takes to get new projects started. We are very keen for the entryway project construction to start this fall and we expressed the hope that the LMD will do everything possible to facilitate this. Mike reported that HPOA supports the proposal to pay for this from HMD reserves, and they also support the proposal to actively seek Interchange funds to rehabilitate the remainder of the Parkway. Don stated that he too is very keen to get the entryway project started and is optimistic of it beginning in September.
5. HMDAC has discussed the need for a mechanism to pay for smaller projects costing perhaps up to \$1,000 without extensive paperwork requirements. These fall into a gray area somewhere between routine maintenance and rehab. Don replied that mechanisms exist for such expenditure and it should not be a problem.
6. The question as to why D&H was still responsible for the irrigation was raised. D&H has a long institutional memory of much of the Hiddenbrooke irrigation but Don expressed dissatisfaction with different contractors

being responsible for landscaping and irrigation. It is his long-term aim to obtain authority to hire an irrigation specialist within the LMD to oversee all irrigation city-wide.

7. Paul raised the issue of financial reports not being forwarded to us. We have received no final budget for 2011/12, no interim figures for the current year and no proposed budget for 2013/14. This information had been provided in the past but due to personnel changes we were no longer receiving it automatically. It was recommended that Mike write to Deborah Lauchner to request up-to-date figures.
8. Don left the meeting and there was an update on the entryway project. Mike presented the latest version of the plans, drawn up by Brian Kilian of Borrecco/Kilian. For the first time we had separate plans for demolition, irrigation and planting. These had been reviewed that morning by MB, JE and JMcW for HMDAC, Don Burton and Brian Kilian. We also had the "spec book" which spells out the details of the contract, and we had projected costs for each category of work. Mike highlighted new features that had been introduced since the last HMDAC meeting, particularly the row of flowering plum trees in front of the white fence on the inbound side, and the "living fence" screening the concrete utility structure. Some areas were still partly undefined, particularly around the v-ditches to the left of and behind the large monument. There was reference to the projected cost of approx. \$60k for the cobblestone in the center median. It was agreed that this was excessive, and there was a consensus that we would like rather more plants and less hardscape. Mike agreed to inform Brian of the committee's preferences.
9. The meeting closed at 9:30.