

A new pump track will be coming to Quarry Park, a project nearly 20 years in the making which will feature multiple courses for riders of varying skill levels, a new picnic area and a bike fix station.

“This track will not just serve those under 18 but it will also serve those in their 20s and 30s and frankly, more importantly it creates an opportunity where parents and kids can go and have a strong family day,” San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Director Nicholas Calderon said during Wednesday’s county planning commission meeting.

In a 4-1 vote the planning commission cleared the way for more than an acre of Quarry Park’s meadow to be transformed into the bike amenity.

The site will include three separate tracks, each with bank turns and consecutive bumps known as rollers. A beginner track will sit south of a course for intermediate and high skilled riders. Circling those two tracks will be a skill training track with stone, wood and metal obstacles.

“While we’re offering all these opportunities for different skilled level riders we also know that it’s going to be an opportunity for older and more technical riders to teach younger and new riders how to ride both the beginning track and also that intermediate track,” Calderon said.

Community interests in a new pump track in the midcoast became prevalent in 2002 when the county was developing its Midcoast Recreation Needs Assessment, Project Planner Michael Schaller told commissioners.

Those interests were reaffirmed in following studies including a 2007 Midcoast Action Plan for Parks and Recreation, a 2016 Granada Community Services District and Park and Rec Facility Priorities plan and a 2016 San Mateo County Visitor Survey.

Community calls for a pump track were again made in 2017 through 2018 while the county developed it’s Quarry Park Master Plan; with five community workshops and events held in total.

“What you see being proposed today has gone through a lengthy community workshop process,” Schaller said.

Still, commissioners raised concerns for potential negative effects of the project, largely centering on parking. During the public comment portion of the meeting, two residents who live near the proposed site claimed park visitors often park their cars in neighborhoods, rather than in the onsite parking lot.

Calderon said the department plans on adding 10 to 12 parking stalls to the existing lot. He also suggested many visitors will ride their bikes to the site, an assertion public commenters refuted, countering that the new course would attract visitors from outside the area.

The proposed course is “not unique,” with similar or larger tracks existing in communities across the Bay Area and another Half Moon Bay track in the works, Calderon said. Ultimately, the Quarry Park Pump Track is intended to be a community amenity, he said, suggesting bikers are unlikely to travel far distances to access the course.

Commissioner Kumkum Gupta also raised concerns for rider safety, questioning Calderon on rule enforcement. Signs detailing track rules will be displayed in the area and staff will monitor the site on a rotating basis but Calderon said riders are also responsible for encouraging good behavior.

“Riders have to hold other riders accountable,” Calderon said. “People understand having these types of amenities is a privilege so you have to be responsible in how you use them.”

Commissioner Mario Santacruz, the lone dissenter of the project, said he was unable to support the project after accounting for community concerns. He also questioned the necessity of the pump track in an area dominated by adults over the age of 50 and suggested a different amenity could have appealed to more racially diverse backgrounds.

Responding to those concerns, Calderon said riders of all ages can enjoy the track and noted the Bulldog Riders, a North Fair Oaks youth bike group organized by the St. Francis Center has long advocated for a similar pump track in their community.

The county Parks and Recreation Department will be sharing the cost of developing the pump track with the Granada Community Services

District which has committed \$100,000 to the project, and the San Mateo County Parks Foundation.

“That in and of itself I believe is a testament to how strongly supported this project is and how desirable this amenity is,” Calderon said.

Supportive dollars helped expedite the track’s development which was set back a year due to the pandemic, Calderon said during a Feb. 4 Parks Commission meeting. The project is also moving ahead of others identified in the Quarry Park Master Plan, due to the funds.

sierra@smdailyjournal.com

(650) 344-5200 ext. 106