

Government

Compromise Stevens Creek Trail Alignment on Council Agenda

Council members have to keep competing interests in mind when deciding where new trail will go.

By [Pam Marino](#) | [Email the author](#) | April 4, 2011



The old driveway from Stevens Creek Boulevard into the Stockmeir property. The trail would most likely come out through the driveway onto the street. Credit [Pam Marino](#)

Where to put a hiking and biking trail on a small piece of triangle-shaped land along [Stevens Creek](#)—surrounded by competing interests from neighbors, golfers, historians, and environmental interests—is the dilemma of the Cupertino City Council this week.

“I think this thing is kind of tricky,” Vice Mayor Mark Santoro said March 15 when the council first tackled trail alignment for the Stevens Creek Corridor Project Phase II. “The problem here is we have a narrow strip of land, and there are a lot of constraints.”

After ticking off at least five issues facing the trail, he quipped, “When you sum all that up, there’s no place to put a trail.”

Representatives from the competing interests are expected to come together Tuesday as the council hammers out a compromise at its meeting at 6:45 p.m. in the [Cupertino Community Hall](#), 10350 Torre Ave.

The compromise on the table would have the trail continue from where it currently stops at the end of the [Blackberry Farm](#) parking lot and next to the seventh green of the [Blackberry Golf Course](#), running on the east side of Stevens Creek, until the eighth green, then crossing a bridge and running on the west side of the creek between the second and third rows of orange trees in the Stockmeir orchard, past the original Stockmeir home and ending at Stevens Creek Boulevard.

Several issues kept the City Council from deciding on an alignment at the March 15 meeting, sending staff to investigate alternatives:

- Concerns from golfers about interference between trail users and golfers; an alternative bridge location taking users away from the course puts them too close to homes in The Meadows development.
- Environmental concerns over keeping trail users far enough away from the creek so as to protect the riparian habitat; there are also concerns about removing trees depending on which bridge location is chosen.
- A desire by the [Cupertino Historical Society](#) and others to protect the orange orchard so it can one day become a “legacy farm,” which would be used as

an educational and historical site.

- A 2005 council decision that would keep the trail at least 100 feet away from homes in [The Meadows](#); the homeowners association is opposed to that vote being overturned.

City staff members met with the [Stocklmeir Task Force](#) on March 28 to discuss the issues and discuss a potential compromise. The task force, created two years ago to bring stakeholders together to decide on future plans for the 5-acre orange orchard, agreed with city staff on the current compromise proposal.

“It’s no doubt the alignment The Meadows would most prefer,” past association president John Buenz said in an interview in regards to the compromise.

Cupertino Historical Society president Darryl Stow agreed that a trail running as close to the creek as possible is desired by the organization.

“We’d like to keep the trail out of the orange orchard as much as possible,” he said.

The Stocklmeir home, which housed four generations of the family before it was sold to the city in 1999, is considered too unstable to be used, except as an historical exhibit, Stow said.
