

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
October 10, 2003**

Present:

Bruce Bentley, Chair
Terry Holme
Kate Pflaumer

Excused:

Joanna Grist
Sarah Neilson

Absent:

James Fearn

Staff:

Ken Bounds, Superintendent
Sandy Brooks, Park Board Coordinator

Chair Bruce Bentley called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. A quorum of the Board was not present; the agenda consent items will be approved at the October 23 meeting.

Superintendent's Report

Parks Superintendent Ken Bounds reported on the following:

Nations in Bloom Award: On October 6, Seattle took second place and a gold certificate for the 200,000-1,000,000 population category in the Nations in Bloom competition in Apeldoorn, Netherlands. This annual international competition invites cities from all over the world to participate. Its objective is to encourage the best practices, innovation, and leadership that lead to a vibrant, environmentally sustainable, and lively community with a high quality of life. Nations In Bloom recognizes cities for their achievements in five categories: Environmentally Sensitive Practices, Enhancement of the Landscape, Heritage Management, Community Involvement, and Planning for the Future.

Seattle Works Awards: Several Park Department staff were finalists in the citywide Seattle Works Awards. Mark Plunkett, Seattle Aquarium staff, won an award in the "Vision" category. Mark came before the Board during the June 2003 public hearing on the Marine Park Marine Reserves.

Fees are Restructured: The Associated Recreation Council held its annual meeting on October 8, with a very successful discussion on restructuring fees. For the first time, fees will be consistent at all community centers across the city for the before- and after-school programs.

Smith Cove Park Acquisition: In an action that achieves a long-term goal of the City and the Magnolia community, Seattle Parks and Recreation acquired 7.3 acres of property at Smith Cove in late August from the U.S. Navy. Purchase of the property was funded by \$2.2 million from the Pro Parks Levy, \$1 million from the Shoreline Park Improvement Fund, and \$2.7 million from King County.

Construction Projects Underway: The International District Village Square project, located on Dearborn Avenue, is underway and is progressing well. The bid for Yesler Community Center, estimated at \$4 million, came in at \$4.7 million. Department staff are currently making re-design decisions and re-allocating other funds. The project will go back out for bid next month. This is the first large project to come in over estimate during 2003. Bids were opened this week for the Golden Gardens Bathhouse project, which was 10% under estimate. Construction is now under way at both Jefferson and High Point Community Centers, and will begin soon at Sand Point.

Green Lake Alum: The consultants have finished the draft Integrated Phosphorus Management Plan and submitted it to the Washington Department of Ecology for review. This will be the basis of our permit coverage under the federal NPDES program. Parks will host a public meeting on Thursday, October 16, at Green Lake Community Center, with more than 12,000 meeting invitations mailed to the communities surrounding Green Lake. Staff are also meeting with interested community organizations, which are mostly very supportive. In the meantime, public complaints have been increasing about the foul smell of the lake water. Weekly testing of the water continues.

Day of Caring: Comcast and CityYear of King County partnered with Rainier Beach Community Center on October 4 for a "Day of Caring." More than 70 volunteers from Comcast, City Year, and Rainier Beach Community Center worked on a variety of tasks including cleanup, touch-up painting, and technical support in the computer lab.

Summer Concerts at Pier: The Department received more than \$240,000 in profits from its contract with One Reel for the successful summer concert series.

Starbuck Grant Awards: Starbucks granted ten \$10,000 awards for parks at an October 4 celebration. Seattle Parks and Recreation received many of the awards. Grant recipients are:

- University Playground Art Fence - Roosevelt Neighbors Association
- Beer Sheva Playground Development
- Friends of Annie's Playground (at Meadowbrook)
- Benefit Park Playground Renovation
- Cowen Park Playground Renovation - Friends of Cowen Park
- Longfellow Creek Educational Site Improvements
- Roanoke Path Improvements
- Whittier Park New Park Development

South Park CC Fall Leadership Program: Twenty young people signed up for this program, which trains youth who are interested in serving on the Department's councils.

Northwest Book Fest: This annual event will be held at Sand Point Magnuson Park the weekend of October 18.

Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience

Bruce explained that the general public comment portion of the agenda is reserved for topics that have not had or are not scheduled for a public hearing. Testimony is limited to three minutes per speaker.

Two people signed up to give testimony.

Anne Knight: She is a member of the Olmsted Centennial. The Centennial Board would like to leave a legacy, after the year-long Olmsted Centennial celebration, and have reviewed different ideas for signage to designate the boulevards. The Board believes that its idea - which is to change the background color of signs designating boulevards from their current green to a brown background - would be easy to implement. Anne distributed photos of current signs and suggested revisions. The Board is donating \$3,000 seed money to get the project off the ground and hopes implementation will begin in 2003.

Nancy Malmgren: Nancy distributed a copy of the Washington State Beach Environmental Assessment, Communication, & Health Program. She also distributed a flyer titled "Is your local beach safe?" which lists four upcoming events where the public can discuss this question. Sponsored by the Washington State Department of Health and the Washington State Department of Ecology, the public will be asked to help decide which 60 beaches out of 500+ along Puget Sound and the Washington coast should have their water quality monitored. Nancy suggested that Carkeek Park be one of those monitored and discussed the unsafe water quality at Carkeek Park and Pipers' Creek. She believes that some people are still not getting the message that this beach is not safe, as people are still harvesting clams there. She urged that signage noting the problems with the effluence at this park be monitored and she hopes that the Parks Department and Board will approve the monitoring.

At a watershed meeting she attended earlier in the day, she found out that the permits for West Point and Carkeek Park will now allow more flows in CSO's for stormwater. Nancy said that King County is required to take regular readings of the creek system, the beach, and shellfish at Carkeek because of the wastewater treatment facility located there. They are now increasing discharges from 8 to between 12 and 14 yearly. This is news to her and her organization. She asked if the Board is aware of this change.

Nancy urges that saltwater beaches be classified as environmental conservation beaches, rather than as navigation and recreation beaches. She will write a letter requesting this change as an ordinance.

Discussion/Recommendation: Recommendation to Make the Northacres Park and Jose Rizal Off-Leash Pilot Areas Permanent Elements Discussion/Recommendation

Because a quorum was not present, this discussion/recommendation is re-scheduled to the October 23 meeting.

BRIEFING: Idle Policy and Procedure

Adam Cole, Parks Department Environmental Stewardship staff, came before the Board to give a briefing on the Department's vehicle idling policy and procedures. The Board received a written briefing, included below:

Written Briefing

Idle Reduction Team

Program Statement, 4/01/03

Our Goal:

1) To develop, implement, and maintain an "Idle Reduction" program at Parks (a "demo-pilot" for other depts to share) that enables staff to make more informed choices regarding vehicle idling, with a goal of reducing unnecessary vehicle idling (as defined above).

Our Role:

- 1) Work as a team to design and implement a program aimed at reducing or eliminate unnecessary vehicle idling at Parks (scope of program will be limited to on-road vehicles and will not include vehicles commonly referred to as "equipment"...such as tractors, mowers, Kabotas, etc...).
- 2) Info share with all Parks staff, other city departments, and organizations involved in fleet and air quality issues as they relate to vehicle idling.
- 3) Each team member will be responsible for 1) communicating our program to fellow staff as requested, 2) monitoring and reviewing program in the field, and 3) reporting back to the team as needed and requested.

Our Program:

1. Scope of the "Idle Reduction" program is limited to on-road vehicles operated for Parks purposes. This 2003 program will not include vehicles commonly referred to as "equipment"...such as tractors, mowers, Kabotas, etc... These items, as well as gas powered hand held "equipment" such as push mowers, backpack leaf blowers, and line trimmers, may be considered for a second phase of this program in 2004.
2. As of April 2004 we will move forward on the following program elements:
 - a. Develop an Idle Reduction Policy and Procedure that set limits on vehicle idling at Parks.
 - a. Develop educational materials that encourage/enable behavior change and support the Policy and Procedure.
 - b. Develop Idle Reduction program "exit" signs at maintenance yards reminding staff of program goals.
 - c. Develop program "prompt" stickers for inside crew cabs.

- d. ID resources/partners that can visit crew meetings and answer questions about idle reduction.
- 3. Establish a timetable and site schedule for info distribution, meetings, and sign installation.

Subject: Fleet Vehicles – Cars and Trucks: Appropriate Idle Times		Number 060-P 2.8.3.3
		Effective May 31, 2003
		Supersedes N/A
Approved:	Department: Parks and Recreation	Page 1 of 3

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 To establish guidelines for improving air quality through the elimination of unnecessary idling of Parks cars and trucks. Limiting car and truck idling supports cleaner air, healthier work environments, the efficient use of city resources, the public's enjoyment of park properties and programs, conservation of natural resources, and good stewardship practices.

2.0 ORGANIZATIONS AFFECTED

2.1 Seattle Parks and Recreation

3.0 REFERENCES

- 3.1 City of Seattle Environmental Management Program 1999
- 3.2 Mayor's Environmental Action Agenda 2002
- 3.3 Parks and Recreation Policy and Procedure Number 060-P 8.13, 2002 "Environmental Policy"
- 3.4 US Clean Air Act 1990
- 3.5 RCW 46.61.300 "Starting Parked Vehicles"
- 3.6 RCW 46.61.600 "Unattended motor vehicle"

4.0 AFFECTED VEHICLES AND OPERATIONS

4.1 This policy applies to the operation of any Parks owned or leased car or truck, or any personal car or truck used by staff or registered volunteers for official Parks purposes.

5.0 DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 Power take off (PTO) mode occurs when the main vehicle engine power is being used to power vehicle systems other than the wheels. Uses of PTO mode include, but are not limited to, boom operation and hydraulic pump pressure generation.
- 5.2 Vehicle idling is the running of a car or truck engine while the car or truck is stopped

for a foreseeable period of time and not in a PTO (or similar) mode.

5.3 "Cars and Trucks" includes other vehicle types such as, but not limited to, vans, mini-vans, station wagons, hatchbacks, SUVs.

5.4 Alternatively Fueled Vehicles are cars and trucks that run on power sources other than unleaded gasoline or diesel, such as, but not limited to, propane, natural gas, and electricity.

6.0 POLICY

6.1 MANUFACTURERS' GUIDELINES

6.1.1 Always follow the vehicle manufacturer's guidelines for idling unless otherwise advised by Fleets and Facilities staff.

6.2 INITIAL WARM-UP

6.2.1 Diesel Fueled Cars and Trucks:

6.2.1.1 Idle times up to 10 minutes are allowed for diesel fueled cars or trucks during their initial shift warm-up, and at subsequent times when the car or truck is being restarted after a prolonged period of shut down that results in vehicle conditions similar to those prior to initial shift warm-up.

6.2.2 Unleaded or Alternatively Fueled Cars and Trucks:

6.2.2.1 Idle times up to five minutes are allowed for unleaded fueled cars or trucks during their initial shift warm-up and at subsequent times when the car or truck is being restarted after a prolonged period of shut down that result in vehicle conditions similar to those prior to initial shift warm-up.

6.3 OPERATION OF CARS AND TRUCKS IN THE FIELD

6.3.1 Diesel Fueled Cars and Trucks:

6.3.2 No operator shall unnecessarily idle the engine of a diesel fueled car or truck that is stopped for a foreseeable period of time in excess of five minutes.

6.3.3 Diesel fueled cars and trucks should only be turned off after a proper amount of time has expired to allow the proper circulation and cooling of engine oil (and/or other engine fluids), not to exceed five minutes.

6.3.4 Unleaded or Alternatively Fueled Vehicles:

6.3.5 No operator shall unnecessarily idle the engine of an unleaded fueled car or truck that is stopped for a foreseeable period of time in excess of 1 minute.

6.3.6 Operators making frequent and multiple stops that require their car or truck to be stationary for time periods up to three minutes may idle up to three minutes during these circumstances.

6.3.7 Never leave keys in an unattended car or truck.

7.0 EXCEPTIONS

7.1 This policy does not apply to situations where engine power is necessary for an associated power need such as, but not limited to, electrical or pressure generation, inverter or tool use, hoist or winch use, or lift gate or boom operation.

7.2 The health and safety of staff and park users, the safe and efficient use of vehicles and tools, and the wise use of city resources should not be compromised by turning off the engine of any motor vehicle.

7.3 Cars and trucks may exceed any idle limit for the purpose of defogging, defrosting, or de-icing windows. Idling must end once fog, frost, or ice conditions have been eliminated. When window ice or frost conditions are present, attempts to remove the ice or frost from windows with a scraper must take place before idling begins.

7.4 In the field, staff may idle a vehicle for up to 15 minutes for the purpose of getting warm and/or dry if indoor accommodations are not available in the immediate work area. To reduce carbon monoxide accumulation in the cab, window(s) must remain partially open throughout.

7.5 This policy does not apply to vehicles being serviced or inspected.

7.6 Appropriate Fleets and Facilities staff may exempt cars or trucks from idle limits as needed or requested.

7.6.1 An employee will take his or her car or truck to a Fleets and Facilities facility for inspection and repair if the performance, efficiency, and safe operation of any car or truck have been compromised by operator adherence to the idle time limits stated in this policy.

8.0 PURCHASE AND USE OF IDLE REDUCING EQUIPMENT

8.1 All attempts shall be made to purchase equipment that will 1) eliminate the need for excessive engine idling and 2) save money through reduced fuel use. Appropriate purchases may include, but are not limited to, portable gas or diesel powered generators rather than inverters.

9.0 PARKS FLEET COORDINATOR ASSISTANCE

9.1 For questions regarding this policy, please call the Fleet Coordinator or an Environmental Stewardship Coordinator for assistance.

Verbal Briefing

Adam stated that the Parks Department has taken the City lead to eliminate unnecessary idle times for vehicles and wants to be the citywide model for this good environmental stewardship. Over the years, both Parks staff and the public have identified unnecessary idling as a problem. In 1999, the City approved an Environmental Management Plan that included reducing fossil fuels. The City set a goal of trying to reduce the use of fossil fuels by 5% by 2005. Public safety departments (police and fire), which have a number of large pieces of equipment, may not be able to bring their consumption down that much. To offset this, other departments that have heavy equipment (such as Parks, City Light, and Transportation) are asked to bring their percentage down by 8%. The easiest way to make these reductions is by educating staff.

Board Discussion

Kate asked if it is common for Park Department vehicles to idle vehicles for more than 15 minutes. Adam described instances of trucks idling to warm up air brake stems or booms. Sometimes vehicles have been left running near a building entry or HVAC unit, and the fumes from the vehicles affect those inside. Kate asked to what extent would this policy

decrease idle time. Adam said one way to measure is if a decrease in fuel use occurs. Also, the Department used to get letters from citizens complaining about trucks running for long amounts of time, sometimes with no one in the trucks. In the last six months, no complaint letters about this have been received.

As part of the policy, each vehicle has stickers on its dashboard displaying idling time guidelines specific to that vehicle. Environmental Seward staff have also prepared a list of Frequently Asked Questions and those have been distributed to staff.

Terry asked if the 8% reduction goal factors in the purchase of additional vehicles. Adam answered yes, that regardless of the number of vehicles, the fuel use must be reduced by 8%. The City is currently reducing its fleet and the Parks Department has reduced its fleet by 40 vehicles. It is also phasing out SUVs (sport utility vehicles), introducing Segways, and purchasing new vehicles that meet fuel-efficiency standards.

Terry asked if the next step in the idle reduction policy will affect equipment such as leaf blowers, Kubotas, etc. Adam said the next step is a "fall" reminder to staff of the idle policy for winter equipment operations. Following that, off-road vehicles (which include the leaf blowers and other hand-held equipment) will be looked at. So far, idling of this equipment has not been a problem; however, there are air quality issues that can be assessed.

The policy reads "in the field, staff may idle a vehicle for up to 15 minutes for the purpose of getting warm and/or dry if indoor accommodations are not available in the immediate work area." Terry asked to what degree and how will the Department monitor people getting in their vehicles and running the engines to stay warm? Adam said that crew chiefs will recommend their crews go to the nearest community center or other Department facility to warm up. Idling the vehicles to stay warm is to be an exception and not a common occurrence.

The bottom line is to get staff to think about their behavior, how to use resources, and how that use affects the environment. Environmental staff also plan to work with tour buses and other large vehicles that visit the parks to encourage them to incorporate the idling policy.

Bruce commented that his employer (a large recycling company) is working on this issue, too. His company has 400 pieces of diesel equipment that sometimes run 30-45 minutes with no one in them. He suggested that the Idle Policy be shared with the various Advisory Councils that sponsor many field trips for the Department.

The Board thanked Adam for the great job on this presentation.

Briefing: Sign Posting on Boulevard Utility Poles

Susan Golub, Parks Department Strategic Advisor, came before the Board to give an update on the Department's policy on posting signs on boulevard utility poles. The Board received a written briefing, included below.

Written briefing

Issue

In 1994 the City enacted a law that prohibited posting signs on utility poles on streets throughout the City. This law was overturned by the Court of Appeals in 2002. In light of this ruling, what should the Department's policy be regarding the posting of signs on poles along park boulevards?

Current Department Policy

The Park Code prohibits posting signs, posters and notices on structures within City parks, except as authorized by the Superintendent. This prohibition includes posting on utility poles along park boulevards. (SMC 18.12.050) Department policy also limits signs that Parks and Rec. can place within its own parks.

The Court of Appeals Decision

The 1994 utility pole posting ban was enacted because of safety concerns for utility workers (the signs and the staples attaching them to the poles endangered workers climbing the poles), the potential fire hazard from the thick layer of signs that were accumulating on poles, and because the proliferation of signs was creating a visual blight. The law banning sign posting was challenged in court. The trial court found in favor of the City, the Court of Appeals did not. The City is appealing this ruling to the State Supreme Court.

The Court of Appeals concluded that "posting temporary signs on the portion of poles, within reach of pedestrians, adjacent to streets and sidewalks is a traditional public forum" and therefore constitutionally protected speech. (*City of Seattle v. Mighty Movers*, p.1 and 4) The ruling is silent about utility poles along park boulevards.

When the sign posting ban was overturned, the City adopted rules that govern how and where signs are permitted on poles on City streets. Such rules were recommended in the Court decision as a means to address the City's sign posting concerns. The rules limit how high on the poles signs can be posted, specify how the signs can be affixed to the poles (no big staples), and limit the stacking of signs atop one another.

Applicability of the Decision to Park Boulevards

A Boulevard is Different than a Street: The Court describes the environment of utility poles as a "multitude of business signs, billboards, and flashing neon advertisements that invariably surround the poles." (*City of Seattle v. Mighty Movers*, p.11) Clearly, this is not the environment of utility poles along park boulevards. There are no business signs and billboards and neon advertisements are prohibited. (SMC18.12.050) Because of the very different environment of park boulevard utility poles from the environment of street poles as described in the decision, it is possible to conclude that the Court was not including park boulevards in its definition of street.

Aesthetics Matter: The Court rejected the City's argument that aesthetics are a "compelling government interest" in banning signs on poles. However, the aesthetics

argument applies very differently to park boulevards. "Natural beauty, recreational opportunities and peaceful repose" (SMC18.12.025) are the reasons parks and park boulevards exist; and these are the reasons why a roadway is designated park boulevard and not city street. It seems reasonable to conclude that the Court would have found aesthetics a compelling argument in support of a sign ban when applying the criterion only to park boulevards.

Limits on Department Sign Posting: As evidence that there is no compelling government reason to ban posting on utility poles, the Court of Appeals cited the exception to the ban that allowed the City to post its own regulatory signs and notices. The Court argued that the signs allowed to be posted by the City on poles could create danger for utility workers, fire hazard and visual blight, the very problems that the City was trying to prohibit with the ban. However, there is a different situation with park boulevards because the Park Code and Department policy limit all postings, including those of the Department.

Department Policy 4.2 states that for park facilities:

Signs will be kept to a minimum and will not be posted except when the signs clearly serve a need to ensure safety, to improve the pleasure of users, to promulgate rules, or to inform the public (hours of operation, times of closure).

Ensuring safety (speed limits, directional signs) is the only reason among those listed in the policy that applies to park boulevards. Therefore, the Department has significantly restricted its own placement of signs on park property to only those circumstances when the signs clearly serve a public safety need. This is much more restrictive than the exception to the posting ban the City allowed itself, and provides further proof that boulevards are different from streets.

Traditional Use of Boulevards

History of Boulevards: The Court of Appeals relied on the fact that people have traditionally used utility poles along City streets for sign posting as the basis for overturning the City's ban: posting signs on the poles is a traditional public forum, and thus constitutionally protected speech. The history of park boulevards provides additional support for carving out boulevards from being subject to the Court's opinion.

One hundred years ago, in October 1903, the City adopted the Olmsted Plan for Seattle's parks. The dominant feature of the Olmsted Plan was a twenty mile landscaped boulevard linking most of the existing and planned parks and greenbelts within the City system. The Olmsted Plan designated eighteen separate boulevards, most of which exist today. This is John Charles Olmsted's description of the boulevard plan:

The general scheme is to start the driveway on the shores of Lake Washington, carrying it around to Lake Union, through the University grounds, thence through the valley to Green Lake and around the shore to Woodland Park, and from there to the military reservation at Four Lawton [now Discovery Park].

As Valerie Easton noted in a Seattle Times article on the Olmsted legacy: "The Olmsted designs for the City remain remarkably intact." Even earlier, in 1893, the Seattle City Council recommended developing Lake Washington Boulevard. These early City and park planners knowingly developed a special park road system that would differ from city streets. The boulevards were to be landscaped connectors between and through parks and greenbelts within the city system, and were themselves linear parks.

Traditional prohibition on sign posting: Placing signs on utility poles along park boulevards has not been a traditional or legal use. In fact, the first prohibition against placing signs on poles along streets and boulevards occurred in 1954:

It is unlawful to post, stick, tack, stamp, paint or otherwise affix or cause the same to be done, any notice, placard, sign, bill, card, poster, advertisement or other device designed to attract the attention of the public, to or upon any sidewalk, crosswalk, curb or curbstone, pavement, lamp post, electric light, telephone, telegraph or trolley line pole, hydrant, or shade tree or tree box in any parking strip;... Ordinance 83593, Nov. 23, 1954.

A section was added to the Park Code in 1977 which specifically applied the earlier law to parks:

Except as authorized by the Superintendent, it is unlawful to use, place or erect any sign board, sign, billboard, bulletin board, post, pole or device of any kind for advertising or notification in any park, or to attach any notice, poster, sign wire, rod or card to any tree, shrub, railing or post or structure within any park; or to place or erect in any park a structure of any kind. Ordinance 106615, July 29, 1977

The Department has no history of the Superintendent authorizing posting on park poles. Prohibition against signs on poles has been the history/tradition along park boulevards.

Practical Issues with Signs on Utility Poles

Maintenance: While the sign ban was in effect, the City had designated staff policing the poles, removing signs and assessing violators. Since the ban was lifted, coinciding with an era of very tight City budgets, there is no staff assigned to the task of enforcing the sign posting regulations. Complaints and violations are increasing. Certain companies who hire people to post signs are regularly and flagrantly ignoring the regulations, especially the height restriction. It appears they are well aware that the City does not have enforcement staff to police their activities, or maintenance staff to remove the illegal signs. The same maintenance/policing situation would exist for Parks if we were to open up our park boulevards to sign posting.

Proposed Department Policy: Based on the many differences between park boulevards and City streets, and upon the historic character and traditional use of park boulevards, the staff recommendation is to retain the Park Code's existing prohibition on the placement of signs on utility poles along park boulevards, with the exception of signs authorized by the Superintendent.

Verbal Briefing

Susan also gave a brief verbal review of the policy, followed by a question and answer session.

Board Discussion

Kate asked how the policy is enforced. Susan said Parks staff removes any signs on boulevard poles they come across but there is no dedicated staff just to remove the signs. Ken said the company responsible for posting the signs is also notified. This also helps with police enforcement. Terry asked is there is a master map of boulevards. Ken answered yes.

Ken stated that this is not a change in the Park Department's policy. The briefing before the Park Board is to bring the policy to both the Board's and the public's attention.

The Board thanked Susan for the update.

BRIEFING: Shoreline Inventory and Habitat Assessment Study

Kevin Stoops, Parks Department project manager, came before the Board to give a briefing on the Shoreline Inventory and Habitat Assessment Study. The Board received a written briefing, included below, and a verbal briefing.

Written Briefing

Earlier this year Seattle Parks and Recreation retained Anchor Environmental to prepare an inventory of shoreline parks and to assess their potential for salmon habitat restoration. Included in such an effort were research into salmon habitat needs, existing conditions of park shorelines, existing recreational use, and potential for habitat restoration. The consultants identified priorities for conservation of certain shorelines, and habitat restoration potential for others. Priority restoration sites included Rainier Beach Lake Park, Beer Sheva Park and Martha Washington Park, as well as Seward Park and Pritchard Island Beach Park.

Background

Salmon utilize Seattle Park shoreline's as they migrate as juveniles from the Cedar River, Duwamish River, Green-Duwamish River and smaller streams, and then return to them as adults. Juvenile fish require availability of prey, refuge from predators, migration corridors, physiological refuge and high-energy refuse. In general, the juvenile fish favor environments with small substrate, shallow nearshore gradients, overhead vegetative cover, unarmored banks, and no barriers to migration. Large numbers of juvenile salmon emerge from the Cedar River system each winter and spring and pass through Lake Washington before migrating to sea via the Lake Washington Ship Canal. While certain salmon species make this migration rather quickly, Chinook salmon typically rear for

some time in nearshore areas in the south end of Lake Washington before they proceed to sea. Extensive research on Chinook behaviors and habitat needs is underway by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service as part of the Seattle District Army Corps of Engineers' Lake Washington general investigations, an effort funded in part by Seattle Public Utilities and others.

Methods

The consultants undertook field investigations of park shorelines in Lake Washington, the Lake Washington Ship Canal, and Puget Sound to identify and evaluate habitat parameters such as slope, armoring, substrate, vegetation and woody debris; as well as built features such as piers, boat ramps, swimming beaches, bulkheads and other park improvements. Habitat improvement opportunities and constraints were weighed to identify potential for habitat improvement. The habitat improvement potential was then evaluated in light of landscape considerations to identify improvement potential. This was then compared to restoration potential that was derived from consideration of park use opportunities and constraints. As an example, while removal of bulkheads at Stan Sayres Park was identified as a habitat improvement potential, the park use constraint related to the site's use as a boat ramp meant that it was considered a no-action site. Where a conflict did not exist, priorities were assigned. In cases where habitat was in good condition, conservation was indicated.

Results

Of the various parks studied, three were assigned very high priority for habitat improvement: Rainier Beach Lake Park (marina), Beer Sheva Park, and Martha Washington Park. Two additional parks identified as high priority were recommended for improvement as well: Seward Park and Pritchard Island Beach. All of these have substantial potential to contribute juvenile salmon habitat based on known fish use areas relative to Cedar River Chinook populations. Sites identified as already possessing excellent habitat included Colman Park, East Montlake Park, Matthews Beach and Discovery Park. All of these parks have unarmored, gently sloping shorelines, detritus-rich substrates and overhanging vegetation and woody debris. Several other parks with high conservation priority were also identified.

Discussion

At this time there are several efforts underway to implement the results of the study as follows:

Seward Park: A Salmon Habitat Improvement project, financed by the Shoreline Park Improvement Fund, has provided for nearshore substrate enhancement along the park's northeast shore. Old concrete bulkheads have been removed along the south shore, and native trees and shrubs planted. A grant from the King Conservation District will provide additional work along the park's northwest shore.

Beer Sheva Park: Seattle Public Utilities and the Army Corps of Engineers have undertaken initial studies related to "daylighting" Mapes Creek and restoring wetlands and the shoreline at Atlantic City Park.

Rainier Beach Lake Park: The existing moorage is in poor condition, needs extensive renovation to continue in operation, and produces essentially no revenue. The adjacent undeveloped portion of this site is one of the identified conservation areas. Removal of the moorage is recommended as a habitat project to pursue with future Shoreline Park Improvement Fund monies.

Martha Washington Park: Existing rock bulkheads and groins could be removed, the shoreline regraded and plantings added. Such work is also recommended with future Shoreline Park Improvement Fund monies or possibly as a project to be pursued with the Army Corps of Engineers.

Verbal Briefing

Ken gave a brief introduction of this assessment. Kevin displayed a large map of the waterways and a restoration prioritization flow chart. He also displayed aerial photos of Seward Park, Beer Sheva Park, Rainier Beach Lake Park, and Martha Washington Park and described the proposed work.

Board Discussion

Following Kevin's review of the written briefing and aerial photos, the Board asked a number of questions. Terry asked several questions about the work at Pritchard Island Beach. Kevin described the work.

Ken said that an interesting aspect that came out of the report is the priority of where the important habitats are. Some small projects have been done on Lake Washington Boulevard and some work is scheduled for Magnuson Park, however, the study showed that the bulk of the work is needed in the south shorelines.

Terry said he lives next to Colman and walks Seward Park 12-15 times yearly. He has watched the progress of shoreline restoration at Colman and believes that it creates a severe separation of people from the water. He prefers the shoreline at Seward Park, which has a good connection between the pathway and water. Kevin described the planned work, which would be in clusters and not a continuous length. Ken said the Department is reviewing work that occurred previously and is working to achieve balance between salmon habitat and recreational uses of the shoreline.

Nancy Malmgren shared a grant application form with Kevin to apply for a \$50,000 grant for Seward Park by October 15. She discussed the history of Seward Park. Kevin said that the work performed there in 1990 created the ideal habitat for sculpins (bullheads), predator fish that eat baby salmon.

Ken said the shoreline policy gives the Department lots of good direction, which will evolve into best policy practices. The Department's landscaping crews are also incorporating this policy into their work. Kevin agreed and said that the crews no longer cut down everything along the shorelines.

Terry asked about the change in use at the marina. Ken said this will come before the Park Board. There was a short discussion on the marina. Terry asked if the marina is near the end of its lifespan. Kevin said that the Department's major maintenance program estimated that \$300,000 worth of repairs is needed. The structure cannot last much longer. The shoreline construction is slated to begin in summer of 2005.

Terry said that people who walk around the parks appreciate the shoreline work that is being done. Signage explaining the work is posted.

Nancy Malmgren asked about the consultant fee and Kevin answered that the fee was \$50,000 for the overall study. Kevin gave more detail/description on the process.

Bruce thanked Kevin for the great presentation and commented that he is constantly amazed at the Parks Departments' varied projects and undertakings.

Park Board Business

The Arboretum Master Plan Implementation is scheduled for the Board's October 23 agenda. Usual Board procedures are that a briefing and public hearing is held at one meeting, followed by a discussion and recommendation to the Superintendent at the next meeting (generally two weeks later.) The Board received a letter from Fritz Hedges, Acting Deputy Superintendent and member of the Arboretum and Botanic Garden Committee, which is overseeing the Implementation, requesting the Board to do all four steps at its October 23 meeting. The Board agreed that it would first hear the briefing and public hearing on the 23rd, and then make a decision that night as to whether it is ready to discuss the project and make a recommendation.

All Board members are scheduled to be present for the October 23 meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Bruce Bentley, Chair