

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners
<http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkboard/>
Meeting Minutes
June 22, 2006

Board of Park Commissioners:

Present:

Angela Belbeck
Jack Collins
Terry Holme
Debbie Jackson
Kate Pflaumer, Chair
Jackie Ramels

Excused:

Amit Ranade

Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:

Ken Bounds, Superintendent
B.J. Brooks, Deputy Superintendent
Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Commission Chair Pflaumer called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. **Commissioner Holme moved and Commissioner Belbeck seconded approval of the Acknowledgment of Correspondence, the June 22 agenda, and the June 8 minutes, as corrected.**

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Bounds reported on the following items. For more information on Seattle Parks and Recreation, please visit the web pages at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/>.

Summer Guides: The Superintendent distributed a copy of the Seattle Parks' Summer Guide to each Commissioner. With the recent great summer weather, many parks are experiencing crowds of visitors. For a printable copy of the guide, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/events/summerGuide.pdf>

Wading Pools Open: 14 wading pools and water spray sites opened for the summer this past week. The remaining 14 locations will open next week. For more information on the wading pools, including all 28 locations, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Aquatics/wadingpools.htm>

Off-leash Areas in Magnolia and Queen Anne: Parks is considering dog off-leash areas in the Magnolia and/or Queen Anne neighborhoods. Two public meetings are scheduled for June 27 and June 29. For more information on this proposal, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/projects/OLA.htm>

Aquarium Recommended for Grant Funding: The Aquarium was notified by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) that it has been recommended to be funded \$600,000 by NOAA's Ocean Literacy grant. The grant will be awarded over a five-year period beginning September 2006. For more information on the Ocean Literacy grant, see http://environment.cornell.edu/action.php?resource_id=836. In addition, the Seattle Aquarium Society announced a \$1.5 million grant award from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. This is the largest private grant in the Aquarium's history and will be used for the New Currents Campaign for an Expanded Aquarium on the east side. For more information on the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, see <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/default.htm>

John C. Little Sr. Park Hours of Operation: The current hours of operation at this park are 6:00 a.m.-11:30 p.m. Seattle Parks has received several letters requesting the hours be changed to match those at Othello Park, which are 6:00 am-10:00 pm. Seattle Housing Authority and Seattle Police Department support this change, to match other park hours in the New Holly neighborhood. For more information on this park, see <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/parkspaces/LittlePark.htm>

Teens Against Tobacco Use (TATU): The TATU program has reached its capacity. 15 teens will provide over 150 service hours each, totaling more than 2,250 community service hours. The teens will create and deliver programs to deter youth from using tobacco, and hold programs in community center day camps, playgrounds, and health fairs.

Senior Adult Fitness Programs: Hiking and walking programs are expanding and becoming more popular, with 24 senior walkers participating in the recent Sound Steps hike to Franklin Falls. Two new *Enhance Fitness* class programs have been established this month, one in the south end at Southwest Community Center and at Magnolia Community Center, where the program is full. For more information on the Senior Adult programs, please see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Seniors/index.htm>

Teen Life Center Relocation: On Wednesday, June 21, Garfield Teen Life Center staff held a facility-closing ceremony, with more than 100 youth in attendance. The Center will close in July and relocate to Washington Middle School for two years. Seattle School District will begin construction in July of Garfield High School and a new Teen Life Center, with completion scheduled for fall of 2008. For more general information on the Teen Life Center, see <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/teens/teenlifecenter.htm>. For more information on the construction and location of Garfield High and the Teen Life Center, see <http://www.newgarfieldhigh.com/>

Magnolia Community Center Staff Honored: Assistant Coordinator Doreen Deaver was presented with an award for Excellent Community Relations by Catherine Blaine Elementary School on Tuesday, June 20. This award is for positive relationships that she has created with the school and the community throughout her tenure at the Community Center. For more information on Magnolia Community Center, please see <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/Centers/magnoliacc.htm>

Center City Parks Means Music: Several downtown parks have scheduled free lunchtime concerts. Freeway Park has scheduled Thursday lunchtime concerts. Cascade Park has scheduled four Free Music Friday lunch concerts, one each month from June through September, sponsored by Alcyone, Vulcan, and PEMCO. Occidental Park will have Wednesday lunchtime concerts in August and September, and eight Out-to-Lunch concerts on Tuesdays in July and August. Four of the Tuesday concerts will be held in the mall while the park construction is still underway.

Upcoming Events

Northgate Community Center/Library/Playground: The grand opening is scheduled for Saturday, July 15, from noon to 4:00 p.m. For more information on this new facility, please see <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/centers/Northgate.htm>

Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience

The Chair explained that this portion of the agenda is reserved for topics that have not had, or are not scheduled for, a public hearing. Speakers are limited to three minutes each and will be timed. The Board's usual process is for 15 minutes of testimony to be heard at this time, with additional testimony heard after the regular agenda and just before Board of Park Commissioner's business. One person people testified.

Ken Shaw: Mr. Shaw is a volunteer who has worked primarily in Schmitz Preserve for 11 years. He wants to help the Department maintain this special park, but has had a very difficult time communicating with the Seattle Park Senior Urban Forester on the maintenance of the Preserve. He asked that the Board convene a forum to discuss his concerns.

Discussion/Recommendation: City Hall Park

Cathy Tuttle, Seattle Parks' project manager, briefed the Commissioners on this project at the June 8 meeting. The briefing was immediately followed by a public hearing. [See minutes of this meeting at <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/ParkBoard/minutes/2006/06-08-06.pdf>]. Tonight the Commissioners plan to discuss the project and make a recommendation to the Superintendent.

At the June 8 meeting, Commissioners asked Ms. Tuttle to provide additional information; an additional written briefing follows:

Written Briefing

Background

In 1911, Seattle Mayor George W. Dilling asked the Parks Department to "improve and maintain" the City's first downtown park. City Hall Park was originally designed as the grand public green in front of the main entry to City Hall. When City Hall moved north in 1962, King County took over the building as its Courthouse but the park continued to function as a "forecourt" lawn until 1967, when the County moved the Courthouse entrance to Third Avenue. Now, the lawn of this 1.3-acre park is often used for sleeping, while park users are frequently arrested for public drinking and drug dealing. Despite a lack of public open space in south downtown, City Hall Park is underused by many neighborhood residents, office workers, and tourists. In the past 40 years, a variety of minor and major improvement projects have attempted to refashion City Hall Park into an important park space in south downtown.

City Hall Park improvements are designed as part of the Mayor's Center City Parks Initiative and reflect recommendations from the Downtown Parks and Public Spaces Task Force. The proposed improvements, while simple in design, will transform City Hall Park into an attractive southern gateway to downtown Seattle that is historic, accessible, and open.

In 2005-2006, the Mayor proposed \$100,000 for planning and initial design and \$400,000 for final design and construction of improvements to City Hall Park. Council modified this proposal and approved \$100,000 for initial planning and design work in 2005 and \$50,000 to continue planning and design in 2006 and asked for the project to return to Council before additional funding was provided. Construction is not yet funded.

Project Design

A revitalized City Hall Park will provide much needed usable public open space in the renaissance of south downtown. Specific design elements include:

- A mini shelter-house that includes a comfort station, storage area, and materials for programming needs
- Pedestrian-only access on Dilling Way
- Removal of selected trees, while protecting specimen trees and providing nearby 2:1 tree replacement
- New level plaza areas with utility hookups that can be suitable for gathering and vending activities
- Reconfigures pathways to allow universal access and better reflect current circulation patterns
- New decorative plant beds to add visual interest
- New decorative fences in selected areas to define park functions, highlight planting beds, and direct park use

- A stage area for special events programming as well as for daily use
- A “learning landscape” play feature that is attractive to families visiting or living in the neighborhood
- New furnishings and light fixtures to serve park users and be consistent with requirements of the Pioneer Square Preservation Board

Schedule and Budget

The schematic design will be presented to Council before proceeding to design development and construction documents later in 2006. If approved, construction could begin in late 2007 and be completed in 12-18 months.

At a schematic design level, project costs for planning, design, and construction are estimated to be \$3.6 million for regrading and refurbishing the park, and adding park features such as a play area and historic elements to attract new users. The comfort station/mini shelter house is not included in the \$3.6 million estimate.

Public Process

City Hall Park improvements have been reviewed at a variety of stakeholder meetings for the past year, and three community meetings have been held. The schematic design has been reviewed by the Pioneer Square Preservation Board and the Seattle Design Commission, the Pioneer Square Community Association, the Board of Park Commissioners, as well as by a Project Advisory Team (PAT). The PAT was selected with input from the City and includes the following members:

- Jordan Royer, Mayor’s Office
- Laura Inveen, Downtown Emergency Services Center Board and King County Judge
- Cindy Bogar, SAMIS Land Company
- Craig Montgomery, Director Pioneer Square Community Association
- Tamara Mentee, Frye Hotel
- Peggy Dreisinger, Metropolitan Improvement District
- Neil Lukas, Resident
- Bob Peth and Francisco Tello, Seattle Police Community Policing Officers
- Bud Parker, King County Facilities Management
- Alfred Poole, Human Services Department
- Amit Ranade, Board of Park Commissioners

Partners

Parks has worked with all PAT member organizations to ensure the design can meet a variety of needs represented by these varied groups. Parks was asked to brief the King County Council in May, and the County has recently expressed some interest in reopening the south entry as well as partnering with Parks on security, maintenance, and programming.

Next Steps

Following a presentation of the schematic design to Council, Parks will proceed with design development and construction drawings for City Hall Park improvements. During design development, Parks will continue to address issues with the public and other interested groups including fencing, tree removal, managing park activities, and coordination with King County. Pending funding approval, park improvements will begin construction in late 2007 and be completed in 12-18 months.

Verbal Briefing

Ms. Tuttle stated that, at the June 8 meeting, Commissioner Holme asked several questions. She has since forwarded the answers to his questions to the Board. She displayed four large aerial photos and drawings of City Hall Park.

Board Discussion/Recommendation

Commissioner Collins moved approval of the staff recommendation for the schematic design. Commissioner Ramels seconded. The Board discussed the following aspects of the plan.

Trees: Commissioner Jackson asked what types of trees are in the park. Ms. Tuttle answered that the park currently has 24 trees, mostly oaks with one maple on 4th Avenue, and pointed out the location of the trees. Nine healthy trees and two sickly trees are proposed for removal. Six new trees would be added. Commissioner Collins commented that the Board is very interested in the mature trees located in the downtown parks and he believes Parks is careful not to remove trees if it isn't necessary. He feels that it is appropriate to remove some trees in this park. Commissioner Belbeck stated that the terrace design is very functional for this park space and the design requires removal of several trees.

Fencing: Commissioner Ramels commented that this is a beautiful plan and she supports it. The park has been neglected for a long time. However, she is still unclear about the ornamental fencing and feels this part of the plan is ambiguous.

Play Area for Children: Commissioner Ramels asked if the design includes a preference for children's use of the park and whether a playscape was considered. Ms. Tuttle answered that the designers looked at Seattle's 2000 census, which showed 600 kids in the five census tracts that surround City Hall Park. Planned future housing in the area may also bring additional children to the area. Commissioner Pflaumer commented that a number of people bring children with them when they visit the courthouse who may also be users of the park. In addition, a new daycare is opening in the area.

Greenspace: Commissioner Pflaumer referred to the letter King County Councilmember Phillips sent to the Park Board urging that greenspace in the park not be reduced.

Homeless: Commissioner Ramels referred to John Barber's testimony at the June 8 meeting, asking that social workers who work with the homeless in this area be involved in the planning and design. She asked if the social workers are agreeable to the plan. Commissioner Ramels suggested that Parks staff involve interested homeless people to help work in the flowers and take care of the park.

Courthouse Entry: Commissioner Holme commended the designers on this plan. He does, however, have concerns on the indefinite date when King County would change the main entry on the east side of the Courthouse to open into this park. He hopes that the City will leverage the County to move quickly on this component. Superintendent Bounds answered that Parks staff, including Deputy Superintendent Brooks, are meeting with County Councilmembers on this.

Structures in Park: Commissioner Holme referred to a mechanical shack that is located on the north side of the park, which is very unattractive and recommended that staff look at this structure.

The vote was taken. Commissioners Jackson and Pflaumer abstained, as they were not present at the June 8 meeting. The remaining four Commissioners all voted to approve the motion. Motion carried.

The Commissioners thanked Ms. Tuttle, who is moving from Seattle to Sweden, for her five years of dedication to many Seattle Parks' projects and to the citizens of Seattle.

Briefing: Washington Park Arboretum Pacific Connections (formerly South Entry/Madrona Park Terrace) Project

Jon Jainga, Parks Project Manager, presented a briefing to the Commissioners regarding the Washington Park Arboretum Pacific Connections Project. Commissioners received both a written and verbal briefing, with both included in these minutes. No action is requested at this time.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

On June 22, Seattle Parks' staff and the landscape architecture firm The Portico Group will brief the Board of Park Commissioners on the design development plans for the Washington Park Arboretum "Pacific Connections" project (formerly known as the South Entry/Madrona Terrace). This briefing is for informational purposes only.

Project Description and Background

Seattle Parks and Recreation (Parks), the University of Washington (UW) and the Arboretum Foundation (Foundation) are undertaking an extensive program to improve the Washington Park Arboretum. *Renewing the Arboretum*, the Master Plan adopted by the City and UW identifies the planned improvements.

The Washington Park Arboretum Pacific Connections project is a high-priority project in the Washington Park Arboretum Master Plan that has been endorsed by the City Council and the University of Washington Board of Regents. Key project elements include establishment of extensive plant exhibits representing areas from around the Pacific Rim, a lawn meadow area, and the construction of a small interpretive shelter and parking area. The 12-acre site is located on the hill across Lake Washington Blvd. from the Japanese Garden.

The proposed plant collections for the Washington Park Arboretum Pacific Connections gardens are based on five geographic regions consisting of Cascadia, Chile, China, New Zealand, and Southeast Australia. Each collection is showcased through preview gardens, horticultural displays, and immersive Forest Types. The collections are accessible to the range of visitors including gardeners, horticulturists, and scientists. For the gardener, these will be gardens of diverse and beautiful plants that will grow in our Pacific Northwest maritime climate—because the places they come from have climates like ours. For the horticulturist, each of these places (gardens) represents a rich diversity of plants that can be propagated and integrated into our traditional northwest landscapes. For the scientist, the structure of these (larger) gardens represents the ecological relationships between plants found in these locations around the Pacific Rim.

Public Involvement Process

An open house was held on April 5, 2006, and a public meeting was also held on May 5, 2006, both at the Graham Visitors Center at the Arboretum. The meetings were advertised through project signs, a project website, press releases, and postcards mailed to over 1,000 interested parties and neighbors.

Issues

The primary issues for the development of Pacific Connections are completing fundraising for the capital development and maintenance funding for establishment and long-term maintenance of the new gardens. The Foundation is actively fundraising for the project and has currently raised \$2.2 million of the \$6.0 million project budget.

Budget

The Pro Parks Levy provides \$2,268,200 project costs of planning, design and construction of improvements to the Arboretum, which includes funding for the schematic design portion of the Japanese Garden Entry Structure project, and the Pacific Collections project. In addition, the Pro Parks Levy is funding the planning, design and construction of the Arboretum's Irrigation Mainline project. Future design and construction of the Pacific Connections project will be funded with a mixture of private and public dollars.

Schedule

Design development will be completed in June 2006. Construction drawings for a Phase One development project will follow. The scope of Phase One will be based upon the level of project funds raised.

Additional Information

Jon Jainga, Project Manager, 684-7054; jon.jainga@seattle.gov

Michael Shiosaki, Pro Parks Development Manager, 615-0823; michael.shiosaki@seattle.gov

Seattle Parks and Recreation Website: www.seattle.gov/parks/pro Parks/projects/Arboretum-Pacific.htm

Verbal Briefing

Mr. Jainga introduced Dennis Meyers of The Portico Group, the principal landscape architect for this project, and Donald Harris, Seattle Parks Property Management and Acquisition Services Manager. Mr. Meyer and Mr. Jainga displayed a number of large drawings of the Arboretum and its Master Plan, including the schematic design and site

plan. Mr. Meyer then pointed out the elements of various Master Plan projects, and described the Pacific Connections project in detail. He also described how project components were ranked in order to be completed.

The Commissioners asked several general questions about the project and commented on the very interesting design. Commissioner Ramels asked if it is common to select collections based on longitudinal areas and Mr. Meyer answered that even though the selected plant collections originate in other countries and continents, they were selected because they are on the same longitude as the Pacific Northwest and the collections will be sustainable. The Superintendent commented that visitors to the Arboretum will see plant collections from New Zealand and other countries, without having to travel there (similar to visiting a zoo and seeing animals from other continents.) Commissioner Pflaumer asked about the name of one path, "Pilgrims' Path." Mr. Meyer explained that at Mt. Ona in China, visitors walk up the mountain and the trail is called Pilgrim's Path. Part of the design is to reflect the origins and history of the collections.

Superintendent Bounds stated that the Arboretum Foundation is raising funds for this project in a very successful manner. Commissioner Jackson asked for more information on the \$6 million budget. The Pro Parks Levy includes \$2,268,200, with a portion of that paying for the schematic design of the Pacific Connection project. She asked if there is a schedule for collecting the remaining needed funds. Mr. Harris commented that the Arboretum Foundation has raised \$2 million in donations for this project. It is difficult to set a schedule until further funds are collected.

Commissioner Collins stated that the Pacific Connections project has evolved in a wonderful way and asked that Parks staff bring this briefing to the July Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC) meeting. Commissioner Holme suggested that, as collections get moved in the Arboretum, staff keep the public informed with signage and wayfinding.

The Board thanked Mr. Jainga, Mr. Meyer, and Mr. Harris for the briefing.

Briefing: Madison Park Project

Pamela Kliment, Seattle Parks Neighborhood Matching Fund project manager, provided the Commissioners with a briefing on this proposed Neighborhood Matching Fund project at Madison Park. The Commissioners received both a written and verbal briefing, with both included in these minutes.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

None, this is a briefing.

Project Description and Background

Madison Park is located at the corner of East Madison and East Howe in the Madison Park neighborhood. The park consists of two parts, the beach, and an upper part which is two acres in size. There is a play area, lighted tennis courts, a maintenance path, granite animal sculptures, and a wooden fort-type structure. The granite structures and fort were installed by artist Richard Beyer in 1983. There are trees of varying sizes and other plantings (see attached aerial).

The Friends of Madison Park (FoMP) started planning the Madison Park Improvement Project in April 2005. They received Neighborhood Matching Funds in October 2005 to hire a landscape architect. Their goals are to improve the play area, incorporating the granite sculptures; adding a gathering place where parents could watch children, neighbors could relax, meet with friends or sit, read, and think; and adding an ADA path across the park. The project would also include replacement of the irrigation system and improvement of the drainage in the grassy area.

The FoMP followed the design process required and described by Parks in the handout distributed to all community groups. There were three well-attended meetings in early 2006. Parks sent out a mailer to 1,650 addresses to announce these meetings. For more about the public process, please see the public involvement section below.

The concept plan consists of a renovated play area, most of which is wrapped around an important tree at the site (a magnificent oak); a plaza near the historic staircase; and an ADA decorative concrete path through the park. Some trees will be removed, some replaced, and some added. The tennis courts are not included in the design. The original schematic design included a half court basketball court. This concept plan was approved by Parks ProView Committee.

After the concept plan was presented at the third public meeting, misinformation was spread in the neighborhood, claiming the project would include removal of all trees, flattening the site from north to south, adding a 10' wide path, and changing the name of the park. The FoMP, at the request of the Madison Park Community Council, presented the plan to the Community Council. Other people came forward who either didn't know about the project or had a renewed interest. Some were negative about the plan and some wanted more meetings. There were also new, thoughtful suggestions about the trees, path, and grading. A revised plan was prepared that took into account some of these thoughts. The revised schematic was presented and questions and comments were entertained. In this plan the basketball court was removed, more trees were added, the location of the path was adjusted, and the size of the gathering area was reduced. The major concern was about the trees, so a plan that addressed this in particular was presented.

A fourth meeting on June 5, 2006, was sponsored by Parks, with 123 people signing in. Of those, 19 people filled out comment sheets after the meeting, and more are arriving by mail. This is in addition to people who have called and e-mailed about the project. While there were comments and suggestions about specific parts of the design, there was general approval of the concept plan.

The Madison Park Community Council has asked that there be more process and more meetings as the design is refined.

Issues

In the next steps we will refine the design and prepare construction documents. A committee will be formed to choose play equipment. Many people in the neighborhood have expressed interest in the trees and plants, which will need to be selected along with benches, picnic tables, garbage cans, and other details such as the decorative concrete. Another very important step will be to prioritize elements based on the community's wishes and ability to raise funds.

Public Involvement Process

In addition to the public meetings and mailings, the FoMP have installed a sign at the park (donated by Madison Park Realty) and briefed the Seattle Tennis Club, the Madison Park Business Association, and the Madison Park Community Council. They presented updates to local schools and made a separate presentation to and solicited comments from the residents of the Park Shore retirement home adjacent to the park. Four members of the steering committee are also members of the Madison Park Community Council.

The FoMP put posters in the local businesses' windows and distributed homemade fliers to local preschools. Fliers were inserted in grocery bags at Bert's Grocery and with invoices at Lola's Hardware store. The group created a web site, www.friendsofmadisonpark.org, which included an e-mail address where people could send comments. At the first public meeting, 4th graders from McGilvra Elementary presented a comprehensive survey they did of all the students in the school asking them about what they like in parks. After the first public meeting, a very large article about the project appeared in the Madison Park Times. After the fourth public meeting, a larger sign was placed at the site and colored plans were delivered by the FoMP to local businesses for distribution to their customers. There will be a mailing explaining the next steps.

Budget

Schematic design has been paid for with a \$15,000 award from the Neighborhood Matching Fund. The FoMP received a \$100,000 Large Project Fund Neighborhood Matching Fund award in October 1005. While strong private

fundraising efforts have yet to begin, \$90,000 has already been raised. The group has also sold 200 T-shirts and hats. We expect the project to ultimately have a budget in excess of \$600,000

Schedule

The schematic design has been completed. Construction documents should be completed by December 2006. Fund raising will be going on at the same time to allow for a January bid, followed by construction in the spring. Construction should be complete by the summer of 2007.

Additional Information

Pamela Kliment, Parks Neighborhood Matching Fund Planner, 684-7556, or Pamela.Kliment@seattle.gov

Verbal Briefing

Ms. Kliment described the project and displayed three large photos and drawings, including aerial photos. She reviewed the information in the written briefing paper and stated that Parks has managed a number of Neighborhood Matching Fund projects in parks and has a good track record with them.

Commissioner Jackson asked what issue has brought this project before the Park Board. Ms. Kliment answered that there are two issues: (1) a false perception by some community members of the project elements; and (2) Madison Park Community Council, of which several are also members of FoMP, doesn't believe it was involved early enough in the process. The Community Council is not opposed to the plan — just believes it should have been more involved. Commissioner Collins recommended that Parks staff present the plan to Madison Park Community Council and adequately consult with them. Ms. Kliment added that another issue is some Community Council members don't like some elements of the plan and may blame the process. Commissioner Pflaumer noted that some Community Council members want a one year delay in the project. Superintendent Bounds stated that the plan can be taken to the Community Council, but a one-year delay is not feasible. Ms. Kliment stated that at the last public meeting, 123 people signed in with probably 150-160 in attendance. Most agreed with the design. FoMP will meet with Madison Community Council on Monday night. Commissioner Pflaumer suggested Parks staff also attend. Commissioner Collins requested a letter to the Park Board detailing the outcome of this meeting.

Ms. Kliment introduced Maurice Cooper, President of Madison Park Community Council, and introduced several FoMP members. Ms. Kliment stated that she believes this issue can be solved. The Superintendent commented that the project has had great outreach and community involvement.

Commissioner Pflaumer asked about the fort that is currently at the park. Ms. Kliment answered that it will be removed, as it is falling apart. It may be replaced with a similar structure. Commissioner Ramels asked if the design calls for no lights and Ms. Kliment answered that only pathway lights are suggested at this time. Commissioner Holme asked about the timeline. Ms. Kliment stated that Mayor Nickels will announce the Neighborhood Matching Fund large project awards on July 15. These funds must generally be used in one year from the time of award; however, Department of Neighborhoods does sometimes give extensions. Commissioner Holme suggested that a reader board be located at Madison Park to advertise future meetings. Ms. Kliment agreed and stated that 100 colored flyers were distributed up and down the street to advertise the last meeting.

The Commissioners thanked Ms. Kliment for the briefing.

Briefing: Comprehensive Skatepark Plan

Susanne Friedman, Seattle Parks' project manager, provided a briefing on the City's Comprehensive Skatepark Plan. Commissioners received both a written and verbal briefing, with both included in these minutes. No action is requested at this time.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

On June 22, Parks staff will brief the Board of Park Commissioners on the status of the Citywide Skatepark Planning Process. A second briefing and public hearing on the final site location recommendations and criteria is scheduled for December 2006. The Park Board will make a recommendation on these in December 2006.

Project History

The City of Seattle recognizes skateboarding as a healthy and popular recreational activity. Nationwide there are more than 11 million people of all ages and backgrounds who participate in and enjoy skateboarding for recreation and sport, making it one of the fastest growing sports in North America.

A lack of public places within the city to skate has forced many skateboarders to use transitional spaces or public properties. Seattle Parks and Recreation encourages healthy recreational activities and sports and, to the extent possible, seeks to accommodate these activities and sports. Skateboarding requires ample terrain and facilities to appropriately accommodate this rapidly growing sport.

Other local jurisdictions have benefited significantly from engaging stakeholders of the skateboarding community in strategic planning processes to develop a course of action for serving skateboarders. Decisions about where, how many, and what types of public skateparks would best serve Seattle require consideration of a broad range of stakeholders and neighborhood perspectives.

In August 2003 Parks adopted its Skateboard Park Policy. In February 2006 City Council unanimously approved legislation (Resolution #30843) that recognizes the growing popularity of skateboarding as a recreational activity and calls for Parks, a consultant, and a newly formed Skatepark Advisory Task Force to engage the community in a citywide planning process to assess the need for skateboard parks and to identify the best potential areas to locate them. The legislation is modeled after a similar effort recently undertaken in Portland, Oregon.

Project Purpose

To develop a comprehensive skatepark system plan for Seattle that encompasses a citywide needs analysis, inventory of existing and proposed facilities, creation of a skatepark typology (hierarchy of facilities), siting criteria, and recommendations on future locations for these facilities.

Project Scope

Task Force

The Task Force's role is to be advisory to the consultant team and to streamline the public outreach necessary by serving as a sounding board on the draft siting criteria, park typologies, site selection, public process, etc. The Task Force is comprised of representatives from all quadrants of the city who bring both skater and non-skater perspectives to this planning effort, as well as diverse backgrounds and professional expertise. Task Force members have been approved by Superintendent Ken Bounds and Councilmember David Della. Susan Golub, as representative of the Superintendent's office, and Tatsuo Nakata, as representative of Councilmember Della, are participating as unofficial members of the Task Force.

Task Force Members — John Carr; Matt Johnston; Nin Truong; Jeanne Krikawa; Susanne Friedman; Joe Bell; George Blomberg; Joyce Moty; Christine Larsen; Scott Shinn; and Jelani Jackson.

Public Process

Public outreach and notification for this planning process will occur at several levels and has been modeled after the outreach conducted for the second round of the Opportunity Fund. It includes the following components: web page, mailings, news media, and signs.

As noted in the schedule below, there will be two rounds of public meetings:

- **First round:** three meetings, June 14, 15, and 17, (North, South, West) to review draft siting criteria and skatepark typologies and to have an initial discussion of possible locations.
- **Second round:** three meetings in early fall (North, South, West) to review draft recommended locations that meet siting criteria etc from the first round of public meetings, and next steps.

In addition to the two rounds of public meetings, we will explore other means of soliciting and receiving feedback and ideas, including the possibility of forms that can be downloaded from the web and e-mailed with responses, or hard copies of forms that can be mailed in. Task Force members may help with outreach to smaller groups by presentations at community or organization meetings.

Task Force and Public Meeting Schedule

- #1 – 3/16/06, 100 Dexter Room #128; Initial meeting, review proposed timeline, goals and draft RFQ; (Task Force subgroup for consultant selection process)
- #2 – 4/20/06, 100 Dexter Park Board Room; Initial meeting with the consultant, discussion on project parameters
- #3 – 5/18/06, 100 Dexter Park Board Room; Materials preview for up-coming public meetings – Round 1

Public Meetings Round 1 – mid June '06 (6/14, 6/15, 6/17); Public review of selection criteria and skatepark typologies

- PELL Committee Briefing – 6/21/06
- Park Board Briefing - 6/22/06

Open House and Skate Tournament at Ballard Bowl – 6/24/06

- #4 – 6/29/06, 100 Dexter Park Board Room; Public Meeting report out, next steps
- #5 – 9/07/06, 100 Dexter Park Board Room; Materials preview for up-coming public meetings – round 2

Public Meetings Round 2 – mid September '06 (9/19, 9/20, 9/21)

Public review/comment on application of selection criteria to specific sites.

- #6 – 10/05/06, 100 Dexter Park Board Room; Public Meeting report out, next steps,
- #7 – 11/02/06, 100 Dexter Park Board Room; Review preliminary draft report
- PELL Committee – 12/6/06 – review draft report
- Park Board Briefing/Public Hearing – 12/14/06
- Park Board Recommendations – 1/11/07
 - (Task force subgroup for Park Board and Council presentations)
 - (Consultant to prepare Final Report between 1/11/07 and 1/31/07)

Submit plan proposal to Full Council by Jan 31, 2007, per resolution.

Accomplishments thus far

Consultant Selection – The Task Force was appointed in March 2006. In April the Task Force unanimously selected Arai Jackson Ellison Murakami as project consultants, with Hough Beck and Baird and Grindline as sub-consultants. Steven Arai brings more than 34 years of urban design, master planning, and public process expertise to the project. Hough Beck and Baird's practice focuses on landscape architecture and land use planning. Grindline is a local skatepark firm with extensive experience in the design and construction of skateparks.

Skatepark Tours – On two consecutive Saturday's in April, Task Force members participated in touring thirteen different skatepark facilities in surrounding jurisdictions to assess what the range and possibilities are in successful and not so successful skatepark siting and design.

Typologies and Site Criteria – In May the Task Force finalized the draft typology and site selection criteria to be presented at the first round of public meetings. The typology is a hierarchy of skate facilities, and the criteria will be used as a filtering tool to evaluate sites nominated for future development. Please refer to the attached document for detailed information.

Ballard Bowl Skate Competition — In addition to the accomplishments listed above, Task Force members have been very active in coordinating an Open House and skate tournament and actively supporting the process in the larger community.

Synopsis of Public Input and Key Issues Raised

Due to the date of the public meetings, June 14, 15, and 17, a verbal summary of those meetings will be given at the Park Board Briefing itself. Public input received to date includes:

- A request for a public meeting on a Saturday,
- A complaint about holding a public meeting on a Saturday,
- Requests for Task Force meeting notification, agendas, and summaries,
- Input on the inclusion of BMX bikes at skateboard facilities,
- A request for a skatepark at the Magnolia Village.

Budget

\$100,000 appropriated by City Council, February 2006, for the planning analysis.

Staff Recommendations

No recommendations at this time.

Additional Information

For additional information, please contact Susanne Friedman, Parks Project Planner, (206) 684-0902, or susanne.friedman@seattle.gov. Project information can be found at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/projects/Skatepark.htm>.

Verbal Briefing

Ms. Friedman reviewed the background of the skatepark plan study. She displayed the timeline and described the various dates and tight deadlines.

It is estimated that there are 20,500 skateboarders in Seattle today, ranging in age from 3-43 years old, mostly male. The Task Force looked at a national range of skateparks by studying 12 skateparks in different areas. This effort was very enlightening. The Taskforce has asked a broad range of community members to suggest possible skate sites. To garner interest and input, the meetings were advertised on television and radio, and flyers were posted at community centers, libraries, and Neighborhood Service Centers. Notice was included in the Department of Neighborhood's newsletter and 11 newspaper articles have been published.

Ms. Friedman described the types of skate sites as a skatespot, district site, and regional site. She commented that one skatepark in Denver is 60,000 sq. ft. and can accommodate up to 400 skaters at once. The Taskforce will pay close attention to sites that are near public transit and where the community can view the skaters.

She listed four issues:

- (1) Where will future funding for these sites come from? When will facilities be built?
- (2) How did Parks determine the number of skaters who will use the sites? How to determine how many skate areas to build?
- (3) Building skate sites will take open space to use for active recreation. The Taskforce has a list of considerations, which include: not impact critical habitats, replace gray spaces whenever possible, etc.
- (4) Mixed uses: BMX riders and skateboarders currently are not using the same sites

She described the next steps. The Taskforce will spend the next two months culling through all the suggestions and work with other public agencies that might have usable sites (Port of Seattle, Seattle School District, Seattle City Light, etc.) A list of recommended sites will be assembled in September and public comment on these will be solicited in September and December.

Board Questions & Answers

Commission Collins asked if the end product of the Taskforce is to have a master plan that shows precise proposed locations of skate sites. Ms. Friedman stated that is correct — the Taskforce is working on the location and size — it is not looking at any design elements. Commissioner Pflaumer urged that the Taskforce be very specific on any sites.

Ms. Friedman stated that the next public meeting is in Ballard on Saturday. Commissioner Holme attended one of the meetings and stated he was very impressed. He referred to the 2002 Joint Athletic Facilities Development Program (JAFDP), which included an appendix of all field sites and suggested that the Taskforce do this for the skate sites. He was involved with the JAFDP process and learned a lot from the methodology used. During the JAFDP process, Parks staff selected sites. In the skate site process, citizens are suggesting the skate sites and their suggestions may not be as specific as staff suggestions would be. In order to get to specific sites, it requires give and take. The Superintendent added that the JAFDP process did not include adding new fields to parks; however, adding skate sites in parks changes the use of the park and requires much more interaction with the community.

Commissioner Holme asked if graffiti walls have come up in the discussions and Ms. Friedman answered that it hasn't so far. Commissioner Holme asked about the schedule of the Lower Woodland skatepark and Ms. Friedman answered that it is in an appeal process with the City's Hearing Examiner regarding a Determination of Non-Significance.

Commissioner Pflaumer referred to public hearings on this issue. The Park Board is currently scheduled to hold a public hearing on the Comprehensive Skatepark Plan at its December 14, 2006, meeting. Parks staff will check with City Council to determine if they plan to hold a public hearing. Commissioner Pflaumer stated that she prefers either the Park Board or Council to hold a public hearing, but not both. Ms. Friedman will also review the Park Board's future agenda with the Board's Coordinator.

The Commissioners thanked Ms. Friedman for the briefing.

Old Business/No Business

August 10 Meeting: Several Commissioners will be out of town on August 10. The Chair will discuss the possibility of canceling the meeting at the next Park Board planning meeting.

City Charter Amendments: Seattle City Council is discussing charter amendments, with Amendment #3 requiring the Seattle Parks Superintendent and four other Department heads be re-confirmed by City Council every four years. The Park Board has serious concerns about this proposed change. Commissioner Collins commented that it would politicize the Superintendent's position. The Seattle Times printed a June 23, 2006, editorial opposing the amendment. After further discussion, **Commissioner Pflaumer moved that the Park Board write a letter to City Council opposing Charter Amendment #3, as it relates to the Park Board's role. Commissioner Collins seconded. The vote was taken and the motion carried.** Commissioner Pflaumer will draft the letter and circulate to other members for review. For more information on the Charter Amendment, please see http://www.seattle.gov/council/committees/committee_charter.htm

WSDOT SR520 Widening Project: Commissioner Collins gave a brief update on the Mayor's Taskforce Committee, of which he is a member. Deputy Mayor Ceis and City Councilmembers Drago and Conlin attended the last meeting of the Taskforce. Deputy Mayor Ceis effectively buried the idea of a tube/tunnel for the SR520 Widening Project because of the cost and the sediment it would stir up in Lake Washington. Commissioner Collins feels if the replacement bridge were to be built higher, it would be less damaging to the Arboretum and asked if he should advocate for this, as the Park Board's representative to the Taskforce. He asked other Commissioners to e-mail their thoughts to him regarding this. For more information on the SR520 Widening Project, please see <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/SR520Bridge/>

Roanoke Park: The Superintendent followed up on the citizen testimony given at the June 8 Park Board meeting, with information being sent to the Commissioners. For more information on Roanoke Park, please see <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/parkspaces/RoanokePark.htm>

Letter of Appreciation to Starbucks: At its June 27 meeting, Commissioners approved a letter of appreciation be sent to Starbucks for its generous donation to Powell Barnett Park. This letter is near completion and will be finalized soon. For more information on the Starbucks' Parks program, please see <http://www.starbucks.com/aboutus/grantsparks.asp>

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
Kate Pflaumer, Chair
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE _____