

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
Meeting Held at 100 Dexter Avenue North
November 8, 2007
Web site: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkboard/>

Board of Park Commissioners:

Present:

Jackie Ramels, Acting Chair
Neal Adams
John Barber
Terry Holme
Christine Larsen

Excused:

Amit Ranade, Chair

Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:

Christopher Williams, Interim Superintendent
Susan Golub, Strategic Analyst
Sandy Brooks, Park Board Coordinator

Commissioner Ramels called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and explained to the audience that this is a three-hour meeting with the first 1-1/2 hours focused on regular Park Board business and the second 1-1/2 hours to be used to review resumes submitted for the Board-appointed, and currently vacant, position on the Park Board.

Commissioner Holme moved, and Commissioner Larsen seconded, approval of the agenda. Commissioner Barber moved, and Commissioner Holme seconded, approval of the October 25 minutes as corrected. Motions carried.

Superintendent's Report

Interim Superintendent Christopher Williams reported on several park items. For more information on Seattle Parks and Recreation, visit the web pages at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/>.

Interlaken Park: Last week Congressman Jim McDermott, Congressman Norm Dicks, Seattle Mayor Nickels joined 250 kid/teen volunteers for a very successful cleanup of this park, in honor of Seattle Parks Horticulture Manager, Duane Penttila, who passed away unexpectedly last fall. 2,500 seedlings were planted during the day's events.

City Hall Park: Seattle Parks Tree Crew finished the trimming and grooming work on the trees in City Hall Park. This work lifted and thinned the canopy to allow the pedestrian lights to provide better light throughout the park.

Staffing News: Mickey Fearn recently joined Seattle Parks and Recreation to help with the development of the Department's Strategic Action Plan. Mickey led the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative and is a previous training coordinator for Seattle Parks.

Zoo Garage Decision: Parks staff will meet with the Law Department to review the implications of the Hearing Examiner's decision to invalidate the permit for the proposed Zoo garage on the basis that buildings are only permitted uses in parks when incidental to the park and are customarily found in parks. The City will not challenge the decision, but the Woodland Park Zoo Society may do so.

Seattle Parks Foundation: The Foundation has raised \$18.1 of the needed \$20 million of its fundraising goal for Lake Union Park! In addition, Safeco recently donated \$500,000 for the bridge in the new park. The bridge will be dedicated during a January 2008 celebration, and in April there will be an official celebration for Lake Union Park.

Hamilton School/Wallingford Playground Proposal: After meeting with the Law Department and Council Central Staff, Parks staff have concluded that additional Council action to approve an easement for placement of the geothermal wells at Wallingford Playfield is needed. Legislative approval of compensation and/or mitigation of the impacts of the proposed installation are also needed. This action is separate from the pending legislation authorizing a land exchange between Seattle Public Schools and Parks.

Commissioner Holme asked that if this project comes back to the Park Board for consideration, that staff remember that several Commissioners are new to the Board since the original Wallingford/Hamilton briefings and a background briefing would be helpful to them. Commissioner Ramels asked also that the Board clarify its earlier position if the project comes back before the Board. [The Board voted against the easement in a vote of 2-1 last year.]

Cascade Land Conservancy: Seattle Parks is working with the Cascade Land Conservancy to determine the best approach to increase diversity in their organization and maintain relevancy in the City of Seattle. Commissioner Adams [who is African American] noted that he is interested in adding racial diversity to both the Cascade Land Conservancy and Seattle Parks Foundation. An experienced consultant, board members, and community volunteer, he offered his services to Seattle Parks Foundation and they could find no use for him. Superintendent Williams will work with both groups to determine how their boards are selected.

Family and Education Levy Outcomes: The Middle School Community Learning Centers operated by Parks successfully achieved all performance outcome goals for the 2006-07 School Year. The programs represented are Denny, Mercer, McClure and Whitman Community Learning Centers. In all categories the outcomes were well over 100% of the targets which reflects \$157,292 in performance pay.

Brighton Playfield: The Brighton Playfield Science Park is now open to the public. The project was constructed by WS Contractors, the Seattle Conservation Corps, and volunteers. Funded by the Pro Parks Levy Opportunity Fund and the UPS Foundation, the project has provided two new "outdoor classrooms." The Geo Plaza is oriented toward earth sciences such as geography and geology and the Physics Plaza has a math and physics theme. The Solar System Path is a new 400 meter walking/running path that explains interplanetary distances and scales and exhibits sculptural planets that were created with the help of neighborhood kids. Another display explains the outer planets and other science exhibits are in the plans for the park as funding becomes available in the future.

Green Seattle Day: Commissioner Larsen attended Green Seattle Day this past weekend where 50 youth planted 3,800 trees. Some comments she heard from the youth were that it was "better than sleeping in or watching television." Councilmembers Clark and Conlin were there and helped with the planting. She thinks it was a great project for the youth, as they also received a civic lesson.

New City Council Committees: Commissioner Ramels asked about the new members of the Parks, Education, Libraries and Labor (PELL) Committee. Staff will send this information as soon as it is official.

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. Three people signed up to testify.

Nancy Malmgren: She represents the Carkeek Watershed Community Action group, advocates of environmental education, and gave Board members a handout. She briefly described the work of the group and reviewed some of the language in the Comprehensive Plan 2000 that refers to protecting urban creeks and watersheds and developments since the Comprehensive Plan was adopted by City Council.

Update Briefing: Seattle Parks' Public Involvement Policy

Dewey Potter, Seattle Parks Communication Manager, presented a briefing on the Department's Public Involvement Policy. 1999 first established; 2002 amended for accessibility by users and practical implementation for staff; 2006 amended to clarify how decisions are made.

Written Briefing

Dewey Potter, Seattle Parks Communication Manager, and Joelle Ligon, Seattle Parks Strategic Advisor, presented a briefing on the Department's public involvement policy. Commissioners received a written briefing (included in these minutes) prior to the meeting and Ms. Ligon gave a Powerpoint presentation at the meeting.

Requested Board Action

None.

Project Description and Background

This is to inform the Board about the current status of Parks' Public Involvement Policy (PIP), to relay a history of the policy and to describe how the policy is used.

The PIP provides guidance to staff and information to citizens on how decisions about major changes in parks will be made, and to engage the public in those processes. It applies largely to capital improvement projects and to the creation of plans, including the Citywide Skatepark Plan and recently the Lake Washington Boulevard Vegetation Management Plan.

The policy:

- Describes
 - Role of park users in planning processes
 - Factors that impact decisions
 - How professional staff incorporate, or do not incorporate, suggestions and recommendations from the public
 - Circumstances when we do not seek public input; ~ and ~
- Establishes procedures
 - For soliciting and considering public input

History

The policy was first established in 1999, after a project classified as "major maintenance," an artificial turf surface at the Queen Anne Bowl, drew complaints from neighbors. Parks undertook a

In 2002, after using the policy for two years, Parks conducted an evaluation that drew mainly positive response, and updated it.

In 2006, in response to issues in which the public felt they had not been heard, Councilmember David Della requested an audit of the PIP. Concurrently, the Park Board undertook its own review, and made its own changes to the policy.

Breadth and Scope of the PIP

The PIP is mainly used by the Planning and Development Division (PDD) by Project Planners and Project Managers (PM). The Public Information Officer(s) (PIO) assigned to PDD works with the staff to ensure proper implementation of the PIP.

In the past four years, Parks has held 211 meetings and 89 special events. The vast majority of these meetings have been in relation to acquisitions or capital improvements funded through the Pro Parks Levy.

Throughout the life of the Levy, we have engaged more than 13,000 individual participants. During that same time, Parks staff have implemented more than 150 individual public involvement plans. These have been for projects as minor as the summertime tennis court re-surfacing projects and as significant as the complex and multi-year Cal Anderson Park and Bobby Morris Playfield improvement projects.

Currently, one PIO is assigned to PDD. At the height of the Levy, there were three. This PIO also offers PIP assistance to other divisions, including the Urban Horticulture Division and the Operations Division, when they have project-related needs

The scope and complexity of the projects Parks has planned and implemented with the community is enormous. We have converted an old amusement park in West Seattle to a salmon-friendly pier; completed three creek daylighting projects; put numerous pieces of new art in our parks, including three water features, a giant-sized and historic pair of Hat 'N' Boots, an art walk and children's tile art projects; expanded by four acres an existing park in the most densely populated neighborhood in the City by building over a lidded reservoir (Cal Anderson Park); built three new dog-off leash areas, a skate bowl and a disc golf course; and converted three former City Light Substations into neighborhood parks.

How we reach communities

Initial outreach begins when the Planner or PM works with people in Parks who are familiar with the issues and residents of the neighborhood where we plan to undertake a project, and makes direct contact with key community members and organizations there. This step familiarizes the community with the proposed project begins building relationships.

The first indication that most community members would see are four-foot by four-foot signs on site describing the upcoming project and giving detailed information about the project's scope, schedule, genesis, and budget, and contact information for the PM or Planner and where to go on the web for more information.

Three weeks before a public meeting, neighbors receive a postcard in the mail containing the same information as is on the sign(s) announcing a public meeting. These mailers are sent to every address within 300 feet of the park and to any mailing lists that Parks had compiled or that staff have gathered from key community members or organizations.

Also three weeks before the meeting, Parks staff make and install on site 11"x17", brightly colored, laminated signs announcing the meeting information. Parks sends a news release to local media (daily, community, and ethnic newspapers) announcing the project and meeting details. Parks staff also update the project web page, if applicable.

We take great care to determine if foreign language translations will be needed for the meeting notification materials. If it is determined that the neighborhood is comprised of communities that are non-native English speakers, Parks staff will have all meeting notification materials translated into one to eight different foreign languages, and announce on the postcard that interpretation services are available at the meeting upon request.

Generally, Parks uses a three-meeting model. In this model, the first meeting is a brainstorming session wherein Parks works with the community to develop an initial set of ideas. This is followed by a second meeting where more detailed drawings are prepared and presented to the community, based on comments from the first meeting. At the second meeting, ideas are refined and a preferred design is identified. The final meeting is reserved for presentation of a near-final preferred design.

Once a preferred design is identified, the PM or Planner writes a public involvement summary and posts it on the project web page and mails it to all who participated in the public process to date. Throughout the life of the project, the PM or Planner, in conjunction with the PIO, makes periodic updates to the project web page to keep the community informed about the status of the project.

Projects that the Superintendent believes are significant or controversial go to the Board of Park Commissioners for a public hearing and recommendation.

As significant changes are made to the project, the four-foot by four-foot onsite signage is updated to reflect these changes.

At the end of the significant projects, Parks organizes a public grand opening celebration. Less significant projects with smaller budgets do have grand opening celebrations.

Tools we use to engage

At all public meetings, Planners and Project Managers outfit themselves with a set of tools designed to engage. These include:

- Meeting Agenda with desired outcomes
- Public Input/Decision Timeline Chart that clearly outlines
 - opportunities for public input
 - who will be making decision(s)
- Project schedule
 - Outlines specific opportunities for public input
- Ongoing Public Involvement Summary (OPIS)
 - History of the project
 - Explanation of how decisions are made
 - Factors that have an impact on the outcome
 - Budget
 - Timeline
 - Sign-In sheet

Public involvement audit

In spring 2005, Parks experienced a “perfect storm” of projects with problematic public involvement process. These included the Zoo garage, a decision to site outdoor concerts at Gas Works Park, the Loyal Heights Playfield project, and the Occidental Square project.

As a result of these issues, Councilmember David Della ordered the City Auditor to conduct an audit of Parks public processes. That audit took place during the last half of 2006 and early 2007. This included an overall assessment of Parks’ processes and a case study of the Loyal Heights Playfield project.

As a result of the audit, Parks staff are working to include more email notifications to process participants, to hire facilitators earlier and more often if controversy is likely, and to post meeting notes on the web in a more timely manner. The auditors also recommended hiring a consultant to help us reach hard-to-reach communities. There is \$50,000 in the proposed 2008 budget for this.

Simultaneously with the audit, the 2006 Park Board reviewed Parks’ processes and made recommendations to improve upon the existing policy. The Park Board recommended changes included making the opportunities for public input much clearer to communities. This includes the use of the new Ongoing Public Involvement Summary.

Looking forward

Under the direction of Interim Superintendent Christopher Williams, Parks will undertake a new outreach strategy by routinely sending staff to the regular meetings of the Citywide Neighborhood Council, District Councils, and some Community Councils.

The purpose of this strategy is to be aware of issues arising in the community regarding Parks, and to be able to work with neighborhoods and communities to head off potential problems before they begin.

Additional Information:

The Park Board presentation will include a PowerPoint on the Public Involvement Policy.

Verbal Briefing/Board Discussion

Ms. Ligon described the role of park users in the planning processes and factors that impact decisions that are made. In the past four years, the Department has held 211 public meetings and 89 special events, such as grand openings and ribbon cuttings, with 13,000 citizens participating. Public involvement processes were held for 120 different projects. Ms. Ligon next reviewed the capital projects the Department has completed during that time and reviewed how the Department reaches communities, which includes:

1. preliminary outreach to user groups/neighbors
2. on-site signage
3. postcard notices mailed to residents within 300+ foot of project, generally 2-3,000 mailings for each project
4. e-mail notices
5. press release
6. web pages
7. additional on-site signage listing meeting dates and project updates

An ongoing issue is effectively reaching non-native English speakers and hearing impaired.

She next described that the staff engage the community by using the three-meeting model and sharing preliminary ideas with the community. Tools used to engage the community includes:

1. Meeting agenda with desired outcomes
2. Ground rules
3. Project schedule
4. Ongoing public involvement summary
5. Sign-in sheet

She displayed a Public Input/Decision Timeline Chart, described the ongoing public involvement process, what happens when the project is over, and the grand opening ceremonies held when the project is completed.

In early 2005, the Department experienced a “perfect storm” in its public involvement process with several controversial and very visible projects/decisions coming to the forefront: the Zoo garage decision (of which Parks was not a part of the decision process); synthetic turf at Loyal Heights Playfield (Pro Parks language did not clearly state that the turf would be installed at the site and neighbors were unaware that this was to happen during the project); removal of part of the trees at Occidental Park; and the announcement of the Summer Concert Series being moved to Gas Works Park without a public process.

The combination of these has been a huge problem for the Department and it is still dealing with the impacts. Soon after the “perfect storm”, Councilmember Della called for an audit of the Department’s public involvement process; the Board of Park Commissioners reviewed the policy and adopted a number of changes in 2006; and the audit suggested a number of changes that are being implemented. The Department is moving forward with the policy under new direction from Superintendent Williams.

Board Discussion

Commissioner Larsen asked that the public involvement policy include direction that the project/meeting notices are shared with community leaders. She chaired the Friends of Dahl Playfield for over four years and worked with Parks staff; however, she never heard of a “PIP” and didn’t know there was a communication strategy.

Commissioner Barber commented that he is very active in a “Friends of” group and, as a result of that involvement, was notified of a project in his neighborhood by Ms. Potter. Interim Superintendent Williams stated that the Superintendent or Deputy Superintendent will now attend all the City Neighborhood Council’s monthly meetings and Seattle Parks’ Directors will attend all the monthly meetings of the 13 District Councils to better share information.

Commissioner Adams thanked Ms. Potter and Ms. Ligon for the briefing and commented that it helps him better understand how the Department connects with neighborhoods. Commissioner Holme commented that he has been a Park Board Commissioner for five years and was on the Board when several of the “perfect storm” issues came before the Board. No one testified at the Board’s public hearing regarding tree removal at Occidental Park, three people testified against the Zoo garage, and the Board heard much testimony against the artificial turf at Loyal Heights.

Commissioners thanked Ms. Potter and Ms. Ligon for the briefing.

Briefing: 10-Year Review of the Neighborhood Planning Process

Scott Minnix, Project Manager for Department of Neighborhoods, and John Rahaim of Seattle’s Department of Planning and Development presented a briefing on the City’s 10-year review of the Neighborhood Planning Process. Commissioners received both a written and verbal briefing.

Written Briefing

Neighborhood Plans were completed between 1995 and 2000 to manage growth in the neighborhoods, especially in light of Seattle’s Comprehensive Plan and growth management strategy, adopted in 1994.

Since neighborhood plans were completed, growth throughout Seattle has been generally consistent with expectations but this has varied by neighborhood. Some neighborhoods have seen a level of growth that was anticipated, while in other neighborhoods the growth has been far more or far less than anticipated. In addition, some neighborhoods are uncomfortable with the current pace of growth, regardless of estimates, while others believe that more investment is needed.

The Mayor believes that given these circumstances, it is time to update Neighborhood Plans. The Mayor initially announced the proposed Neighborhood Plan Update proposal in July 2007. Since then, the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) and the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) have been reviewing this proposal with community, business and civic groups to receive their feedback on the proposal.

Requested Board Action

Feedback on proposed process for updating plans. No formal action needed, unless desired by Board.

Project Description and Background

See attached proposal.

Public Involvement Process

There have been approximately 20 meetings to date, and about 30 more are scheduled by year’s end. The purpose of these meetings is to receive feedback on the proposed planning process and the involvement of neighborhoods.

Issues

1. The role of the neighborhood and of City staff.
2. Proposed “sector” approach, whereby the city will be divided into six sectors, and each sector completed within a year.
3. Timing -- proposal is to complete each sector (6-8 plans) within one year.

Budget

In the Mayors budget proposal, a total of 10 FTE is proposed (6 re-allocated and 4 new) across five departments. In addition, \$505,000 in consultant fees is proposed.

Schedule

October – December 2007:	Revise update proposal process and review with stakeholders
Jan 2008:	Select first sector
Jan – June 2008:	Pre-planning, to include preparing a sector “almanac” or fact book about the sector, a compilation of existing plans and policies that guide neighborhood plans, and training of community and City staff on the above
July 2008 – June 2009	Complete plans within first sector
2014	Complete all plans

Proposed Process for Updating Neighborhood Plans October 10, 2007

Neighborhood Plan Update Overview

Neighborhood plans were completed between 1995 and 2000 to manage growth in the neighborhoods, especially in light of Seattle’s Comprehensive Plan and growth management strategy, adopted in 1994.

Since neighborhood plans were completed, growth throughout Seattle has been generally consistent with expectations but this has varied by neighborhood. Some neighborhoods have seen a level of growth that was anticipated, while in other neighborhoods the growth has been far more or far less than anticipated. In addition, some neighborhoods are uncomfortable with the current pace of growth, regardless of estimates, while others believe that more investment is needed.

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First Draft of Proposal released July 2007

The Mayor initially announced the proposed Neighborhood Plan Update proposal in July 2007. Since then, the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) and the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) have been reviewing this proposal with community, business and civic groups to receive their feedback on the proposal. See separate document: “Comments to date from the Community on First Draft of Proposed Neighborhood Planning Update Process”.

This proposal, Draft Two, is intended to incorporate the feedback heard during these past 3 months and to present a revised proposal for further comment. Some of the details of the original draft remain, while others have been refined or revised.

Key Principles for Planning Process and Plan Content

- 1. Inclusiveness.** The planning process must be broadly inclusive of diverse stakeholders, including residents, business owners, immigrants, all income groups, homeowners as well as renters, non-profits, and civic organizations
- 2. Sustainability.** Since neighborhood plans were completed much has been learned about the effect of growth on the health of our environment, particularly climate. Neighborhood plan updates provide an opportunity to re-focus our growth management strategy on building a more sustainable City and help to reduce the City’s contribution to climate change. To that end, neighborhoods will be asked to address how neighborhood plans will help to:
 - Lower waste and carbon production;
 - Reduce dependency on automobiles;
 - Encourage sustainable transportation choices;
 - Improve the pedestrian environment;
 - Encourage more trees and green spaces;
 - Use locally produced food and materials;
 - Promote sustainable water use; and
 - Promote healthier lifestyles.

Proposed Process

By Sector. Plans are proposed to be updated by geographic sector (6 sectors overall). The order of sectors to be reviewed would be determined by applying the following criteria:

1. Amount of household and employment growth, relative to anticipated growth
2. Significant changes that have occurred but were not anticipated by the earlier plans within the sector
3. Overall effectiveness or completeness of current plan in the sector; this will include a review of the process used to create the original plan, and the effectiveness of the plan in addressing actual growth

We anticipate that all plans within each sector will be completed within one year.

Pre Planning. In the six months prior to work in the first sector, City staff will conduct Pre Planning work that will include the following

1. A detailed public involvement strategy:
DON will establish a detailed public involvement strategy in consultation with the neighborhoods within the proposed sector. DON will insure a broad range of stakeholders are involved. The city is proposing that each Urban Village establish a working committee to work most closely with city staff on the details of the plan. This committee should represent a broad cross section of the neighborhoods. This committee may be an established organization or committee, or may be a new group, depending on the needs and representation within the neighborhood.

In addition, during the pre-planning stage DON will continue to establish and build relationships with community groups, community leaders and individuals. Many “new” groups will be introduced to Neighborhood Planning for the first time so it is important they be represented during this process. Outreach to these groups for input at more culturally and language-appropriate venues will be important and equal to the weighting of input at the working committees to ensure diverse voices in the updates. Additionally, we will work with various language-based media to increase information and encourage engagement from traditionally non-participatory populations.
2. A Sector Almanac, generally covering the following information:
 - Household and job growth, including trends and patterns
 - Demographics within the Sector and planning areas
 - Recent and planned public investments
 - City services or facilities that do not appropriately address growth
 - Zoning and development capacity for each planning area
 - Accomplishments to date in implementing neighborhood plans
 - Sector planning activities underway
 - Applicability of Housing Levy and “Bridging the Gap” to Sector
3. A catalogue of City Policies and Plans that are relevant to sector and neighborhood planning areas. Except for the Comprehensive Plan, all of the plans noted below have been adopted (or will be) after neighborhood plans were completed.

The relevant plans and policies will include, among others:

- Comprehensive Plan
- Transportation Strategic Plan
- Seattle Transit Plan
- Sub-area Transportation Plans
- Urban Forest Management Plan & Green Seattle Partnership
- Comprehensive Drainage Plan
- Climate Action Plan
- Seattle Bicycle Master Plan

- City-wide Pedestrian Plan
 - Restore Our Waters Strategy
 - Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development.
 - Other Relevant Action Plans and Agendas
4. Guidelines for Neighborhood Plan Updates. These will include Principles for Public Involvement, overall format of plans, a summary of the process, an explanation of terms, proposed schedule, etc. These guidelines will specify that all plans must cover the following six elements:
- Land Use
 - Transportation
 - Housing
 - Environment/Open Space
 - Capital Facilities
 - Utilities

In addition, neighborhoods may choose to include the following optional elements in their plans, depending on circumstances in their neighborhood:

- Public Safety
- Social services and Human Needs
- Arts/Culture
- Urban Design
- Economic Development
- Recreation

Neighborhood and City staff roles

The City and neighborhoods will work collaboratively to produce the plans. Both neighborhood and City staff will bring substantive issues, concerns and recommendations to the table for discussion by each neighborhood. Both the neighborhood and City staff will review drafts of each portion of the plans, so that these drafts reflect goals, policies and strategies developed during the process. City staff will handle the logistics of the planning process, such as organizing meetings, preparing materials for review, etc. At the end of the process and final draft reviewed by both City and neighborhoods, City staff will be responsible for preparing a final document for action by Council that reflects the goals, policies and strategies that the neighborhood has developed. If staff feel that these goals, policies and strategies are not consistent with City-wide and state policies and regulations, they may prepare a companion document for the Council that outlines these concerns or inconsistencies.

For the City, DPD will manage the overall update process for the City. DON will manage the neighborhood involvement strategy. Other departments to be regularly involved include the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Parks, and Office of Housing (OH). Other departments will be included as needed.

Plan Update/ Adoption/Recognition

After final agreement with the neighborhood working committee, staff will finalize a plan document for Mayor and Council review. As noted above, if there are differences in the plan recommendations between the final document and that of another group, a companion document may be prepared for Council and the Mayor to consider.

The document will include specific strategies that are recommended to implement the plan.

Council will determine how they want to officially recognize each plan. This may include recognition of the plan by resolution, approval of goals and policies of a plan to be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan (per current practice) or some other method for action, to be determined by the Executive and Council.

Resource Assessment and Staffing Strategy:

The Mayor’s budget currently proposes a total of 10.0 FTE in five city departments to be devoted to Neighborhood Plan Updates. Of these, 6.0 FE are proposed to be existing staff re-allocated from other work, and 4.0 FTE will be newly hired. One of the new hires will be a Manger Two position, to oversee the interdepartmental team effort. In addition, the budget proposes a total of \$505,000 in consultant resources to support the effort. These will be used to augment staff expertise in areas such as economic analyses, urban design, transportation analyses, etc. These funds will also be used for public involvement support (meeting room rentals, refreshments, etc) and for printing and preparing documents for public review.

Department of Planning and Development: Program Lead

- Manager II – Program Coordinator
- Land Use Planner III (x2) – Planning and Subject Matter Experts
- Land Use Planner II (.5 GIS Support)
- Admin Spec II (.5) – Program Administrative Support

Department of Neighborhoods

- Planning and Development Specialist II – Outreach Coordinator

Department of Transportation

- Associate Transportation Planner (x3) – Subject Matter Experts

Department of Parks and Recreation

- Planning and Development Specialist II– Subject Matter Expert

Office of Housing

- Community Development Specialist, Sr. – Subject Matter Expert

Other Resources (consultants, materials prep, temporary staff)

DPD - \$350,000

DOT - \$120,000

OH - \$35,000

Total - \$505,000

Verbal Briefing & Board Discussion

Mr. Minnix and Mr. Rahaim reviewed the information in the written briefing above. Commissioner Ramels asked how Seattle Parks fits in with this process. Mr. Minnix answered that Seattle Parks Project and Development Director Kevin Stoops attends the team’s weekly meetings. Commissioner Ramels asked whether the areas that were bypassed during the neighborhood planning process (those outside of urban centers and villages) would be included this time.) Mr. Rahaim stated that this review is still focusing on the urban village concept and the neighborhoods that weren’t deemed urban villages last time will be invited to participate in this process. Staff will review the plans by sector, with a focus on the urban villages, and to update the existing plans.

Interim Superintendent Williams noted that this process is different from the original neighborhood planning process and noted that many Pro Parks Levy projects came about as a result of the neighborhood planning process. Seattle has really benefited from this outcome. If another levy is developed and approved, that would also benefit the city.

Commissioner Larsen referred to the second document of the briefing paper “Proposed Process for Updating Neighborhood Plans” and asked how the team will determine the groups to work with. Mr. Minnix answered that staff will go out into the community to build relationships and then work to involve all the planning stakeholders. Mr. Rahaim added that staff will work with the communities to determine the groups to work with. The stakeholders can vary from community to community. The City will not just automatically default to work with the community councils and district councils.

Commissioner Holme noted that there are six sectors and asked how the City decides the order in which the plans are reviewed. Mr. Rahaim referred to the written briefing, which reads: “**By Sector.** Plans are proposed to be updated by geographic sector (6 sectors overall). The order of sectors to be reviewed would be determined by applying the following criteria: (1) Amount of household and employment growth, relative to anticipated growth; (2) Significant changes that have occurred but were not anticipated by the earlier plans within the sector; and (3) Overall effectiveness or completeness of current plan in the sector; this will include a review of the process used to create the original plan, and the effectiveness of the plan in addressing actual growth.” Commissioner Holme commented that this process is a learning curve with new processes being developed to review the plans. He suggested that the smaller plans be reviewed first, and then use the lessons learned from those first reviews on the larger neighborhood plans.

Commissioner Adams noted that the role of City staff is different in this process than in the original neighborhood planning process and Mr. Rahaim agreed. He asked how the new/revised plans will be approved. Mr. Rahaim stated that City Council approved the original plans as part of the City’s Comprehensive Plan and believes that a similar process will be used for this round of plans.

Mr. Rahaim noted that the information isn’t yet on a website, but will be in 2008. Staff will come back and brief the Board again as the process moves forward. The Board thanked John and Scott for the briefing and the good work on this review.

Resume Review for the Board-Appointed Position

Previously, the Board’s membership consisted of seven members appointed by the Mayor and all confirmed by City Council. In January 2007, City Council amended the Board’s membership so that three members are now appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by full City Council, three members are appointed and confirmed by City Council, and the seventh member is appointed by the other six members, with no further confirmation required.

The Park Board has worked extensively for the past several months to develop a policy for making this selection and has scheduled several special and regular meetings. At its October 16 meeting, Commissioners developed a process for scoring resumes and determining the top candidates for interviewing. Parks staff sent the eight resumes and cover letters via e-mail to the Commissioners via e-mail for review and individual scoring.

Tonight Commissioners will use the second half of the meeting to tally their individual scores and determine the candidates to interview. Commissioners held a lengthy discussion to determine whether to interview the top three or top four candidates. **Commissioner Adams moved, and Commissioner Barber seconded, that the top three candidates be interviewed. After considerable discussion, the vote was taken as 3-1. Commissioner Holme voted against the motion and the chair doesn’t vote unless to make or break a tie. Motion carried.**

Commissioner Holme moved that if one of the top three candidates declines the interview, that the next highest candidate be invited to interview. Commissioner Barber seconded. The vote was taken and was unanimous in favor. Motion carried.

Commissioner Ramels stated that the review has been a humbling experience, as the eight candidates have great experience and qualifications. She is grateful that the Park Board has such a high quality slate of candidates to choose from. She reviewed each resume 5-6 times before scoring the candidates

Commissioner Holme chaired the committee that developed the procedure and Commissioner Barber assisted him. He thanked Seattle Parks’ staff Susan Golub and Sandy Brooks for all their help in developing the procedure. Commissioner Holme reviewed the history of the rating sheet and noted that Commissioners revised it a number of times during previous meetings. Several valuable lessons have been learned that will be helpful the next time this position is to be filled.

For purposes of tonight’s discussion, the resumes were numbered 1-8, in the order they were received. Commissioners disclosed their knowledge of candidates as follows: Commissioner Ramels knows candidates #2 and 4; Commissioner Barber knows #1, 4, 5, and 8; Commissioner Adams does not know any candidates personally but has knowledge of

candidates #2, 4, and 8; Commissioner Holmes knows candidates 3, 4, and 8; and Commissioner Larsen doesn't know any of the candidates.

Parks staff collected the Commissioners tally sheets and added the individual scores to determine the top three candidates. The candidates with the top scores, Gary Gaffner, Donna Kostka, and Michael Shiosaki, were determined and will be contacted the following morning to schedule their interviews.

At a special public meeting on November 29, from 7:00-9:00 pm at Seattle Park Headquarters at 100 Dexter Avenue North, the three candidates will be interviewed. Interviews will be scheduled 30 minutes apart and Parks staff will be the timekeeper to keep the interviews on schedule. Commissioner Holmes and Barber will prepare the interview questions and send to the other Commissioners for input. A final version will be ready for the interviews. Commissioners agreed to take turns asking the questions, allow time for follow up questions to the candidate, and allow time for the candidate to ask questions or make closing remarks. Candidates will be asked to wait in a different part of the building until called for their interview. Parks staff will remain with them and bring them to the interview when it is their turn.

At a special public meeting on December 3, Commissioners will discuss the three candidates and select the highest and second highest rated candidate.

Commissioners commented that this is a new procedure, is being developed in stages, and may need to be refined once the first selection process is completed. Parks staff will schedule a de-briefing in January and Commissioners will be asked for suggested improvements to the procedure.

Old/New Business

Park Board Retreat: Commissioners Adam and Barber are working with Parks staff and the retreat facilitator to develop a draft agenda, which will be sent to the other Commissioners for review. Commissioners were asked to send any comments to the planning committee.

The Board has several new members and a focus of the retreat is to determine how the Board best operates as a group. It is hoped that the discussion will culminate in an agreed-upon group statement on the Board: what role it plays, who it is as a group, and how Board members balance their roles as individuals and Commissioners. Interim Superintendent Williams commented that a good question for the Board to ask itself is "How do the individual members balance their personal interests with the Board's interests?" Commissioner Adams commented that this is a good question. He has been on many boards and commissions and has learned that when members have been with a group for awhile, they either learn to balance these two interests, they leave, or they become a thorn in the side of the group.

Survey: Parks staff will send a survey to the Board to determine interest in some logistical aspects of the Board's meetings. Commissioner Holme commented that he would like to revisit how Commissioners address one another and the City staff in the public meetings. He feels that the current manner of address – "Commissioner", "Superintendent", "Deputy Superintendent" and "Mr." or "Ms.", may be offputting to the public. He asked that a more informal tone be used of referring to each other by first name. The other Commissioners agreed. The current nameplates that list the word Commissioner and the last name will be kept; however, first names will be used during the meetings.

Political Materials: It was noted that at the Board's October 25 meeting held at Graham Visitors Center, a private citizen who is a member of a City-sponsored committee, placed political materials on the agenda table and invited everyone to take a copy. In the future, the Board should ask that such political materials be removed.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
Amit Ranade, Chair
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE _____

