



Seattle Parks & Recreation

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SMITH COVE PARK DEVELOPMENT

Seattle Parks and Recreation's Planning & Development Division

Magnolia Community Center

Wednesday, February 8, 2017 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Present:

Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) Staff

- David Graves, Seattle Parks and Recreation Strategic Advisor
- Karen O'Connor, Seattle Parks and Recreation Sr. Public Relations Sp.

GGN Shannon Nichol, Tess Schiavone, Sara Zewde, and Amy Cragg

Community Members – Approximately 90 community members participated in the meeting. There were many large constituent groups from the dog-off-leash group, sand volleyball group, shoreline restoration, Little League, long-time Magnolia residents and habitat groups.

Jeanie Kohl-Wells, King County Councilmember attended. She spoke at the beginning of the meeting and highlighted the \$250,000 that King County is contributing to the project.

Project: This project develops the 4.9 acre easterly waterfront property recently acquired and makes improvements to the playfield half of Smith Cove Park (west of 23rd Avenue West) used for youth sports. It will include a restroom, improve beach access, field improvement, walking and biking trails, sand volleyball courts, dog-off-leash-area and other passive and active opportunities for all. The park will enhance opportunities for active recreation, increase environmental-sensitivity, and be inviting and usable for more people.

A. Public Comments

1. Question regarding shoreline softening and erosion: Has the team looked at the proposal with cruise ship traffic? Concerned about erosion.
 - i. David- This will not be a sandy beach, it would be a rocky beach. The team will need to do a feasibility study of the concept, including geotechnical investigations.
 - ii. Shannon- pointed out that we are not filling out from the existing shoreline, but pulling back and softening the slope from the existing shoreline.
2. FoSCP (Friends of Smith Cove Park)
 - i. The Friends have envisioned a magnificent public park here. They have been working on this for 15 years. On behalf of FoSCP, Bruce presents two priorities:
 1. A restroom is essential.
 2. Beach Access points: The Steering Committee of the Friends of Smith Cove group is advocating for two beach access points— in the northeast corner of the site and on the south end.
 - ii. FoSCP
 1. Does not agree with the pump track because this is a waterfront park. A pump track could go anywhere.
 2. Supports the effort to have more area of the park “in touch with the shoreline.” The park should have waterfront-specific activities like picnicking, walking.
 3. Supports beach volleyball but suggests moving it up to the currently shown pump track location because he'd like to see more passive open space where the beach volleyball is located.
 4. Feels there is too much sand in the proposal and would like to see some of it become grass rather than sand. Suggests sand is limited to just volleyball areas.
 - iii. FoSCP
 1. Three points:
 - a. Would like to see more walking trails. Would like to see one that goes all the way around the perimeter of the park.
 - b. The views that the park should be orienting toward are not just those of Mount Rainier. Concerned that proposed trees will block views. The trees should not block views to the water, birds, and low tide areas. Birders are interested in the shore at low tide.
 - c. Would like clarification on how the proposal will keep the tide from coming into the shore. Concerned that softened shoreline would be taking away existing park.
 - iv. FoSCP
 1. Don't need concessions or food trucks, glad those are not in the plan

2. Trees grow, they will block views. Is a biologist and doesn't think there are native trees that will grow in bioretention areas.
3. Does not think crosswalks alone will slow cars.

3. Athletic Fields/Sports:

- i. President of Magnolia Soccer
 1. Notes the "nice ideas and balance of program" in the design proposal. Thanks design team.
 2. Mickey Mantle used to play on the baseball fields here, so baseball is part of the site's heritage.
 3. Soccer fields are limited around the city. Supports the improvement to drainage and infrastructure supporting athletic fields at Smith Cove Park.
 4. Sports are played all year long; advises not to remove drainage improvement from the project construction. Drainage around the city's athletic fields are poor.
 5. Advocates for the inclusion of baseball in the first phase.
- ii. David Graves response:
 1. The field design will be similar to the Sports Meadow at Magnuson Park. (robust, high performance natural lawn)
- iii. Magnolia Little League
 1. Great to recognize what a cool site this is.
 2. In the 1940s, Smith Cove Park was the home of baseball. Now, baseball is scrambling to be a part of the new park and is a secondary program.
 3. Baseball is a significant stakeholder in the park. There are 560 kids just in the Magnolia Little League. Each of those 560 kids have families, coaches, and friends.
 4. The Magnolia Little League pays \$40,000 per year for field rental. Perhaps no other stakeholder group is "putting money in the turnstile" to use the park.
 5. The Little League is growing rapidly, at about 14% a year. And yet, the group is 10% away from maxing out the field rentals, so they are near a crisis point. They need more little league fields.
 6. Softball in Magnolia is an amazing story of encouraging girls to play sports
 7. Reminder that the additional \$250,00 from King County was specifically for youth sports.
- iv. Volleyball Advocate:
 1. An advocate for the volleyball. His group raised \$1,000 in one day. The group is not locked into a location on the site - happy to move north if needed.
 2. Thank you for providing 3 courts in the plan.
 3. Notes that beach volleyball is played all year, despite perception. (He's playing tomorrow).
- v. Field Advocate:
 1. Supports drainage for the fields. Childhood obesity is an epidemic, and youth sports is a way to grow good citizens of our society. Horrified to see that baseball is not part of the base funding of the project.

4. Urban Sparks

- i. Great to see a family-friendly park.
- ii. The family biking community is growing and he is happy to see the proposal of a pump track. Appropriate end to the Elliot Bay trail.
- iii. Pump tracks make kids and adults more confident and safer bikers. The Urban Sparks group has built the pump track at Magnuson Park.
- iv. Vows that the community will find funding to support the pump track with ease.
- v. Highly recommends keeping a pump track at the park. It will be a great draw to bring people to the park.

5. Dog Park Public Comments

- i. OLA Advocate:
 1. "This design is a Ferrari. What we need here is a minivan." Doesn't think design is practical.
 2. The dog park is a triangle which renders it useless.
 3. Does not understand why a pump track is being defined as a 'basic park' element that is fully funded and a dog park is not. Would prefer a multi-acre OLA instead.
 4. Most of the pictures in the presentation must be from winter because they don't show cruise ships. When cruise ships are docked views are not good. Therefore, people won't be sitting in the Adirondacks, as shown in rendering.
- ii. OLA Advocate:
 1. Active Play for kids is great
 2. OLA is not usable because it is too small
 3. Would like to see a study of number of people using OLA vs. number of people using the pump track at Woodland Park. Thinks numbers would not justify pump track installation.
 4. I am disheartened to see a de-prioritized OLA. People do not use the pump track at Woodlawn Park.

- iii. OLA advocate:
 1. Dog owners have been pushed to the side. There are twice as many dogs as there are kids in the City of Seattle.
 2. People have no places to exercise their dogs.
 3. Bathrooms are a good idea, but how will they be maintained and kept safe? How will maintenance be done on park?
- iv. COLA
 1. One tenth of 1% of parks in District 7 are OLAs.
 2. Twenty to thirty percent of residents in District 7 are dog owners.
 3. COLA has \$44,000 for the construction of a new OLA that this project can make use of.
 4. OLAs are places that develop community. We (dog owners) will always be there.
- v. OLA Advocate:
 1. SPR manages 154 playgrounds, but only has 14 dog parks. We don't need a playground; that is expensive. Notes to audience there is no 2nd phase.
 2. Nobody ever asked for a pump track. She has been attending meetings for this project all along. There was not a pump track at the last meeting. Doesn't understand how it appeared in the plan now.
 3. Dog parks build community.
 4. Trees will block views.
 5. Speaker outlines a personal cost estimate for a dog park (\$19,933.29).

6. General Comments:

- i. Neighbor (lives on top of bridge)
 1. Thinks we paid for fun with design, it's not practical.
 2. Taking away rip rap takes away protective edge and takes out existing park.
- ii. Great Heron Group:
 1. Pleased to see south stair in first phase.
 2. George Bloom led beach walk at SCP last year and noted the importance of the Smith Cove shoreline. It is important for people to be able to access and watch unique SCP shoreline.
- iii. General Comment
 1. Never seen a pump track in a shoreline park. It isn't compatible.
 2. Same with children's play area. There are plenty of other parks with playgrounds and doesn't feel it is necessary here.
 3. Was glad to see an image of Westward in the presentation, because it is a place where people love to go, although you have to purchase something to be there. The fire pits are a draw at Westward. Would like to see fire pits in the park. They are cheap and popular on a clear evening.
 4. Supports the ballfields and OLA- they are the biggest stakeholders here.
 5. Suggests changing the design of the curves around the play fields and moving bioretention to increase the size of the OLA.
- iv. General Comment:
 1. I have children and support the soccer field and trails. However, without an OLA, dog owners will still come and use the area anyway.
 2. I support the baseball fields, however, I imagine I won't want to use these baseball fields because the dogs will be running around on them.
 3. Suggest releasing pressure on the park by putting in an OLA.
 4. Who decides if the money will be spent on an OLA?
- v. David response:
 1. There will be an OLA at this park. We will dig into this.
- vi. "Birds, Boats, and Balls." That's what this park is about.
- vii. Commenter:
 1. I vote for the Program Spread approach (vs. the Shoreline first approach)
 2. I enjoy the waterfront. Move volleyball to pump track, to expand the area of passive engagement with waterfront.
 3. I like the crosswalks, but suggests adding stop signs or speed bumps to slow traffic
 4. Does the team have any thoughts on increasing accessibility to the park (from bridge and surrounding neighborhood)?
 - a. David response- that is beyond the scope of this project.
 5. Supportive of a connection down from Magnolia Center.
 6. The dog park should take the rest of the beach area (west of 23rd) so it can expand in size)
- viii. General Comment
 1. There are playgrounds all over the city; we don't need one here. Doesn't understand why we need one.
 2. Wants to know how rising tides (climate change) will affect the park if the rip rap is being removed. Proposes that the bio-retention area also become a dog park.
 3. Look at Westcrest dog park. This is one of the best dog parks because it has dog-specific trails that are fenced. Can some of the trails at SCP be fenced to be part of the OLA?

- ix. Commenter:
 - 1. Wants to applaud the designers for the balanced design.
 - 2. Also likes the idea of fire pits along waterfront.
 - 3. Would like to see baseball become part of the primary \$3.9 M funding.
 - 4. Votes for the shore first approach.
- x. General Comment: Speaker does not understand why we want to remove the riprap.

Thank you for participating!

