

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

JANUARY 11, 2001

Present:

Bruce Bentley, Chair
Karen Daubert
James Fearn
Susan Golub
Michael Shiosaki
Kathleen Warren
Staff: Ken Bounds, Superintendent
Michele Daly, Park Board Coordinator

The meeting was called to order by Interim Chair Bruce Bentley at 7:04 p.m. The agenda was approved as distributed.

Oral Requests and Communications from the Audience:

- **Ellen Taft** - expressed concern about dogs off-leash signage. She informed the Board that citizens continually take their dogs off leash in children's play areas. She previously visited the Board approximately a year ago and was promised signage would be installed. The Volunteer Park playground has two signs where there are no signs at the Green Lake Playground, Sand Point Junior League Playground, Miller and Madison Park Beach. She requested signage be installed at every playground in a location that is visible from the playground. Signage that states Obey the Leash Law with a second sign prohibiting dogs in the area causes confusion. The Department has placed approximately 400 signs but some of them may have been vandalized. The Department will survey the signs and see if they are placed in the right areas. Often it depends on which way someone enters a park if they'll see a sign. The Department does not want to place signs on freestanding posts that would get in someone's way. Signs do help empower enforcement but do not stop some dog owners. Animal Control needs to be called to provide enforcement. The Park Board members will also informally look at signage as they visit parks. A press release publicizing dogs in the parks regulations was also suggested.
- Ellen Taft urged the Park Board to stop the City Attorney fighting the citizen lawsuit regarding the Volunteer Park Off-Leash Dog area.
- Ellen Taft stated there seems to be a staff problem at Madison Park Beach regarding dogs and allowing dogs to swim at the beach and soil the sand.

- Ms. Taft further informed the Board she does not want her unlisted phone number nor her

e-mail addressed given out by staff, which has occurred in the past.

- **Bonnie Miller**, expressed concern that the park-like feel of Sand Point/Magnuson Park has been lost. Instead of corridors of trees there will be narrow alleys with restrictive vegetation between the fields. The number of fields has grown and they are larger. No room has been left around the edges, between the fields, and the sportsfields go into a portion of the wetland habitat educational area. Ms. Miller urges the design committee be sent back to the drawing board. She requested only one or two left fields be allowed in order to have valuable tree and walking areas between the fields.
- **Lynn Ferguson**, expressed appreciation for the Park Board's leadership on the design of the great urban park which is nearing completion. Ms. Ferguson stressed the importance of experts being involved in the project and that it be done right so the historic wetlands can work. She is concerned the fields are overlapping into the wetlands a little bit. She thinks it is important to do the projects together so "dig and dump" can be implemented with no new fill being added. Two things that kill wetlands are fill and pollution and a few soccer balls or beach balls in the area would be fine.

Superintendent's Report:

- The Mayor has forwarded to the City Council the reappointments of Bruce Bentley and James Fearn to the Park Board. The Mayor is appointing Bruce Bentley as Chair of the Board for a term ending December 21, 2002.
- The millennium monolith that appeared January 1 at the top of Kite Hill at Sand Point/Magnuson Park, then was moved to Green Lake's Duck Island, will be installed atop Kite Hill so the public can enjoy it through March, before kite season begins.
- Zoo Attendance – The 2000 attendance total was 1,127,969, about 151,000 over last year and surpasses the record high from 1996 by 4,546 visitors. The new Komodo Exhibit, the baby gorilla and elephant birth combined to help push up the attendance.
- Youth Basketball – The Department's youth basketball program kick-off was January 6. There are over 500 teams; over 6,100 boys and girls participating in the program at community center and school gyms during the next few months.

- Pro Parks Levy – Staff has completed implementation plans for the operations initiatives and has assigned leads for the various tasks. January 19 is the deadline for Citizen’s Oversight Committee applications.
- Mayor’s Retreat – The Superintendent just returned from the Mayor’s Retreat in Leavenworth; Project Lift Off, implementation of the levies and transportation are high on the agenda.
- Beacon Hill tent city has been given space by St. Marks commencing January 21. The tent city has been given permission to stay at El Centro an additional five days pass their January 16 deadline. The tent city folks have stated they would be moving to Martin Luther King, Jr. Park.

Items of Interest to the Board:

Bruce Bentley received an invitation to attend a Seattle Public Utilities Stakeholders Workshop on January 18 at the South Lake Union Armory regarding CSOs. Bruce has another volunteer commitment during that timeframe and asked if another Board member would like to attend the CSO workshop. Karen Daubert will already be attending on behalf of the Friends of Street Ends so she will also represent the Park Board.

Karen Daubert brought sparkling cider and brownies to celebrate Bruce’s Park Board chair appointment. She also distributed copies of "A Seattle Guide Map – Shoreline Street Ends" , which was done in collaboration with Friends of Street Ends, Seattle Transportation Department and Parks and Recreation.

Karen circulated a February 5 joint Friends of Seattle’s Olmsted Parks Board and Advisors meeting notice to begin brainstorming about the 2003 Centennial Celebration of the 1903 Olmsted Brothers plan for Seattle. Activities and events will be identified that would contribute toward making it a special celebration. The National Association for Olmsted Parks will be having their annual meeting in Seattle that spring as part of the events.

Karen distributed copies of a recently completed summary of plans for the Center City area, "Center City Mosaic,"prepared by The Seattle Design Commission & City Design. It summarizes the plans that have been prepared for the area during the past 15 years, including all of the neighborhood plans, and highlights the "gaps" that have yet to be addressed.

Karen questioned if the Zoo Carousel was going to come before the Park Board. The Superintendent reported the carousel proposal has been and will continue to be open to public review and comment. It is one of the many elements of the Zoo's updated Long Range Plan and its EIS, which have been the subject of several public and community meetings since the fall of 1999. The Seattle Zoological Society accepted the gift from Linda and Tom Allen. The project was carefully reviewed to ensure that the carousel would help meet the Zoo's education, conservation, exhibition and recreation goals. The public will have further opportunities to comment during the environmental review process and City Council consideration of the long range plan this spring.

Approval of Minutes: The Board approved the minutes of December 14, 2000 as distributed.

Northgate Community Center Briefing

The Superintendent introduced the community center process. The community center was funded by the 1999 renewal of the Community Center Levy. The Library was going through a siting process and there were issues around Simon (owners of Northgate Mall) developing the south parking lot, issues around Thornton Creek, and the community's Neighborhood Plan. The Department agreed several months ago to begin the community center site investigation process to coincide with the library and to look at the potential of joint location. Public workshops have been held and the Superintendent wanted to bring the Park Board up to date on the planning process.

Alan Clawson, Project Manager, briefed the Park Board of the progress to date on planning for the Northgate Community Center. The Parks Department began working with the library to get up to speed regarding the possibility of a co-location of a library and community center at Northgate. Co-location was defined as being in the same site, adjacent to one another in a campus type setting; or at a location where there is a good pedestrian route between the two facilities. A co-public meeting was held to discuss the pluses and minuses of a co-location including operation hours as libraries desire quiet where Parks has active recreational activities taking place at community centers.

In August 2000, the City, King County and Sound Transit announced a coordinated public process to help them move toward making decisions about siting public facilities in Northgate. Two public workshops were held in the fall, October 26-28 and December 1-2. The purpose of the workshops was to look collectively at the public projects including the library, community center, potential new park/open space, benefits for Thornton Creek watershed, pedestrian and bicycle features, urban art, transit facilities and light rail station, and develop concepts that guide siting and other public investments and potentially influence private investment actions in the area.

AI distributed copies of the goals, facts and working assumptions, along with a copy of a colored orthophoto of Northgate. The 1999 levy provided \$8.206 million for a full service community center for the Northgate community, including \$1.9 million for acquisition of land if necessary. The center will be a 20,000 square foot facility, which would be placed on a 60,000 square foot parcel. The center would require approximately 56 parking spaces and a small play area (2,000 square feet) is planned so the center can get licensed for before and after school day care activities. The center will include a lobby, meeting rooms, a large multi-purpose room, a commercial kitchen, a gymnasium and other amenities. Although traditional community center program includes outdoor field space, outdoor fields are not part of the community center program. In the 1993 Northgate Comprehensive Plan, the north Metro Transit Park & Ride lot would be purchased and developed into a park. King County plans to sell the Park & Ride lot and consolidate the transit parking lots south of Northgate Mall into a Metro Plaza. A Sound Transit station is also proposed for the south lot area.

Candidate sites for the community center include: south lot of mall, 5th NE & 105th (Bon Marche Tire Store site) 5th NE & 106th (commercial building) and the North Metro Park & Ride Lot. AI outlined the alternatives using Hewitt architectural drawings. The Superintendent will ultimately make a decision on the siting of the new center. The decision will be made based on public input gained at community meetings including the October and December 2000 Northgate Public Facilities Siting workshops. There may be further public process in 2001 before a siting decision is made. It is hoped to make a decision within 60 days, moving forward toward purchasing a parcel of land. It is hoped to have the full design completed by 2002 with the community center open in 2004.

Working Assumptions: Siting—parcel size dependent on site, potential for co-location with other facility; design -multi-story community center difficult because of higher operational costs and because of potential programming limitations, existing budget does not allow for 20,000 square foot building and structured parking; Co-Location *With Library*—co-location preferred in separate buildings, perhaps campus setting because community center associated noise; similar peak hours so shared use of lobby, parking, meeting rooms would not make operational sense; *With Housing*—program limitations because of noise; *With Retail/Commercial/Other Agency Uses*—noise issue could be a problem. If the center is developed within large high rise development, hours and operations of facility will not be dictated by retail, commercial, or other agency needs.

The Superintendent added that the decision is a difficult one as Parks is rather a "bit" player in terms of the siting issue as it relates to the development of the south parking lot site. There are community concerns regarding the Thornton Creek issue. There are some individuals that would like to see the whole south lot green and the creek daylighted, and there are some individuals who would like the creek daylighted to prevent a large development. Simon has the south parking lot up for sale for \$25 million. It is embroiled in lawsuits because of the

general development plan they put together for the whole "super" block. If the south parking lot gets developed a new general development plan will be necessary. If the area gets subdivided and is less than six acres they do not have to go through the master planning permit process. Once the land is sold and different permitting plans are developed, the lawsuit would be dropped because the lawsuit was filed against a specific development and developer.

The Department is trying to be partners and at the same time making sure its interests are represented. The Department, like the Library, does not want to get caught up in a long drawn out legal process that will not allow the project to be accomplished. The Superintendent asked the Park Board to consider what role it wants to play in helping with the siting process and staff will provide specific briefings on the alternatives, review the pros and cons, and conduct site visits if desired. The Park Board will be informed of all future community meetings regarding the Northgate Community Center.

Arboretum Master Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement Briefing

The Superintendent introduced the master plan process to the Board. Donald Harris, Manager of Parks and Recreational Environmental Services and Peter Marshall, Parks Project Manager, briefed the Board on the master plan for the Washington Park Arboretum. The Department, University of Washington and the Arboretum Foundation released "Renewing the Washington Park Arboretum," a proposed long-range master plan for the Arboretum on January 4, 2001. Copies were included in the Park Board's packets. The Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the plan was released simultaneously.

The master plan ensures the Arboretum will effectively fulfill three primary purposes: conservation, recreation and education for decades to come. Key elements include renovation of 30 existing plant exhibits and creation of 21 new plant exhibits; reorientation of some pedestrian trails, construction of a pedestrian/bicycle trail along Lake Washington Boulevard; renovation and expansion of existing facilities in the vicinity of the Graham Visitors Center; construction of a new pavilion and entrance to the Japanese Garden; addition of two pedestrian overpasses, one across Lake Washington and one across Foster Island Drive; traffic improvements, and other minor modifications.

The Arboretum was part of the 1936 Olmsted Plan. The 1978 Master Plan focused mostly on function: traffic, pedestrian circulation, facilities and did not focus on the mission or identity of the Arboretum. Too little funding has left the Arboretum with problems including dying and ailing species, security and traffic issues, too few staff, too few restrooms, too few interpretive signs and difficulty becoming oriented to the park. The latest planning effort began in 1994 with the Hinshaw/Hudson scoping document which led to the selection of the Portico Group to conduct the Master Plan process. Portico in 1997 issued three documents comprising "A Greenprint for the Future." In 1998, 1999 and 2000,

hundreds of citizens participated in an extensive public review process. The Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee's work in 2000, incorporating public comments, led to this plan.

The Arboretum will not be fenced nor will a general admission fee be charged. The concept of admission fees was included in the Plan's first draft only as a discussion of possible sources of revenue to support the maintenance and programs of the Arboretum.

New building space will be clustered near the existing buildings at the Graham Visitors Center and between the south end of the playfield and the Japanese Garden entrance. The only new construction at Madrona Terrace would be a 300 square foot open-side interpretive shelter with an adjoining 30 space parking lot.

The Plan proposes to enhance the north entrance to the Arboretum. For the foreseeable future, Lake Washington Boulevard would intersect SR 520 and Foster Island Drive much as it does today. The plan proposes to relocate a small portion of the north end of Arboretum Drive. To improve safety a pedestrian path may be constructed alongside Arboretum Drive, separating foot and auto traffic.

The Plan also proposes several parking, pedestrian and bicycle amenities for improved public safety and recreational access.

Visitor services eventually may include limited beverage and snack service for which there is demand from current visitors. Such service might be on the small scale of a tearoom and would be oriented to visitors in the park.

The Arboretum's educational, meeting, maintenance and office facilities are filled to capacity. There is no place to store informational and support materials; facilities for school groups are inadequate, maintenance is awkward and difficult and many classes and activities go unscheduled because of the lack of space. The Plan proposes augmenting the Visitors Center with an educational "gateway" structure and a small building for curatorial activities and use of the Museum of History and Industry building for some administrative and support functions that do not need to be located in the Arboretum. Maintenance and operations buildings would remain in their current locations, with renovation and modest expansion. If the Plan is approved, the total developed area in the Arboretum would still be less than 1% of the total area. Foster Island will be developed by developing one open educational shelter.

A "Comparison of the Proposed Master Plan with Previous Plans and Existing Development" was reviewed. The existing greenhouse space would be increased from 5,175 to 5,400 square feet..

The Arboretum Plan will be presented to the Seattle City Council and the University of Washington Board of Regents for formal adoption. The City Council is scheduled to consider and take action on the master plan over the next several months. The Department will be briefing the Council prior to a joint Council-Park

Board hearing which is tentatively scheduled for February 28 at 6:00 p.m. The Park Board would review, discuss and make a recommendation to the Superintendent at its March 8 meeting.

Karen Daubert praised the collaborative effort among the agencies. She inquired if there was a way to take items from the concept Plan and EIS and develop guidelines for future reference. Donald Harris stated during the next few weeks staff will be taking items from the EIS and making an appendage of mitigation standards.

James Fearn inquired what structure the Council will be taking in approving the Plan. Donald Harris stated the Council would be passing a resolution adopting the master plan, two drawings and mitigation standards.

Kathleen Warren inquired if the Bicycle groups had any concerns. Commuter bicycling will still occur and the users will continue to be concerned about cars. The installation of a new type of drain plates was suggested for the roadway. It was suggested the Bicycle group prepare a letter to go on record. Rollerblading will be covered in the Use Management Guideline document. A concern was expressed that instead of concrete pathways, a hard surface be placed on the paths.

Susan Golub stated she thought the plan was wonderful and very responsive to the numerous concerns expressed at the public meetings over the years.

Bruce Bentley stated the Plan is a good balance between Parks and the Arboretum. He remembers hearing building concerns expressed at the various workshops; the plan only allows a small amount construction with other users being housed off-site.

Sand Point/Magnuson Park Sportsfields Briefing

In 1997 the City Council adopted a reuse plan for the Naval Station. The plan was developed over six years. The Blue Ribbon Task Force reported to the Mayor and Seattle City Council in February 1999. The Committee conducted a comprehensive review and assessment of the park. A Citizens Plan was used as the base plan for the design process. The Superintendent informed the Board that in November of 1999, the City Council approved Resolution 30063 which adopted the Sand Point Magnuson Park Conceptual Design. The plan defined an off-leash dog area, habitat areas, parking and vehicle circulation and sportsfields. In addition to approving the design, the Resolution also called on the department to report back to the Council on two items: Sportsfields and the Long Range Plan. The Department was directed to conduct a public process and report the findings, possible impact mitigation measures and recommendations by December 31, 2000 on the possibility of lighting and using all weather playing surfaces on two sportsfields adjacent to the sports meadow. In addition, the

Executive was directed to recommend the number, type and configuration, surface material and lighting of sportsfields that may be appropriately located just north of the 65th Street entrance to Magnuson Park.

C. David Hughbanks, Director of Sand Point/Magnuson Park Division, informed the Board that

there was a large and vocal contingent of sportsfield supporters that weighed in on the debate over the number, types and configuration during the development process and Council's deliberation of the design. Many of those advocates have continued to develop alternative designs. Key considerations included orientation of the sportsfields (north-south-east-west), parking and restroom access, outdoor sports courts, pedestrian pathways, placing similar field types adjacent to one another, providing drainage for these fields and courts, and connecting peninsula-wide drainage to the proposed Magnuson Wetlands. The department reviewed the configuration of all of the sportsfields and outdoor courts. In this review three key principles were followed: there will be no fewer sportsfields than the number approved by the Council, the sportsfields and outdoor courts complex use approximately the same amount of land area that was approved by the Council; and the basic design quality in and around the fields needs to facilitate trees and walkways. This process has resulted in a possible proposed modified configuration for the sportsfields. A public workshop was held December 9. A Park Board hearing is scheduled for January 25 at 6:00 p.m.. The Department expects to ask the Council to review the new configuration in February.

The primary features of the Council Resolution Athletic Facilities Configuration included: 4 lighted synthetic adult soccer fields, 2 unlit natural grass adult soccer fields, 2 unlit natural grass rugby fields, 3 lighted synthetic turf softball fields (300' outfield), 2 lighted synthetic turf baseball fields, 1-400 meter synthetic track, 6 outdoor tennis courts, 6 indoor tennis courts, 3 basketball course and 760 parking spaces.

Eric Gold distributed copies of the "Configuration Alternatives and Recommendation" dated January 11, 2000 to the Board members. There were two alternatives produced by Friends of Athletic Fields and two alternatives produced by the Department of Parks and Recreation in response to the Friends concepts. Diagrams showing the primary features of the alternatives were displayed in the Board room. Eric briefly described the configurations. The geometry of the fields, the parking and how they all fit together was reviewed. The Department's Alternative 2 is the recommended configuration. It includes a meadow area which will be unlit, natural grass and used for Frisbee, youth soccer, adult soccer, flag football and lacrosse. The meadow area would contain space for four fields. The plan includes 1 lit, synthetic turf rugby field, 2 lit, synthetic turf baseball fields, 3 lit, synthetic turf softball/Little League fields, 1 outdoor seasonal inline skate-hockey rink, 6 indoor tennis courts, 4 seasonally

covered (convertible) tennis courts, 4 outdoor (three-season) tennis courts, 1 cross-country course, 1.1 mile and 2 mile circuits (shown as blue line on configuration), 850 total parking spaces (athletic facilities core) and 3 stand alone restroom buildings. The fields will be developed to the highest possible standards for the primary sport for which they are designed. A cloverleaf arrangement will not be used. Each adult field can be converted to two youth ("mod") fields. It is planned to have the fast-pitch batters in the southwest looking to the northeast for safety reasons.

Michael Shiosaki asked how wide the proposed dog run would be, adjacent to the off-leash exercise area. It would be along the existing fence of the NOAA property and would be 12 foot wide gravel with a 4 foot wide wood fiber shoulder on either side. There is a significant grade change in this area.

Kathleen Warren inquired what the red line on Alternative 2 indicates. Eric stated the red line is basically the footprint of the City Council's sportsfields Resolution. The line shows where the Alternative 2 encroaches and where it actually pulls back. Kathleen inquired if artificial turf could be placed in the meadow area instead of natural turf. The Superintendent responded stated the natural meadow area can be looked at in association with the athletic fields as well as Kite Hill. There is a shortage of meadow space in the city. Kathleen stated artificial turf could look better than grass. Expense is a major consideration as well as natural aesthetics. Eric stated the cost of the infrastructure is the most expensive part. An artificial carpet is estimated to last 8-12 years. The meadow will be a great lawn area that will not be scheduled during the winter and allow general use. If it were to be artificial turf, it would most likely be heavily scheduled. The field lighting will be the newest technology possible. There is a Lighting Study underway in the Department. There will be spectator viewing areas. It is hoped to do all the fields at once which would be completed in two years and the wetlands completed in three years. An inventory of who is using fields throughout the city is underway, per Patti Petecsh. Kathleen stated there currently are not enough fields available in the city for soccer groups and it will be great to have a soccer facility within the city that is proposed at Sand Point/Magnuson.

Karen Daubert referenced the comments presented to the Board earlier in the meeting from Bonnie Miller and Lynn Ferguson regarding trees, walking areas and the wetland habitat educational area.. The cross country track is 100 feet away from the wetlands. The areas in between the baseball and soccer fields is approximately 75 feet wide. Fully mature shade trees, 30 feet in diameter, are planned for the walking corridors. Buffers are planned for the Children's Play Area and Dogs Off-Leash area. The number of parking spaces will be increased by 45. A Vegetation Study is planned for 2001.

Susan Golub inquired about the differences of the Department's Alternative 1 & 2 plans. Eric stated it is simply the size and number of the baseball fields; the decision to go with the three fast-pitch/Little League fields. This would allow Little

League tournaments to be held in the city. There has been an infinite combination of ways of putting the fields together during the design process. The Rugby organization has agreed to using a synthetic turf field.

Bruce Bentley inquired if pesticides would be used and would there be a potential for wetland pollution. Nothing will be used that would harm any living creature. The wetlands will contribute to drainage of the park and the Department of Fish & Wildlife is working with Parks in how the wetlands fit into the biosystems around Lake Washington and what long term education programs can be developed.

New Business/Old Business:

Levy Oversight Committee: The Park Board will select one member to serve on the Oversight Committee. Susan Golub and Karen Daubert both expressed an interest to serve on the Committee. There will be one Park Board member and three Pro Parks members selected to serve on the 16-member committee.

Park Naming Committee: Bruce Bentley will continue to serve on the Naming Committee until a replacement is found.

A search is underway to find a Park Board member to fill Margaret Ceis' position.

Future Agenda: The length of the past two meetings is of concern to the Board members. The January 25 meeting will commence at 6:00 p.m. to accommodate the Sand Point/Magnuson Park Sportsfields public hearing as well as the Proposed Tree Policy Public Hearing. It was suggested to place a 3 minute speaker limit notation on the agenda for the "Oral Requests and Communications" agenda item, as well as on the public hearing agendas. A timer can be also be used.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

APPROVED: _____ DATE: _____
Bruce Bentley, Chair