

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
MEETING MINUTES  
JUNE 14, 2001

Present:

Bruce Bentley, Chair  
Karen Daubert  
James Fearn  
Kathleen Warren

Excused:

Susan Golub  
Yale Lewis

Staff:

Ken Bounds, Superintendent  
Michele Daly, Park Board Coordinator

Chair Bruce Bentley called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Consent items including the agenda of June 14, minutes of May 24, 2000, correspondence and a Revocable Use Permit for Picardo P-Patch Access/University Prep Academy at 8000 25th NE/Demolish and Reconstruct Retaining Wall/Relocate P-Patch Path were approved as submitted. Correspondence included letters from Darla S. Morton regarding the Willow street end in Southeast Seattle, invitation to attend the June 30 Gas Works Park Grand Reopening, Kinnear Park landslide mitigation project June 27 planning meeting, new Park Guides and a Vegetation Management Plan public meeting notice for June 20, 2001 at Sand Point/Magnuson Park.

Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience: None

Superintendent's Report:

**Perkins Lane slide lawsuit** – The Court of Appeals upheld the Superior Court ruling that the Department did not have control of natural occurrences and our ownership of the uphill property did not make the City responsible.

**Sand Point/Magnuson Park Wetlands Forum** was a success. Approximately 50 people attended. Discussion included what kinds of wetlands are going to be developed, started to define options and the relationship to the athletic field.

**Seattle Works Award** – Parks and Recreation won three awards this year: Phil Renfrow won the Environmental Stewardship category for his work in pesticide reduction; Patricia Warberg won in the Customer Service category, and Langston Hughes/Yesler Community Center won in the Inspiration Category for their work on the citywide teen musicals

**Project Lift Off/DSHS Certification** – Our community centers’ Out of School Time Programs for kids ages 5 to 12 years old are certified to accept DSHS subsidies for those families who qualify.

**Seattle Works Day** – Volunteers worked hundreds of hours on June 9 to accomplish very different tasks. Volunteers worked in wetlands, pulled ivy, grubbed out trails, dug out blackberry, cut down invasives and spread mulch.

**Skateboard Public Meeting** - A public meeting was held last week to share the proposed skateboard site change. 30 community members attended the meeting. Originally Golden Gardens had been targeted as the skateboard park location. The location was changed with the purchase of the Safeway site for the Ballard Municipal Center. The Safeway site offers better access and visibility. Work should begin in late June.

**Pro Parks Levy Oversight** – Opportunity Fund – On June 12 the Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee approved draft criteria for the first \$5 million cycle of the Opportunity Fund and set July 24 as the date they will hear public comment on their recommended draft. The draft criteria allocates \$1 million for development projects and \$4 million for acquisition projects. Of the \$4 million allocated for acquisition, the Committee recommends that \$1 million be available through an application process, and \$3 million to be set aside for those urban center villages that are underserved in parks and open space, are projected to receive significant population, growth, and did not receive significant levy funds to increase usable open space. Accordingly, the targeted urban center villages are: University District, Denny Triangle and Pioneer Square/International District. Parks’ staff will publicize the Committee’s draft criteria and the July 24 meeting to take public comment. The Committee has discussed and refined the draft criteria for several months. Their goal has been to support the Council’s priorities as laid out in the levy ordinance and translate them into well-defined criteria and a clear process for potential applicants. After the July 24 public comments, the Committee will further deliberate and draft their final criteria recommendations.

**Seaboard Lumber Aquatic Habitat Restoration** – The Seaboard site, renamed Herrings House Park, was dedicated on June 4th, at a high tide that brought juvenile salmon into the new intertidal basin on the Duwamish River.

**Jefferson Park Festival** – Over 2000 people attended the Beacon Hill Festival on June 2nd at Jefferson Park. The event draws a diversity of residents, businesses and non-profit organizations and is a great community builder.

**Gas Works Park** – The grand reopening ceremony for Gas Works Park is scheduled for June 30.

**Audubon Event at Seward Park** – On June 7 Governor Locke and John Flicker, President of the National Audubon Society, spoke at a kick-off event held in Seward Park to celebrate the future site of the Seward Park Audubon Nature Center. The next steps in the process to formalize the agreement between Parks and the Audubon will occur on June 27 when Parks staff will address the Culture, Arts and Parks Committee, and request

a Council Resolution allowing Parks to enter into a formal Memorandum of Understanding. The MOU will allow the Department to move ahead in developing a formal, legal use agreement. Audubon is contributing \$1 million to the creation of the education center in Seward Park.

Items of Interest to the Board:

Kathleen attended two School District meetings regarding field lighting. Wilson-Pacific neighbors would like field lighting and artificial turf but does not have adequate funding. They currently have \$700,000. The neighbors would like to add money and apply for grants. The School District seems to be discouraging the neighbors as the neighbors have told Kathleen the School District is worried if other agencies put money into the school field, the School District would lose total control over the field. The Superintendent will bring this issue up at the next School/Parks meeting. The Nathan Hale meeting was divided about the issue of lights. Bruce Bentley attended the Sealth meeting and people were in favor of field lights at the complex. The Sealth community is concerned about facility access by the neighborhood residents.

**Karen Daubert** – If any Board members have questions regarding the Willow Street end relating to the correspondence received in the Board packet, Karen will provide information.

Karen is pleased with the new Park Guide edition and is happy to see street names included on the maps.

Karen would like thank you notes sent to the North Division and the South Creek tour guides. The tours were very enjoyable and informative.

Bruce Bentley attended the retirement party for Bev Harke, South Division, last week. Pat Warberg, Yesler Community Center, has also recently retired. The Department will be losing many employees in the near future to retirement as employees near 30 years of service. An Employee Involvement Committee is looking at leadership mentoring and how to deal with this issue. This issue is not unique to Parks as it is a baby boomer phenomenon.

Bruce spoke to Parks staff members who recently attended a Teen Advisory Council conference in Phoenix. He is excited about the prospect of advisory councils for our community centers as well as the suggestion of a Teen Park Board member.

Bruce circulated a letter he is sending Don Nielsen, Seattle School Board Chair, requesting a meeting to discuss some of the common interests and issues that both Boards face.

Cascade Park Site Plans & Building Status Report:

Kerry Lasko, Parks and Recreation Manager of Central-West Sector, briefed the Park Board of the Cascade Park Site Plans and Building Status. Kerry introduced guests in the audience including: Sandy Pernitz (P-Patch), Colleen Dody (former Cascade

Neighborhood Council treasurer), Steve \_\_\_\_\_ (NSC), Robin Russell, Linda Moore (Giving Garden), Christine Lea (Cascade People's Center) and Boots Winterstein (Executive Director Lutheran Social Services). A site plan was displayed and referenced. In 1994 the Council authorized the Department to purchase the property at the southwest corner of Cascade Park at Minor and Thomas. In 1995 the Department purchased mid-block property and the lots at the southeast corner of Cascade Park. These purchases expanded the park to a full square block. The City Council directed the Department to initiate a planning process for the development of the entire park. Nakano/Dennis, Landscape Architects, was hired and staff formed a citizen advisory committee to assist with the planning effort. Through a public process seven alternative site schemes were developed and after many meetings two were selected by the advisory committee. Subsequently, the Council adopted both site plans. The only difference between the two schemes is that one retains an existing building for "community purposes" and the other replaces the building with open space for "community gardens." Two schemes were adopted because neither the Cascade community at large nor the advisory committee could agree on a single scheme.

Several developments have occurred in the park since the 1994/95 Council actions. A P-Patch was installed in the southwest corner and is included in both adopted site plans. The Seattle Times vacated the building in the park that was being used as a day care for employees' children in 1998. The Cascade Neighborhood Council developed a salvage nursery and open space in the southeast corner of the park. The comfort station was renovated in 1999. A rain harvest project was installed south of the building in 1999. The P-Patch was expanded in 2000. In July 2000 the Department entered into a one-year agreement with the Cascade Neighborhood Council for use of half of the building as a community classroom.

The Department contracted with Domoto Architects in February 2001 for an evaluation of the building with costs estimates for demolition and improvements. Parks staff conducted a public meeting in March regarding which of the two schemes to pursue. Approximately 40 people attended the meeting. All who attended supported keeping the building as a community classroom. Staff also received 14 written, e-mail and telephone responses, and all but one supported keeping the building. At the meeting, staff informed the community members that the Department did not have funding to renovate or operate the building. A business plan was requested on how the community could renovate and operate the building.

The Cascade Neighborhood Council submitted a Cascade Community Classroom Business Plan to Parks staff this week. This proposal recommends that the Parks Department enter into a 15-year agreement with Lutheran Social Services of Washington and Idaho for the phased renovation and operation of the building as the Cascade People's Center. Some of the services that are provided are generally considered park and recreation services. There may be Initiative 42 issues with the uses currently proposed for this park owned building. The Cascade Neighborhood Council and Lutheran Social Services of Washington has applied for a Community Development Block Grant. They are also requesting a portion of the Pro Parks Levy funds be designated for renovation of

the children's play area and other improvements in Cascade Park be used for the building. In terms of ongoing costs the business plan proposes to have Parks partner with Lutheran Social Services by not charging for rent or utilities. An alternative is to relocate the People's Center to another site in the neighborhood that is not Park property.

Cascade is part of the South Lake Union urban village. In terms of open space it is served by South Lake Union Park on the north and Denny Park and Playfield on the south. Cascade Park is the only public open space in between. The Gap Report shows there are gaps in usable open space in the neighborhood.

The Board of Park Commissioners scheduled a public hearing on the Cascade Park Site Plans and Building on June 28, 2001 at 7:30 p.m. in the Park Board Room.

### Regrade Park Redevelopment Project

Toby Ressler, Project Manager, presented a briefing to the Board members. In February 2000 a public meeting was held regarding making some drastic changes to Regrade Park (3rd & Bell) including removal of the Gyro Jack, increased lighting and security fencing. Some of the people attending that meeting stated that the problems would never be fixed unless there is a redesign of the park and additionally stated the park has been redeveloped and redesigned to encourage a safer place to no avail.

GGLO Architects was selected in April of 2000 to develop a new vision for the park through a full community process, including the Seattle Design Commission, Arts Commission and Parks review. In June of 2000 GGLO led a visioning session. Public response included: the park should be a green oasis, visible throughout, host Belltown events, retain basketball and that the Gyro Jack sculpture is considered a disadvantage to the current park.

Following the visioning meeting a number of meetings between Belltown activists and GGLO were held on site in July 2000. Artists Buster Simpson and Jack Machie and local architects Greg Waddell and Carolyn Geise reviewed early design sketches. This approach emphasized letting the community program the park, taking the design outside of the property lines and into the alley, sidewalks and intersection, redesigning the bus stop and combining the court with a multipurpose space.

From the first public meeting, advisory sessions and discussions with the Department, three concepts were developed: 1) The Bosc – shows more active, basketball court area with surrounding trees and seating area along the south wall. The Gyro Jack was removed in this concept plan. 2) The Spiral – shows a passive, terraced open area ringed by trees surrounding a central fountain which extended to form a moat around Lloyd Hamrol's Gyro Jack and 3) the Circle, which showed a very passive, open mound area in the middle with trees surrounding the circle and seating along the south wall. The Gyro Jack is still shown in this concept plan.

Survey comments regarding the basketball court were mostly favorable. Other comments received from a survey included how the basketball takes away green space, try to use the basketball court as part of the scheduled events and integrate it into the Spiral concept, maintenance and health problems with the water feature may occur, community is split on removing the artwork, and some interest exists in an automatic toilet.

The three concept plans were presented to the Design Commission in September 2000. The Design Commission's general recommendations included: approve the design team's topological approach and urged the team to avoid making design decisions based on current perceived frustrations with the site, explore "syncopated" spiral scheme which engages the corner and intersection, explore an expansion of the ground plane treatment outside of the property lines, narrow the focus and program elements, retain porous western edge (do not close off alley), retention of the Gyro Jack in the scheme requires participation of the artist in the design. The Design Commission does not support destruction of the artwork.

Toby outlined the alternatives: 1) follow Parks' Core Committee and community recommendation for the Spiral Concept refinement with provisions for a basketball court and removal of Gyro Jack. Removal of the artwork is approved by Core but only 50/50 approval from the community, 2) follow the Design Commission recommendation for a Spiral approach to a very green park that engages the sidewalks, intersection and alley while subsidiary, programmable hard surface social space. Basketball de-emphasized or removed. Work with artists to integrate artwork sculpture into the new vision. The Seattle Arts Commission agrees with this alternative. GGLO Architects also recommends this alternative and, 3) leave the park as currently designed.

Programming issues are being discussed along with the design issues. The community and Department staff will continue to work with the consultant. The Police Department has reviewed the design concepts.

James Fearn inquired if the Board needed to take any action on the design concepts. The Superintendent stated no action is necessary but any advice would be helpful. Karen Daubert favors the Circle concept and basketball court. If the studies show that the basketball court attracts the wrong crowd she would be persuaded that the court should not be retained. The Department may pursue relocating the bus shelter. Karen would like to see the park as open as possible with lots of visibility. Kathleen stated it would be nice to have the Park redesigned but the current social problems may remain. Toby remarked that a redesign would help the Department program the park, whether it is movies, concerts or barbecues. The park also needs to have something that happens naturally in the space. James noted that other downtown parks have a lot of foot traffic compared to Regrade Park. You can program the park but after the program the park would revert to the present activities. The Board of Park Commissioners did not select a design concept at this meeting. The Department will continue working with the community and consultant.

Belltown Community Center Briefing

Toby Ressler previously distributed the Belltown Neighborhood Center Programming and Feasibility Study to the Park Board members. Guests in the audience were acknowledged, including Carolyn Geise (Belltown), Scott Nodland (LIHI), Sharon Lee (LIHI), Barbara Sheldon (Denny Hill), Zander Batchelder (Belltown Community Center Chair), Greg Waddell (Carlson Architects) and Al Levine (FHA).

The 1999 Community Center Levy provided \$1.910 million for a new community center for the Belltown community, including the leasing or purchasing of space, and build out of that space, if required. The project will include approximately 5,000 square feet that will possibly include a multi-purpose room, kitchen and spaces for classes, community meetings and celebrations. A new community center will serve as the civic focal point for the neighborhood and be available for public use such as public meetings, classes and rentals.

The Department has been exploring space availability with the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) and Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI). The Denny Hill Association, on behalf of the Belltown neighborhood, received \$35,000 in Early Implementation Funds from the City to prepare the feasibility and programming study. Approximately 10,000 copies of a one-page survey were distributed and 300 responses were analyzed. The YWCA and Senior Services are building new projects in Belltown with facilities and programs that will complement those provided in the new Neighborhood Center.

Twelve sites were evaluated and three were identified as being viable locations: the first floor of the new Lower Income Housing Institute housing project on First Avenue, the first floor and courtyard of SHA's Bell Tower on First Avenue, and the existing site of Angeline's Day Center for Homeless Women being relocated across 3rd Avenue to the new YWCA facility (Pathe Building). The three alternatives were presented to the community on August 16, 2000. At that meeting concern was expressed that both Angeline's and Bell Tower will have a perceived "legacy" of previous use that will carry over to the Neighborhood Center. Based on the input of the community at public meetings and in response to an outreach survey, the Denny Hill Association and Belltown Community Council recommended the Department begin negotiations with the three identified property owners in priority order: 1) Low Income Housing Institute, 2) Seattle Housing Authority and 3) YWCA.

The new low-income housing project will be built by the Low Income Housing Institute and will include one level of underground parking and five stories of housing above the ground floor. LIHI will house their offices in the rear half of the ground floor and has offered the front half of the ground floor as a Neighborhood Center. LIHI officials feel that the Neighborhood Center would be an ideal fit with the other uses in their new facilities. There is also the possibility of expansion at that site as LIHI owns the adjacent building.

Bell Tower is a Seattle Housing Authority facility that serves elderly, low-income and disabled citizens. The tower is set back from the sidewalk approximately 35 feet and is a source of concern for SHA due to undesirable activities that occur in that area. If the

Neighborhood Center were located at this site, a new addition would be extended to the sidewalk for all, or most of the building's width, thus eliminating the courtyard. The current Bell Tower community room would be integrated into the new addition to become part of the Neighborhood Center space. In both instances the Neighborhood Center would have a dedicated entry that would be separate from the entrance to other uses in the buildings.

A public meeting was held earlier this year to discuss the pros and cons of the facilities and what would work best for the community. The YWCA Angeline facility is two stories and would not work out for the Department. Also, the YWCA would have much the same services as the community center would have. It was decided to work with LIHI and SHA to see if an agreement could be developed. The community came to the Department and asked why the Department was not going to purchase the space because what would the community do once the lease ended. The Department is trying to work out a deal to purchase the space with SHA and LIHI. The issue comes down to what does the Department get for the money as well as the timing.

Both the timeframes given by LIHI and SHA are 18-24 months. LIHI has come forward and stated it can build the center for the amount of money available. SHA is trying to find out what the square footage cost of their facility would be worth. SHA met with the Community Advisory Committee on June 11, 2001. SHA had made a proposal to do a lease. The amount of their lease was essentially tied into what was ultimately the construction costs, with some variables, and SHA felt it could deliver the finished product in 18 months. At the meeting on Monday a number was given out to what the Department thought it could purchase the space for in the LIHI project. SHA does not know at this time if they could deliver space for that number. Another idea given at the Monday meeting was SHA's facade possibly could have housing above and SHA is willing to look at the ideas. SHA would need three weeks or a month to pursue analysis for the ideas the community raised. SHA needs more time because of the purchase rather than lease idea.

James Fearn went on record to state he worked for SHA and has not been involved in any of these discussions and will not be participating in the Board's discussion of the community center.

The Project Advisory Committee has been waiting a long time for the center and doing the project right, in the right place, for the right amount of money is the issue, not time Zander Batchelder stated. The deal being made will be with the community of Belltown not SHA or LIHI. There are a lot of commonalities and good characteristics with each proposal. The community's first choice is the LIHI site.

Karen Daubert moved the Board of Park Commissions recommend to the Superintendent the Department proceeds with the LIHI site as its first priority

Kathleen Warren stated she would not have a problem of waiting a month to see SHA's proposal and praised LIHI's accomplishments throughout Seattle. The Superintendent

stated the Department is prepared to move ahead and thinks LIHI will make this work but if for some reason it does not then a deal may be possibly worked out with SHA.  
Kathleen Warren seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.**

**New Business/Old Business:**

A Park Board representative is being sought to serve on the North Waterfront Access Committee to fill Michael Shiosaki's vacancy. The Superintendent will discuss the Committee's work with Michael and see what is involved.

Karen Daubert displayed an article on the Calder sculptures.

The Department will be briefing the Council's Culture, Arts and Parks Committee of the Sand Point/Magnuson Park Implementation Plan and Public Involvement Plan on June 27th.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bruce Bentley, Chair