

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
JULY 26, 2001

Present:

Bruce Bentley, Chair
Karen Daubert
James Fearn
Kathleen Warren

Absent:

Susan Golub
Yale Lewis

Staff:

Patricia McInturff, Deputy Superintendent
Michele Daly, Park Board Coordinator

Chair Bruce Bentley called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. The Consent Items were approved as submitted, including approval of the July 26 agenda, approval of meeting minutes of June 28, revocable use permits for gas service line at 926 Lake Washington Boulevard South and a driveway and parking at 1348 Interlaken Boulevard.

Kathleen Warren requested the “he” referred to in July 12 minutes, Page 6, 2nd paragraph regarding Cascade Park be clarified. Bruce Bentley’s name will be inserted in the place of “he” in the minutes. The minutes of July 12, 2001 were approved as corrected.

Correspondence acknowledgment included: letter to Jennifer Naimy and Robert Raphael regarding South Willow Street-end park, Zoo Parking/Traffic Workshops media advisory, letter of response to David Christie regarding Victor Steinbrueck Park noise, letter from the City Council Culture, Arts & Parks Committee regarding Cascade Park, letter to Darla Morton regarding South Willow Street, Leo Lassen Legacy Project Notice from Gene Buck, Justin Trish letter regarding beach fires at Golden Gardens Park, Laurelhurst Community Club letters regarding expresso cart contract at Magnuson Park and the Radford Court Apartments sidewalk, Sand Point/Magnuson Park Capital Improvement Phasing Plan, Public Involvement and Communications Plan and Consolidated Project Implementation Schedule, letter from Licton Springs regarding renaming of North Seattle Park, and an e-mail copy to Mayor from Laurelhurst Community Council regarding Sand Point Involvement Plan.

Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience

None

South Lake Union Park Use by Teatro ZinZanni – Briefing

Michele Finnegan, Superintendent’s Staff Analyst, provided a briefing on the

background, community process, permit status, issues for consideration and action requested on the proposal by Teatro ZinZanni to use a portion of South Lake Union Park for its antique tent dinner theater for approximately 18-24 months.

From September 1998 through January 2000, One Reel Productions produced Teatro ZinZanni in Seattle. This production occurred on property near the Seattle Center that was leased to the City by the Kreielsheimer Foundation. The City in turn subleased it to One Reel for this purpose. Teatro ZinZanni is a dinner theater that includes a five-course meal and entertainment including cirque artists, contortionists, aerial artists, jugglers and illusionists. The property previously utilized for the production at the Seattle Center is no longer available.

One Reel, Parks staff and the Maritime Heritage Foundation held a preliminary meeting to discuss the South Lake Union use. One Reel presented the concept to South Lake Union Park neighborhood groups in July. One Reel also met with local business leaders in July to discuss this proposal. The City Council Culture, Arts and Parks Committee has requested a briefing on this proposal prior to the Department of Parks and Recreation making a final decision.

One Reel will be requesting necessary permits from the Department of Construction and Land Use for this proposal. Locating Teatro ZinZanni at South Lake Union does not interfere with the proposed construction timeline for the park and the Maritime Heritage Center. Locating the dinner theater at South Lake Union park will increase the number of visitors to the park and will provide an increased park awareness. The Department has heard both support and concern for this temporary park use.

Virginia Swanson, Special Events Coordinator, reported on her attendance at meetings with the Parks Superintendent, One Reel, Maritime Heritage Society and Center for Wooden Boats representatives. After gaining approval of the Maritime Heritage Society and Center for Wood Boats, staff and One Reel representatives met with the South Lake Union Neighborhood Planning group. There were some issues centered on parking and congestion of the Mercer/Valley street corridor but they were supportive of the project. A meeting was held with local business representatives in the area. One business representative asked if it was an appropriate use of the park and another asked if the dinner theater would be in competition with neighborhood restaurants. Others at the business representatives meeting stated they looked forward to the park being a destination site during Teatro ZinZanni's run and that it was a great way to introduce the park to the public. Donald Harris, Parks Environmental Services Manager, stated the theater would be a permitted shoreline use.

Jane Zalutsky, One Reel executive, informed the Board that the dinner theater timeframe would be two years. They are hoping to open on April Fools Day, 2002 and run through April 2004. It was noted it takes the majority of that time to pay the event back. One Reel is a 501-C3, non-profit organization. The event was successful in Seattle in 1998 and is currently entertaining audiences in San Francisco. There are other cities that would like

One Reel to consider visiting. The One Reel Board's first commitment is to the city that they live and work in and if they are considering a second show that it be held in Seattle.

Kathleen Warren stated she has a concern about the dinner theater as an appropriate use of the park. She enjoyed the 1998 theater performance and stated every thing One Reel is involved in is always first quality. Donald Harris stated appropriateness of use is a subjective call. In 1998 the theater was proposed at Green Lake into an existing well-used park. In this case the timeline of the development of South Lake Union Park is well into the two-year period. The theater use would not usurp an existing use. One Reel has indicated they are willing to provide recognition of what is coming behind them at the site by providing interpretive material in their lobby or brochure and perhaps provide revenue spin-off that will go towards park improvements. The Department recognizes constituents are concerned about the use of the public shorelines and concerned about the appropriate use of parkland. Parks also sees it role as being a facilitator and providing a venue where appropriate.

Virginia Swanson stated there is room in an urban city to be in partnership with groups like One Reel to produce really good entertainment on Parks and Recreation sites. She thinks there needs to be a wide variety of events to have a live city. The partnership with One Reel for the Concert on the Pier series has been very successful and has brought the Department good will.

Karen Daubert stated she sees the positive attributes but has concerns about the parkland as an appropriate use for the dinner theater. She is concerned about the traffic during the rush hour time. The theater show starts at 7 p.m. and runs until approximately 10:00 p.m. People would be arriving around 6:00 p.m. for cocktails. Jane Zalutsky noted the existing lot holds 157 cars, the Terry Avenue side has 48 slots for a total of 205. The audience at a performance would be approximately 129, which would use 63% of the available parking Wednesday or Thursday through Sunday.

Patricia Stambor inquired if there would be ticket subsidies as the theater performance cost is prohibitive and an expensive event is exclusive by its very nature.

Karen Daubert would like the Park Board to hold a public hearing on the temporary use of South Lake Union Park for the Teatro ZinZanni production. The hearing location was discussed with the Park Board Room chosen by the Park Board members. Jane Zalutsky noted if a shoreline permit is needed that would take approximately 120 days. One Reel would like to begin building on the site no later than January 2002. James Fearn stated since the location of the dinner theater is different than it was in 1998 there is a need to gather public testimony. The date for the hearing will be determined at a later time.

Cascade Park Site & Building – Board Discussion/Recommendation

The Board held a briefing on June 14 and a public hearing on June 28 regarding the Cascade Park Site and Building. In 1994 the City 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. Through a public process, seven alternative site schemes were developed and after many meetings the advisory committee selected two. 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 Council actions including P-Patch installation, salvage nursery, comfort station renovation, rain harvest project and community classrooms. A public meeting was held in March regarding which of the two schemes to pursue. Approximately 40 people attended and supported keeping the building as a community classroom. The community prepared a business plan which recommends the Parks Department enter into a 15-year agreement with Lutheran Social Services for the phased renovation and operation of the building. They have applied for a Community Development Block Grant and are requesting Pro Parks funds for the play area.

This issue was deferred from the July 12 Board meeting due to lack of a quorum. Below is the staff recommendation:

Decision #1: Building - The Parks and Recreation Department staff recommend retaining and renovating the building for Park and Recreation uses and revise the Master Plan to reflect this decision. If the Board concurs with the staff recommendation, staff will begin working with neighbors in the Cascade community to seek funds to renovate the facility. This alternative will require approximately \$114,127 for interim improvements over a six-year period. A complete renovation for a building life cycle of 16 years is estimated at \$293,335. Parks and Recreation will retain ownership of the building.

**Kathleen Warren moved the Park Board recommend the building be retained.
Karen Daubert seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.**

Decision #2: Management and Operations of the Building - Staff recommends that they develop two alternatives for consideration by the Park Board at their August 23 meeting. Both options are consistent with existing models.

Option #1 – Traditional Community Center: Operate the facility as a satellite community center. Parks and Recreation staff would operate the facility with a community advisory council that is a member of the Associated Recreation Council (ARC).

Option #2 – Contract with a community-based organization to manage and operate the building. Parks and Recreation would operate the facility, via a contract, with a non-profit organization. The Department has an existing interim agreement with the Cascade Neighborhood Council (CNC) for limited use of the building. The CNC is seeking a

long-term contract with the Department to manage and operate the building. The following criteria will be used by staff to evaluate the CNC proposed and is the same criteria that is used to evaluate an potential partner.

The contract must be with a single entity/organization.

The organization must be 501-C3 or an active applicant.

The organization must demonstrate the financial stability and long term financial viability to operate the facility over a period of several years.

The organization must be able to demonstrate the administrative capacity to manage and operate the facility.

The organization must be able to demonstrate broad-based neighborhood support.

The programming plans for the facility, as presented by the contracting organization, must be consistent with the mission and goals of Seattle Parks and Recreation, including recreation, arts and culture, sports and environmental stewardship.

Programming within the building must be consistent with the requirements of Initiative #42.

The organization must demonstrate they are inclusive and representative of the community, including community organizations, local business and neighbors. They must be responsive and open to future changes in programming as the neighborhood grows and changes.

Kathleen Warren inquired how the Department could guarantee that the group will be inclusive and representative of the community and also will not discriminate. Patricia McInturff stated specifics would be included in the contract.

Karen Daubert stated the business plan and all of the background work that the Cascade community has put into this is impressive. The Board apologized to the audience that no quorum was present at the July 12 meeting and this item had to be held over.

Karen Daubert moved that the Department proceed with the development of the two alternatives and return to the Park Board on August 23. James Fearn seconded the motion. Kathleen Warren stated Central Division Director Herbye White was looking for a letter regarding financing and wondered if he had received the letter. **The motion carried unanimously.**

James Fearn had one issue about the building. He thinks the building should be retained as long as it is used. If it gets to a place where there is not a building user then the demolition issue should be revisited. Bruce Bentley stated he thinks a building should be at the site no matter what because he thinks the community is going to go through a huge change and it is going to need some type of community facility.

Superintendent's Report

Deputy Mayor Tom Byers thanked the Department, via an e-mail to the Superintendent, for its increased grounds maintenance which he found very noticeable while recently visiting various parks with his children.

Pro Parks Levy Acquisition Update: Parks and Recreation has signed the purchase agreement with the owner of the 67th & Linden Avenue North property and has reached agreement for the Mayer property in the West Duwamish Greenbelt.

Summer Beach Program – attendance is up with approximately 57,000 visiting the beaches after four weeks of operation.

People’s Lodge – The City Council will be briefed on the Discovery Park United Indians of All Tribes Foundation People’s Lodge next week.

School Board/Park Board Subcommittee – Set for August 7 at noon at the School District Headquarters.

Pioneer Square Pergola – working on price and reimbursement with insurance company.

Aquarium Master Plan – The Landmarks Preservation Board was briefed on July 18 on the general design concept for the Pacific Northwest Aquarium, incorporating the redeveloped Pier 59. This was a pre-application briefing so no formal action was taken but the Board responded very favorably to the concept.

Gas Works Park – The Park survived the Fourth of July fireworks event and is only in need of some reseeding and a few minor repairs.

Items of Interest to the Board

Kathleen Warren inquired about the correspondence regarding the espresso machine at Sand Point/Magnuson Park; a copy of the Department’s response will be forwarded to the Board members. Kathleen asked about Department’s response to the Steinbrueck Park noise issue and the reference that in the future a noise abatement inspector will evaluate the noise level. An “on the spot” reading can be taken and a citation issued at later date. Kathleen reported she drove down Cheasty Boulevard to view the proposed use permit site slated for review and recommendation by the Board on August 9.

Karen Daubert was impressed with the “Way to Go” program which encourages people to take the bus or bike to the Zoo instead of driving their cars by offering zoo discounts and other incentives. During all the Zoo Tunes concerts and every day from July 28 to September 2 patrons will show their bus transfer or pass to the Zoo cashier or ride their bike and mention Way to Go to the Zoo and they will receive \$2 in Zoo Bucks which can be applied to zoo admission, drinks for food or zoo merchandise. Karen noted the T. T.

Minor/Gray to Green might be an agenda item for the School/Park Board meeting. Karen noted she will not be attending the August 9 Park Board meeting.

Bruce Bentley has been asked to sit on a committee regarding water/Initiative 63. Bruce would like to have some discussions on this issue before he begins attending meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

APPROVED: _____ DATE: _____
Bruce Bentley, Chair