

Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
August 12, 2004

Present: Bruce Bentley, Chair
James Fearn
Terry Holme
Sarah Neilson
Kate Pflaumer

Excused: Joanna Grist

Staff: Ken Bounds, Superintendent
Sandy Brooks, Park Board Coordinator

Chair Bruce Bentley called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. **Kate moved approval of the August 12 agenda, July 22 meeting minutes, and acknowledgement of correspondence. James seconded the motion. The vote was taken and was unanimous in support.**

Superintendent's Report

Ken Bounds, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, reported on the following:

Hiring Freeze is Lifted: The City recently lifted its two-year hiring freeze. This means that Parks and other departments may once again fill vacant positions without getting additional approval from the City's Budget Office.

Alki Beach: This afternoon 200 or more unopened hypodermic needles, of an unknown source, washed ashore at Alki Beach. The beach was closed for cleanup and monitoring. Local news stations reported the incident.

Freeway Park Illegal Activity: Recently, the amount of illegal activity, including encampments, has increased significantly in the south plaza area of the park and behind Naramore Fountain. Parks crews, with police assistance, will remove encampments. To eliminate hiding and camping places, much of the larger vegetation will then be thinned or removed.

International District/Chinatown Community Center Opens: The new center opened on Monday and interest in the facility has been phenomenal. Rentals have been booked way into 2005, gym use is approaching capacity, and registration for classes is high. People are literally knocking on the front doors to see if the center is open. An official grand opening is planned for September – Board members will receive invitations.

Magnuson Naming Ceremony: The recreation facilities at the park were recently named and a formal naming ceremony for the entire park is planned for Monday, September 20, at 10:00 am. The celebration, to formally name the park Warren G. Magnuson Park, will include friends and staff of the late Senator, representatives of the Congressional delegation, and other community members.

Beach Naturalists: The Seattle Aquarium's beach naturalist program ended August 1. More than 125 volunteers made 21,000 public contacts this summer on beaches in the Seattle area, inspiring conservation of marine habitats. Extra days were added to this summer's schedule in response to the unusually low tides and holiday weekends that always lure many more visitors to the beaches.

2004 USA Track and Field Junior Olympics: 5,000 youth from Rainier Beach, Miller, Meadowbrook, and Van Asselt community center programs recently participated in the 2004 USATF Junior Olympics in Eugene, Oregon. Both Rainier Beach and Miller had participants who received medals.

State Auditors Give Department Good Report: The Superintendent and Sarah Welch, Park Department Budget Director, met with State auditors following an audit of the Department's accounting/cash handling procedures. The auditors declared there were no auditable findings.

Senior Theatre at Langston Hughes: In a unique collaboration with Seattle Parks and Recreation's Senior Adult program, the Center has initiated a Senior Theatre Program. In October and November, the Center will produce a play, featuring four senior females, which will explore issues facing senior women. Last week, auditions were held with 10 senior actors attending. Auditions and callbacks will continue over the next several weeks.

Milfoil Management on Lake Washington: The growth of milfoil on Lake Washington is especially heavy this year. In July, a pre-Seafair harvest removed the invasive plant away from Stan Sayers Park and the waterway used by the hydros, as well as an area used by special events in Andrews Bay. A second mechanical harvester cut in mid-August will again focus on these two areas, and will also include two acres of shoreline at Magnuson Park. At seven sites on Lake Washington and one on Green Lake, scuba divers hand-harvested milfoil in shallow areas or those not accessible by a harvesting machine.

Mineral Springs Park Dedication Ceremony: On August 14, Seattle Parks and Recreation will join Friends of Mineral Springs Park and the Seattle Players Disc Golf Association to dedicate recently-completed renovations at Mineral Springs Park. The park, which was originally purchased in 1969, was maintained as public open space until 1990 when the Disc Golf Association converted the site into a disc golf course. The Pro Parks Levy in 2000 allocated \$722,000 for park improvements. As a result, an art walk with a 1% For Art installation and improvements to the disc golf course have been made. The dedication ceremony will be attended by Parks Deputy Superintendent B.J. Brooks and Councilmember David Della.

Ballard Skate Bowl Update: Parks staff members have received numerous emails from the local skate community regarding concerns with hiring a skate bowl design firm for the new Ballard skate bowl. Swift and Company, the project's prime consultant, received a fee proposal from a skate park design firm, Purkiss-Rose, as a sub-consultant. Purkiss-Rose is not preferred by some individuals in the local skate community. In response to the skate community's recent concerns on the sub-consultant, Parks has asked Swift and Company to pursue another skate park design firm that is more acceptable to the local skate community. The Department will do everything it can to hire a sub-consultant that works for the skaters. Skaters need to be involved in the design and the sub-consultant needs to understand the importance of that involvement as well as understanding skatebowls.

Occidental Park: Parks held an open house at Occidental Park last night to share information on the revitalization plan with the community. The Park Board will hear an August 26 briefing, followed immediately by a public hearing. There is some controversy surrounding plans to revitalize this Pioneer Square-area park.

Discovery Park: The Superintendent, along with leadership of the Advisory Council, Friends of Discovery Park, Magnolia Historical Society, and Magnolia Community Club met late yesterday with American Eagle representatives to discuss the Navy's privatization of the Capehart Housing at Discovery Park. American Eagle explained their corporate structure and its relationship with the Navy, and answered questions. The goal of the Department and the community is to secure the Capehart site as part of Discovery Park, and that the historical housing be held in public ownership and maintained in a way that is sensitive to the historical buildings and is also economical and sustainable.

Terry asked if the representatives from American Eagle were local. Ken answered that the representatives included company managers from the corporate headquarters and a consultant from Houston. Kate asked if any new info came out of the meeting. Ken answered that the meeting answered questions about American Eagle and the Navy. There is still documentation that has not been released and lots of unanswered questions that the Navy and American Eagle are not yet ready to answer.

Parks and City staff will continue to work with American Eagle in efforts to transfer the Capehart housing to Discovery Park. The historical housing is the more complicated part of the process, due to the needed ongoing maintenance of those buildings and the fact that the housing must be maintained as historical sites.

Kate asked if American Eagle has any plans for the historical buildings. Ken answered, if can't reach agreement with the City, American Eagle and the Navy would use the historical buildings for housing. They have an 8-level priority list of how the housing would be used.

The Superintendent and Park staff will keep the Board up-to-date on this process.

Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience

Bruce explained that this portion of the agenda is reserved for topics that have not had, or are not scheduled for, a public hearing before the Board. One person signed up to give testimony.

Joel Mulder: He is a Queen Anne resident and lives directly below the Betty Bowen/Marshall Viewpoint. He addressed the Board on the Viewpoint Vegetation Management Plan (VVMP.) He is very concerned with the area, because it is on a 50/75% slope. Parks Department staff members plan to remove many trees, some of which are up to 80 years old. This seems drastic, as Parks has done little maintenance on this site for the past 40-50 years. There are many issues with this site. He urges the Department to do a careful environmental assessment on the need to remove the trees and do a geo-technical evaluation of the soils directly above the homes that are below. This site is one of 26 of a larger number (perhaps 90 sites total). It is being treated as an initial site to test the VVMP. He distributed a handout to the Board, with additional information.

Larry Sinnott: He is a board member of both the Friends of Seattle Olmsted Parks and the 520 Advisory Committee. He is the Northeast District Council's representative to the 520 Arterial/Street Impact Study, and is a Board member of the Ravenna Bryant Community Association. Larry gave a brief history of the 520 bridge project and stated that 50 years ago, the Seattle City Council convinced the UW to give away the wetlands at the north end of the Washington Park Arboretum to the R.H. Thompson freeway. Meanwhile, the 520 bridge planners stated, "now that we've got those wetlands, there's another freeway we'd like to run through there, too." So, we ended up with the 520 bridge and the "ramps to nowhere", because the R.H. Thompson freeway was rejected by a citywide vote. In the current plans to rebuild the 520 bridge, all the "ramps to nowhere" will be removed. But, new ramps would be built back into the Arboretum. Larry gave detailed information on the traffic patterns and impacts in nearby neighborhoods, especially from cut-through traffic. He requested that the Park Board write Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to request to study the closure of the Arboretum ramps as an alternative in the 520 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) due out in summer of 2005. Larry will also send the Board written information.

Traci Goodwin: She is a long-time Queen Anne resident, is an attorney, and was married in Parsons Garden – which is kitty corner to Betty Bowen/Marshall Viewpoint. She is also President of Queen Anne Park Stewards, which is very interested in the Viewpoint Vegetation Management Plan and its application at Betty Bowen/Marshall Viewpoint. Her group recently met with Ken on this proposal and appreciates the meeting. She believes the Viewpoint Management Plan is important and urges the Department to implement this plan in a balanced and careful way. She wanted to make two points: 1. make sure plan is balanced; and 2. make sure the public is involved in the process. Queen Anne Community Council is considering the proposed plan at its next meeting.

Sharon Levine: She urges the Department to hold public forums in each neighborhood that is to be impacted by the Viewpoint Vegetation Management Plan and stated that the consultant hasn't asked for feedback from residents. A

clear definition of, and consensus on, is needed to determine what a view is – this definition and consensus has not been reached. Some communities have more viewpoints than others. Don't oppose a community's master plan with the VVMP, which is now the case in Queen Anne.

Chris Leman: He is the chair of the No Expansion to 520 Citizens Coalition and spoke briefly on the history of SR 520. When SR520 was built, neither the University of Washington nor Parks Department stood up and opposed the construction. Now federal law prohibits the use of parks for highway expansion, unless suitable substitute is provided. The Park Department is now in an excellent position to take the firm stand that it did not take 40 years ago when SR520 was built. The No Expansion Coalition supports rebuilding the bridge, with a four-lane configuration. The problem with the proposed WSDOT 4-lane rebuild is that the four lanes would be approximately twice as wide as the existing 4-lane structure. This is due to wider lanes and additional shoulders. This is a terrible impact to the Arboretum and wetlands. His group urges the Parks Department to insist on a full examination on all the impacts to the Arboretum and urge that the re-built lanes use only about the same area it currently uses.

There is also a great opportunity here to expand pedestrian access to the Arboretum and Parks can be a strong advocate in this. The new bridge is required to have pedestrian/bicycle trails. WSDOT is not at this time studying any connection from the new pedestrian/bicycle trail to the Madison Park neighborhood. This connection is about 200-300 feet and would allow greatly improved access to the Arboretum for Madison Park and nearby residents. WSDOT has stated that it would study this connection, but has not yet been asked to do so by the City of Seattle. Parks Department, above all, should be asking for this connection.

Oral Communications concluded.

Update Briefing: Downtown Parks and Public Spaces

Deputy Parks Superintendent, B.J. Brooks, came before the Board to give an update briefing on the Downtown Park and Public Spaces. No action is requested from the Board at this time. The Board received both a written and verbal briefing.

Written Briefing

In its written briefing, the Board received a copy of the Mayor's Downtown Parks & Public Spaces Executive Board Draft Charter; a GIS map of the downtown parks; a list of the downtown parks; and a draft organization chart of the Mayor's Downtown Parks and Public Spaces Executive Board. Following is a copy of both the draft charter and list of downtown parks:

Draft Charter Background

Seattle's Parks and Recreation system is comprised of uniquely designed parks, open spaces, facilities, and programs whose history dates back to the Olmsted tradition. Tremendous progress has been made improving the system; however, more challenges lie ahead in making Seattle Parks and Recreation world class. The public realm needs to be periodically updated if is going to keep pace with a growing population and changing economic conditions. To that end, Mayor Greg Nickels set forth a vision to "reclaim" downtown parks by making them clean, safe, and lively. This vision dovetails with the Mayor's downtown housing and economic development strategies.

Statement of Purpose

The Mayor's Downtown Parks and Public Spaces Executive Board is a management, advocacy, and leadership entity that will develop and implement policies and strategies for the improvement of Downtown Seattle parks, recreation, and public spaces. It will also serve as a liaison to the Mayor's Office.

Board Goal

The goal of the Mayor's Downtown Parks and Public Spaces Executive Board is to "reclaim" the downtown parks by initiating strong management oversight, program and activate its public spaces, and effectuate the needed infrastructure improvements. The focus will be on 24 parks and South Lake Union, located in the downtown area. This goal will result in the modernization of Seattle's downtown parks and public spaces and respond to the changing economics.

Board Structure

The Board will be comprised of two co-chairpersons, two executive staff persons, seven representatives, two functional committees, and a neighborhoods group.

List of Downtown Parks

The list includes Belltown P-Patch and Cottages; Boren-Pike Pine Park; Cascade Playground; City Hall Park; Denny Park/Playfield; Freeway Park; Fortson Square; Hing Hay Park; International Children's Park; Kobe Terrace; McGraw Triangle; Myrtle Edwards Park; Occidental Park; Pioneer Square Park; Prefontaine Park; Pier 62-63; Regrade Park; Tilikum Place; Union Square Plaza; Victor Steinbrueck Park; Washington Street Boat Landing; Waterfront Park; Westlake Park; and Westlake Square.

Verbal Briefing/Board Discussion

B.J. gave a short review of the plan and, per a previous Board request, distributed a 2001 study of downtown open spaces. The Downtown Parks and Public Spaces is a work in progress and the Board will receive regular update briefings. This plan looks at all the downtown parks, and then will begin focusing on the needs of individual parks.

Sarah asked if the Seattle Park Foundation will be involved in fundraising. Ken answered that the Foundation is currently focused on fundraising for South Lake Union Park and is somewhat engaged with the waterfront. It generally focuses on one park per year, which is a good strategy. B.J. stated that when the parks are looked at project by project and development begins, that extended conversations will be ongoing with the Foundation.

Terry wondered if, given the history of the last five years' budget cuts, have maintenance funds remained constant or been cut. Ken answered that the base maintenance funds have remained level and, due to the Pro Parks Levy, some additional maintenance funds are in the budget. B.J. stated that Parks staff will look at maintenance and operations costs, others who can help with the needs and costs (neighborhood groups, Downtown Seattle Association, etc.)

Kate suggested that the name of the oversight group will eventually be shortened, possibly to the "Board" and suggested that a different title be used. Ken answered that the name of the group is a suggestion and hasn't yet been finalized.

Ken stated that the largest goal is how to get more activity into these parks. Ken will continue giving update briefings.

Sarah requested a copy of the open space document B.J. referenced. Staff will send this to the Board. Terry suggested that the maps portion would probably be adequate, rather than the entire document. Bruce suggested that Olympic Sculpture Park be added to the list.

The Board thanked B.J. for the briefing.

Briefing: SR 520 Widening/Arboretum Impacts

Michael Woodland, Parks Department project manager, came before the Board to give an update on the

Written Briefing

Project Lead: WA State Department of Transportation
Location: Montlake neighborhood and Washington Park Arboretum
Interested agencies: University of Washington, Arboretum Foundation, Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI)
Stakeholder groups: Adjacent neighborhoods, Friends of Seattle's Olmstead Parks, trail groups, wildlife protection organizations, small craft boaters, bicycle groups

Project Timeline: Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Issued – June 2005
Preferred Alternative Identified – December 2005
Final EIS Issued – 2006
Preferred Alternative Under Design – 2005 to 2008
Construction Begins – January 2008
Project Complete if 4-lane – 2015 to 2016
Project Complete if 6-lane – 2017 to 2018

Project Summary

Because of structural inadequacies, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is planning to replace State Route 520 (SR520). Two principal alternatives have been developed, a 4-lane and a 6-lane. As compared to the no-action alternative, traffic volumes for the 4-lane will decrease and for the 6-lane only increase slightly. The high-level portion of the bridge will be located over Foster Island.

Potential Impacts to Park Assets

1. In general, Parks-owned properties that are likely to be impacted include the Arboretum, Foster Island, the Museum of History and Industry, East Montlake Playfield, Roanoke Park, and Montlake Boulevard.
2. Several portions of properties under Parks' jurisdiction will be acquired for expansion of the freeway right-of-way and for construction.
3. Several properties owned by other entities or jurisdictions, but used for recreational purposes, will be acquired for freeway right of way. (e.g., Arboretum Foundation, University of Washington, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and City of Seattle's Department of Transportation (SDOT).
4. The building housing the Museum of History and Industry will be demolished in order to accommodate widened right-of-way. This creates a need to address interim and long-term replacement of facility space.
5. As a result of the MOHAI demolition, 4,000 square feet of office space, included in the 2001 Arboretum Master Plan, will not be available to the Arboretum.
6. Planning will be needed for replacement property.
7. Programming will be needed for park property affected by the Project.
8. Proposed lidding of 500 feet of the freeway at Montlake Blvd. E. and 10th Avenue E. (6-lane alternative only) may result in new park spaces with increased maintenance obligations for Parks.
9. Construction of a high-level bridge will create visual impacts and potentially create a noisier environment for the environmentally sensitive areas of Foster Island.
10. Opportunities may exist for eliminating the Lake Washington Boulevard ramps, which currently interfere with use of valuable recreational and aquatic lands and direct high volumes of traffic through the Arboretum. Although the ramps will be closed for up to four years during construction, WSDOT's current plans are to replace them.

Next Steps

1. Parks has already begun to meet with concerned parties to identify preliminary opportunities for WSDOT impact mitigation proposals.
2. Parks will send a letter requesting that EIS alternatives include permanent elimination of the Lake Washington Boulevard ramp.

Background Items

The SR520 replacement project is subject to various Federal and local regulations related to City-owned property used for park and recreation purposes. These include the 4(f) provisions of the Federal environmental review process and the City's Ordinance 118477 (Initiative 42). Both of these regulations require that, "...no highway project can be constructed unless there are no reasonable or practical alternatives and, if that is the case, then replacement property and facilities are required for any property taken." Properties used for recreational purposes, but owned by other entities are not protected by the federal 4(f) provision or Ordinance 118477.

The SR520 Arterial/Street Impact Committee (funded by a combination of State and City money) recently completed a neighborhood impact study, which addresses several concerns including some related to Parks. The study makes a number of recommendations ranging from aspects of the EIS process and transportation analysis to alignment issues, ramp revisions, and objectives for visual design. The study is pending approval by SDOT and the Mayor's Office.

Verbal Briefing/Board Discussion

Michael stated that the objective is to replace the aging structure, not to increase the amount of traffic flow on SR520. He displayed a drawing of the area and pointed out park land that would be majorly impacted by the construction. He also distributed graphics of the project area near the Arboretum. He also gave a brief review of the project, its potential impacts to park property, and the project timeline.

Ken discussed the schedule and stated that the draft EIS is scheduled for publication in June 2005 — after the EIS is released is a good time for the public to give comments to WSDOT. Kate asked about Parks current role in the process – is the Department giving comments to WSDOT. Ken answered yes, that Parks is already meeting with WSDOT and making suggestions to look at and address in the EIS. .

Ken and Michael addressed the earlier suggestion from Chris Leman to extend the bicycle/pedestrian trail to the Montlake neighborhood, during this project. Ken said that Parks staff members have raised this idea with WSDOT; however, he thinks that it is one that the Department will pursue, as soon as it gets additional information. Michael stated that there are lots of supporters for this trail; however, it is a contentious idea to neighborhood residents who would be impacted. Because it is contentious, the State has left it out of its proposal. Kate suggested that Parks staff continue to explore this idea, as every idea can be contentious to some.

James asked if WSDOT has identified a preferred alternative. Michael answered that WSDOT would not do so until the fall of 2005, after the EIS has been released and further considerations have been completed. Kate referred to the enlarged area that the proposed new 4-lanes would require (referred to earlier by Chris Leman in his testimony.) Michael explained the new lanes are wider. Also, the current 4-lanes do not have shoulders and the new 4-lanes would. The major difference in the proposed 4- or 6-lanes would be that the 6-lanes would include a dedicated HOV lane.

Ken stated that this project is a big deal and a major impact on the Arboretum, with a huge impact on Foster Island. Parks staff members are looking at options to shut the ramps down during certain non-peak times. Kate asked if “no ramps” is an alternative. Ken and Michael answered that this is not being considered by WSDOT. The ramps will be closed for some time, during the construction of the new ramps.

The Board asked if funding for this project has been identified. Michael is unsure of funding sources. From information he has heard in the various meetings, the condition of SR520 is serious and may be as bad as the viaduct. Michael answered a question on where the two LIDS would be, proposed only under the 6-lane proposal. Michael said the LIDS, if built, would mostly likely become a maintenance responsibility for Parks. Ken stated that, if the LIDS were built, the Department would look on them as an opportunity to connect the nearby communities. Access to Foster Island could also be improved under the 6-lane proposal. James asked why the LIDS would only be built under the 6-lane proposal. Michael answered that it could either be a budget decision or mitigation for the greater impact that 6-lanes would have on the area.

Terry asked for clarification Michael’s role in this project. Michael explained that he is currently the Department’s senior project manager monitoring the EIS process. He also represents the Parks Department on an interdepartmental team focused on the SR520 widening project. Terry asked why the change in elevation has been proposed. Michael answered that it is due to stormwater management. Since 1990 was built, the guidelines for stormwater manager have become more stringent. By raising the height, runoff water would be sent back towards the Arboretum.

Terry walks this area often and believes the proposed design will have a negative impact on the area. If the lanes are higher and wider, much more area beneath will be shaded. Parks staff agreed.

Terry asked if the Board should take a stand on the project at this point. Ken answered that the EIS process will analyze traffic ramp impacts to the Arboretum and nearby parks, both during construction and once the project is complete. Once the analysis is complete, there will be more information to consider. Michael agreed and stated that a study completed a couple years ago concluded that closing the ramps would gridlock the Montlake area. WSDOT

must now make a more extensive study of ramp-closure and other impacts. Kate stated that traffic in that entire area is already problematic, with lots of backups already. Michael stated that some improvements can be made, but some problems won't eliminate all problems. Ken stated that a good opportunity for the Board to weight in is after the EIS is released.

Ken will also follow up on the bicycle/pedestrian trail issue and report back to the Board. Terry asked who should negotiate for the proposed bicycle trail and Ken answered the City and Parks Department, as it would require trading lands and mitigation.

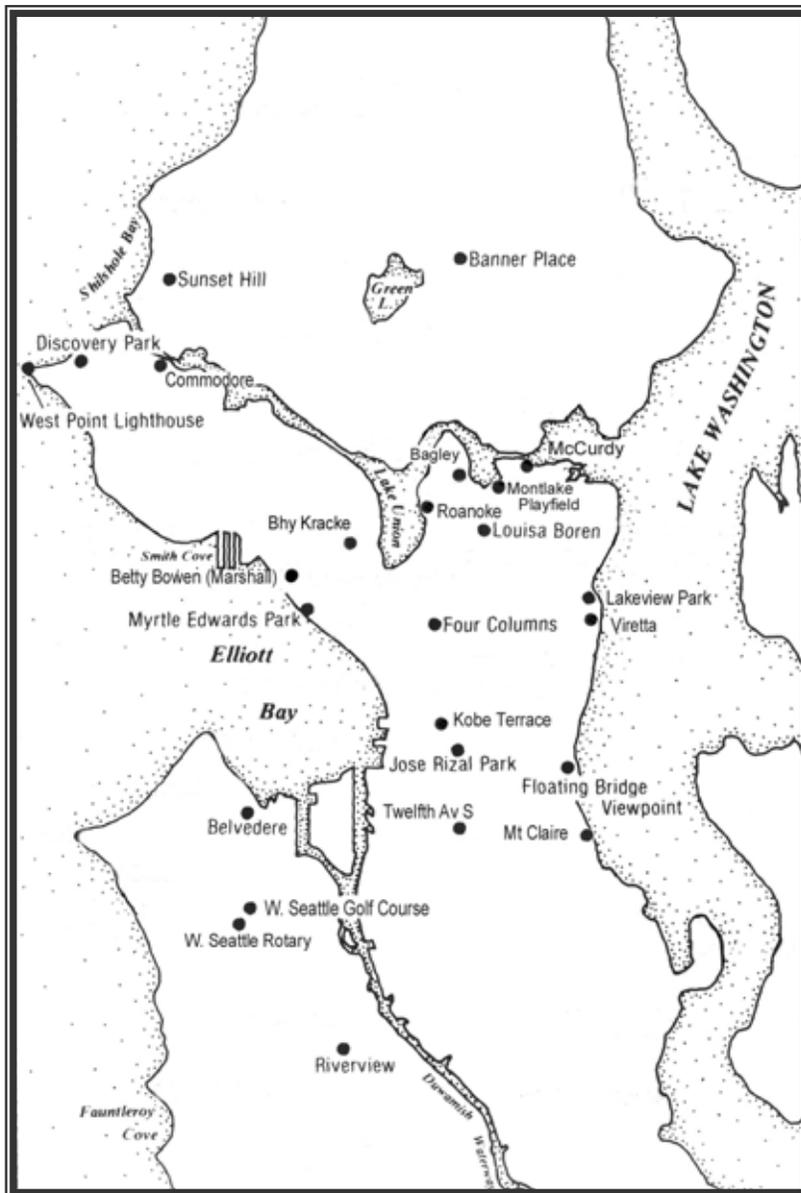
The Board thanked Michael for the briefing.

Briefing: Viewpoint Vegetation Management Plan

Mark Mead, Senior Urban Forester for the Parks Department, came before the Board to give a briefing on the Department's Viewpoint Vegetation Management Plan. The Board received both a written and verbal briefing.

Written Briefing **Seattle Parks Viewpoint Vegetation Management Plan Study Sites**

Composite Map



Map from *Enjoying Seattle Parks*
by Brandt Morgan

Vegetation Management for Seattle Park Viewpoints

The City of Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation has recognized the value of the regions natural and built resources by acquiring view properties of the Olympic and Cascade mountain ranges, Puget Sound, local lakes, and the downtown skyline. The extent of intended views varies with each site and are determined and protected by visual guidelines set by the State Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) in the document, *Seattle Views*, 2002. Many of the city's viewpoints have become threatened due to visual obstruction from native trees and invasive vegetation that inhabit the sites. The Urban Forestry staff of DPR directed this study in an effort to develop a strategy for addressing the restoration and long-term maintenance of these parks.

Goals and Objectives

In finding a balance between natural resource conservation and view preservation, the Department of Parks and Recreation's primary goals for developing a Vegetation Management Plan for viewpoints are:

- to protect designated public views as determined by SEPA guidelines
- to protect steep slopes from erosion and surface water run-off
- to provide maximum native habitat value for wildlife
- to minimize any hazard potential and optimize public safety
- to provide consistent, pragmatic management direction to establish and maintain sustainable vegetation for all viewpoints

The Vegetation Management Plan for Viewpoints addresses the following objectives:

- evaluates pre-determined viewpoints to assess current maintenance and management needs;
- categorizes viewpoints based on shared site conditions and maintenance requirements to optimize intended viewsheds;
- develops maintenance prescriptions that can be applied to all sites having similar conditions with consideration given to sustainable management practices;
- defines maintenance practices and the appropriate labor force for each.

Findings

The initial analyses of each site determined the range of management tasks needed to abate the current conditions and restore sites to their intended view and use. Though not all sites will require each task, the following list of horticultural practices identifies the key maintenance components:

- tree removal
- tree pruning
- invasive weed removal
- erosion control
- planting
- mulching
- irrigation

Evaluations of more than 35 sites were performed to provide vegetation and site analysis that could be used to develop restoration programs.

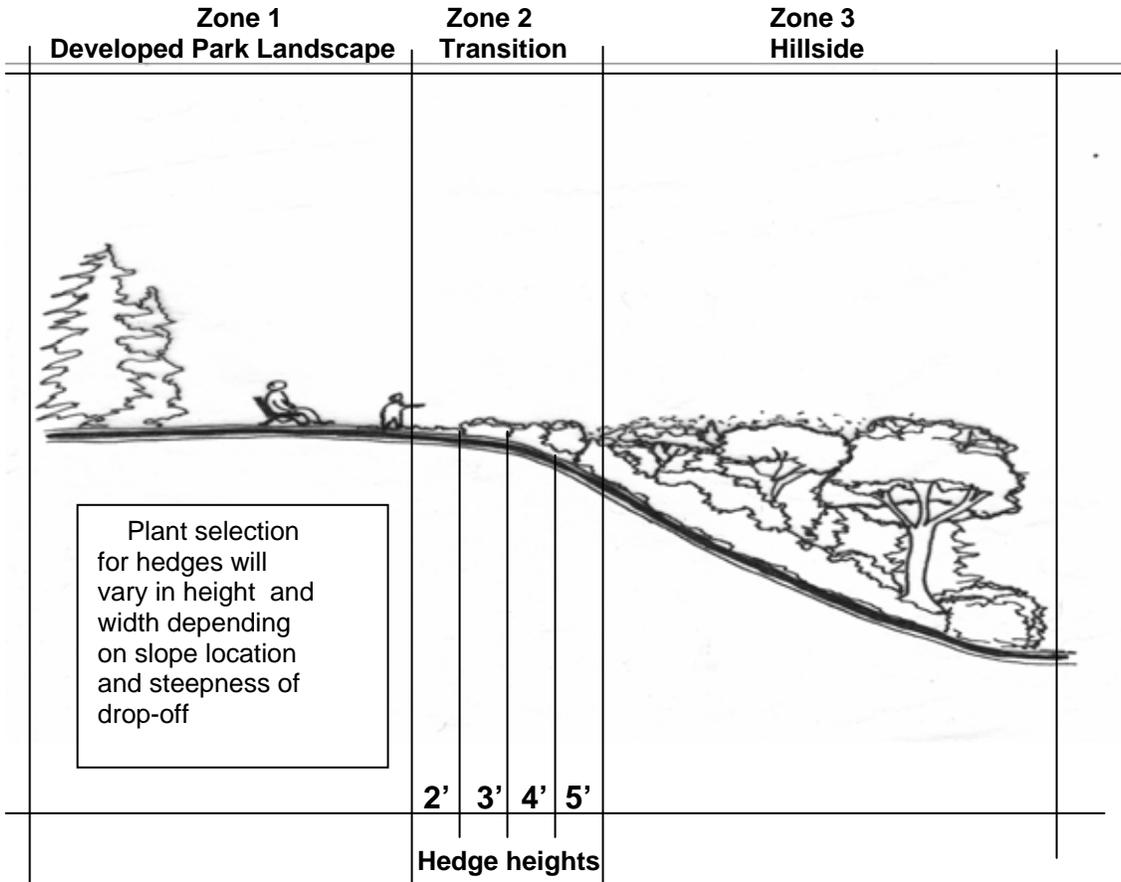
These programs were organized into three primary Maintenance Categories:

Maintenance Categories for Existing Conditions

CATEGORY	PRIMARY MAINTENANCE TASKS
1 - Canopy Conversion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tree removal 2. Invasive weed removal 3. Erosion control 4. Layered vegetation planting 5. Mulching
2 - Pruning and/or Invasive Weed Removal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tree pruning 2. Invasive weed removal 3. Planting - Zone 2 Transition hedges and groundcovers 4. Mulching
3 - Slope Stability and Erosion Control	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tree removal and pruning 2. Invasive weed removal 3. Erosion control 4. Planting – Zone 2 Transition hedges and groundcovers 5. Mulching

In addition to Landscape Management Zones were developed to indicate areas how specific zones along the viewpoint grade would be restored. These zones where utilized to derive appropriate plant palettes.

- Zone 1 – Developed Park Landscape** areas
- Zone 2 – Transition** areas at the top of slopes
- Zone 3 – Hillside** or shoreline locations



**Vegetation Management for Seattle Parks Viewpoints
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Verbal Briefing/Board Discussion

Mark gave a powerpoint presentation and discussed how the Viewpoint Vegetation Management Plan (VVMP) was developed. A site-specific plan is being developed for each of the major viewpoints. The first step is to scope the work on a generic level, then adopt the generic guidelines to a particular park. The next step will be to talk to the community about the plan. The Viewpoint Vegetation Management Plan is available online at: <http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/parks/parkspaces/Viewpoints/VMP.htm>

Mark stated that managing the vegetation at viewpoints is not new – the Department has a 100-year tradition of viewpoint management. Viewpoint designations are not being changed. The purpose of the VVMP is to assemble a “Best Management Practices” to be used for all viewpoints.

Kate asked about earlier public testimony that there has been no public involvement. Mark answered that the public hasn’t been involved while the overall plan has been developed. However, when work is scheduled at an individual viewpoint, Department staff will do public outreach to nearby neighborhoods. Betty Bowen/Marshall Viewpoint is a good example. It is the first viewpoint slated for maintenance under this policy. Parks staff members are now in the planning process for the maintenance. The next step will be to hold public meetings, with neighbors and Queen Anne Community Council members invited. Parks staff members are following SEPA guidelines and will schedule a geo-technical study at this site.

Kate asked about irrigation. Mark answered that native species will be planted and will need to be irrigated while becoming established. The Seattle and Northwest area is in a four-year drought and a number of native trees are drying out and dying. The Department has adequate water supplies to irrigate the new plantings and adequate water is especially important while new plantings become established. Irrigation is very cost effective, as one tree costs on average \$350 to get in the ground.

Staff members will plant sun-tolerant vegetation. Some vegetation will remain while the new plantings become established, and then will later be removed. Staff will use a staggered approach to remove the vegetation

Terry asked when is it advisable to bring geo-technicians in to study a site. This is long-term concern for many residents. Mark answered that hiring geo-technicians is very expensive. Parks staff members are performing maintenance work, and this type of work does not cause slides. Mark gave Jose Rizal Park as a good example. It is a very steep slope and the Department has been removing trees there for the past 60 years. In 2001 the City’s Department of Construction and Design released a study and guidelines on slide areas and ruled that Parks is exempt because it uses “best practices”. Ken emphasized that it is not in Parks interests to create slope instability and experts will be brought in as needed.

Terry suggested that the Viewpoint Vegetation Management Plan document identify which slopes would require bringing in a geo-technical advisor. He believes this would reassure the community. He asked how large the SEPA document is and if Magnolia Boulevard is included in the VVMP. Ken answered that Magnolia Boulevard is not designated as a viewpoint. It does, however, have its own vegetation management plan.

Mark stated that there is some issue on how viewpoints are designated. Bruce stated that he has been curious as to why and how Riverview Playfield was designated as a viewpoint. Mark answered that Riverview isn’t the only playfield designated as a viewpoint — there are others.

Ken stated that the Department will keep the Board posted on the Betty Bowen/Marshall Viewpoint Vegetation Management Plan and on other individual projects as they are scheduled.

The Board thanked Mark for the briefing.

Briefing: Race & Social Justice – Mayor’s Initiative

Christopher Williams, Director of Parks Department Operations, came before the Board to give a briefing on the Mayor’s Initiative for Race and Social Justice, and the Department’s role in this effort. The Board received both a written and verbal briefing.

Written Briefing

The written briefing included:

- 1) memo from Superintendent Bounds to Mayor Nickels
- 2) agenda from the June 15 Racial and Social Justice Leadership Team Kickoff
- 3) Charter
- 4) Seattle Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan for Race and Social Justice.

The following excerpt is taken from the Strategic Plan: “The work plan approach for the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJ) is designed to be a catalyst for ‘organizational transformation’ and to effect a culture change within Parks and Recreation. We will give close attention to areas that shape employee and department attitudes, policies, procedures, behaviors, processes, programs, and services. *Caveat: given our budget challenges, activities, our recommendations, and steps will reflect our current resources for implementation.*”

The proposed work plan approach will focus on four major areas:

- 1) Major Work Plan Elements and Support Mechanisms
- 2) Specific Actions Geared Toward Organization Transformation
- 3) Performance, Accountability, and Outcomes
- 4) Parks Comprehensive Response to the Race and Social Justice Initiative”

Verbal Briefing/Board Discussion

Christopher gave a brief review on this Initiative, which is aimed at reducing disproportionality. All City Departments have been directed by the Mayor to develop a plan to address the Initiative. The Parks Departments’ major work plan elements will include customer service, mentoring program, and a Women and Minority Business Enterprise (WMBE) fair. A WMBE fair was recently held at Rainier Community Center with good results.

Christopher reviewed some of the philosophical questions used to help the Department determine its role in effecting the Initiative:

- ❖ How will we “walk the talk?”
- ❖ What are our values?
- ❖ Who are our customers?
- ❖ How do we serve them?

Christopher stated that there are 98 languages spoken in Southeast Seattle. The City’s current public involvement process works for some groups/individuals. Now, a goal is to find new ways to engage groups who haven’t previously been involved.

Christopher stated that this challenge is big, exciting work! Ken commented that although the Parks Department already does great work, it does not yet reach many communities. The Department must complete internal work to plan how to reach these communities.

James asked if the Initiative provides funding for any additional Parks staff and Ken answered no. The Department’s overall workforce diversity is very good; however, there are smaller, more focused areas that are not as diverse.

Sarah commented that she is pleased the City’s public involvement process is being examined so as to include additional groups.

Terry commented that he was unaware of the “disproportional gap in before and after school childcare programs.” Christopher stated that one way the Department is working on this is in re-tooling how scholarship funds are distributed. Previously, children in some areas were considered more eligible for scholarships than children living in

other areas; now every child in the City is eligible for scholarship money, not based on which area of the city a child lives in, but based on across-the-city need. The Board will be hearing more on the Mayor’s youth strategy.

Bruce commented that the Advisory Recreation Council has also been discussing ways to recruit “new blood” and new volunteers.

The Board thanked Christopher for the briefing.

Park Board Business

Terry suggested that, with several new Park Board members, a fall retreat be scheduled. Last year’s format of a late afternoon/early evening retreat worked well. Parks staff will work to schedule the retreat.

New/Old Business

The meeting formally adjourned at 8:10 p.m. Immediately following adjournment, Bruce and James were each honored for their 7-1/2 years’ service and commitment as Park Board Commissioners. Both were presented a small engraved gift, certificate of appreciation, and the heartfelt thanks of the Superintendent and other Board members for a job well done.

APPROVED: _____ DATE _____

Kate Pflaumer, Chair