



## Department of Parks and Recreation

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
January 22, 2009  
Meeting Held at 100 Dexter Avenue North

Web site: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkboard/>  
(Includes agendas and minutes from 2001-present)

Also, view Seattle Channel tapes of meetings, June 12, 2008-most current, at  
<http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/watchVideos.asp?program=Parks>

### ***Board of Park Commissioners:***

Present:

Neal Adams, Vice-chair  
John Barber  
Terry Holme  
Donna Kostka  
Jackie Ramels, Chair

### ***Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:***

Tim Gallagher, Superintendent  
Christopher Williams, Deputy Superintendent  
Susan Golub, Strategic Advisor

Commissioner Ramels called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and reviewed the meeting agenda. **A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda and the record of correspondence. The vote was taken and the motion carried.** The January 8 meeting minutes will be approved at the February 12 meeting.

## **Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Gallagher reported on several park items.

Seacrest Water Taxi: A good meeting regarding proposed improvements to the Seacrest Dock related to the Seacrest Water Taxi was held at the Alki Community Center, with approximately 100 people attending. King County and the Ferry District, operators of the water taxi, ran the meeting. The proposed improvements were well-received.

California Place Park: Meetings regarding the proposed improvements at the park (a Neighborhood Matching Fund project) have been rescheduled in order to find a venue closer to the site.

Seward Park Encroachments: We have had success working with property owners adjacent to Seward Park who have private encroachments into the parkland. Eleven owners agreed to remove encroachments. We continue working with one family with private gardens planted on park property. Our approach has been that plantings

will be allowed to remain, but all physical improvements must be removed. Park neighbors have been supportive.

Admiral Way Greenbelt: Property on the hillside adjacent to Admiral Way, owned by the Seattle Department of Transportation, is being transferred to Parks and Recreation's jurisdiction. This will allow Parks tree and maintenance crews to care for the greenbelt. Along with the property, SDOT is transferring \$225,000 to help pay maintenance costs.

April 1 All Staff Meeting: Parks and Recreation will hold the second annual All Staff Meeting on April 1 (no joke!). The keynote speaker is K.C. Golden, Policy Director for Climate Solutions, a research and advocacy organization pioneering practical and profitable solutions to global warming.

Free Swim: We have started a new specially priced program of beginning swim lessons for families, School of FISH (Fun Instruction in our Swimming Holes). Since January 1, 2009, School of FISH has offered the discount price of \$2 per lesson for a paired parent and child. The first session (10 classes) is free with a voucher. This program is for elementary and middle school-aged children and their parents. Each child must be accompanied in the water by an adult on a 1:1 ratio. Students in this program will learn beginning swimming skills that include water adjustment, bubble blowing, breath holding, kicking on front, back float, and using a life jacket. The program differs from the Learn to Swim Program – the FISH focus is primarily on becoming comfortable in the water, while Learn to Swim teaches swimming skills.

Magnuson Parking with Children's: The Department has had a month-to-month concession agreement with Children's Hospital allowing their employees to park in the lot at Magnuson Park. In 2005, Children's received a conditional use permit from the Department of Planning and Development to formally establish use of the 375 spaces as a park and pool lot. Employees are shuttled by bus to the Children's campus. Parks recently renegotiated our contract with Children's and will receive substantially more revenue with the new arrangement.

Olympia Visit: The Superintendent, Deputy and Policy Manager, Eric Friedli, traveled to Olympia to meet with state legislators. Very productive "meet and greet" sessions were held with five Seattle legislators.

Wawona: In mid-February the Wawona will be dismantled and moved from Lake Union. Some parts will be saved for exhibit at the new Museum of History and Industry that will be located at the Lake Union Armory. The Wawona work must be completed before the April salmon spawning season.

Hebert Research: Parks and Recreation commissioned a study by the Hebert Research Company to evaluate the economic value of parks to a city. The study found that housing values were higher for homes located near parks.

Aquarium Management: Responding to a question from Commissioner Barber, Superintendent Gallagher discussed the negotiations that are underway regarding management of the Seattle Aquarium by the Seattle Aquarium Society (SEAS). One benefit of SEAS management is the significant increase in fundraising capacity that the non-profit provides; SEAS has raised millions of dollars for Aquarium redevelopment. Another benefit is that SEAS management allows for broader geographic participation in Aquarium support. The proposed management format is a partnership with the City of Seattle – we will not be turning the Aquarium over to SEAS.

National Parks: Responding to a question from Commissioner Adams, Superintendent Gallagher discussed the inter-related issues between urban parks and national parks. In mid-March Deputy Superintendent Williams and Policy Manager Friedli will travel to Washington, D.C. for the National Park Association Lobby Day to discuss policy and funding issues that are common to national and city parks.

For more information on Seattle Parks and Recreation, visit the web pages at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/>.

## **Presentation: John C. Little Award**

Folasa Titalii, Jr. was awarded the John C. Little Award, in recognition of his tireless service to youth. The award, named for former Park Commissioner John Little, is presented annually to a Seattle Parks and Recreation employee who has made a significant contribution to improving the lives of Seattle's young people. Mr. Little was a champion of youth, active in urban 4-H and other youth programs.

Deputy Superintendent Williams presented Mr. Titalii with the award, noting that for over 15 years, Mr. Titalii has worked almost every Friday and Saturday night in Parks Late Night teen program. He has insured a safe, welcoming and inviting atmosphere, a place youth want to go get off of the streets. Mr. Titalii has been a mentor to literally thousands of young people, and is known fondly among teens as Uncle Jr. Mr. Williams praised Mr. Titalii as a class act, providing invaluable service to youth. Mr. Williams was joined in presenting the award by Stephanie Little, John Little's granddaughter, who offered her congratulations and thanks to Mr. Titalii for his many years of dedication to youth.

Mr. Titalii thanked his family, many of whom were in attendance, noting they have inspired him to do good work. He also thanked others, including parks recreation attendants, teen leaders at Late Night, who also are mentors and teachers of youth. And he thanked Department leadership for continuing a commitment to helping youth and having the confidence in staff to set the tone and vision for the Late Night program, and for being sensitive to the needs of the community. The Department has consistently had the courage to guide and give resources to make a vision a reality.

Mr. Titalii stated he would never meet the public service commitment of John Little, who had a passion and commitment and love of working with youth. He stated he was both proud and humble to receive this award. Mr. Titalii cited the importance of learning from the past, noting the excellent history of the Late Night Program, and urged Parks to keep it vital with continued funding.

After accepting the award, Parks staff person Elaine Dunn presented Mrs. Little, John Little's wife, with a Washington State 4-H Hall of Fame pin, in recognition for Mr. Little's 4-H work on behalf of youth.

## **Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience**

The Chair explained that this portion of the agenda is reserved for topics that have not had, or are not scheduled for, a public hearing. Speakers are limited to two minutes each and will be timed. The Board's usual process is for 15 minutes of testimony to be heard at this time, with additional testimony heard after the regular agenda and just before Board of Park Commissioner's business. Three people testified.

Donna Hartmann-Miller: Representing the Friends of Greater Maple Leaf, Ms. Hartmann-Miller talked to the Board about the planning underway for the eventual park that will be developed on the covered Maple Leaf Reservoir. The Friends group formed in 2007 to begin planning the lid park and includes 18 members from diverse backgrounds and interests. They have conducted community charrettes with the help of students from the University of Washington School of Architecture, and developed innovative designs.

The recently passed Parks for All Levy includes five million dollars for this project. Ms. Hartmann-Miller urged first cycle funding for the Maple Leaf Reservoir lid park so that they can do a master plan for the project, with the goal of saving money by coordinating park development with burial of the reservoir.

Regarding the timing of the Levy projects, Superintendent Gallagher noted that scheduling recommendations will come from the levy oversight committee; one factor considered will be the readiness of projects to begin.

George Clubine: Mr. Clubine is also a member of the Friends of Greater Maple Leaf interested in the reservoir lid park. His home directly abuts the current reservoir fence. He urged early funding from the Parks for All Levy. Security and noise are his main concerns about future park development.

Rodney Thornley: Mr. Thornley is a water ski supporter who expressed his displeasure with the Department's decision to cancel the water ski tournaments that used to be scheduled at Green Lake. He submitted a letter pointing out the discrepancy between the Board's recommendation and the Department's decision to discontinue the water ski events and the lack of environmental data supporting those actions. He stated he would take this issue to another decision-making body.

## **Update Briefing: State Route 520 Project**

David Graves, Senior Planner with Seattle Parks and Recreation, and Bob Powers, Deputy Directory of the Seattle Department of Transportation, presented an update briefing on State Route 520 and the Alaskan Way Viaduct replacement projects. Prior to the meeting, Commissioners received a written briefing paper on the SR 520 project, which was also posted on the Board's web page, and is included below.

### ***Written Briefing***

#### **Requested Board Action**

This briefing is being held at the request of the Board of Park Commissioners. No action is requested from the Board at this time by Seattle Parks and Recreation. The briefing is being provided to the Commissioners to update them on the status of the project and set the stage for future briefing(s) and potential action later this year. The last briefing of the Board was on September 14, 2006 during the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) public comment period. A briefing was also presented on January 12, 2006 on the original Pacific Street Interchange design.

#### **Project or Policy Description and Background**

The project before the Board of Park Commissioners is the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project. As you may recall, there were three alternatives originally proposed and analyzed in the DEIS: a new 4-lane structure with a variety of options, a new 6-lane structure with a variety of options, and a no action alternative. For both the 4- lane and 6- lane alternatives, the project limits extend along the SR 520 corridor from I-5 in Seattle to 108th Avenue NE on the Eastside (just west of I-405). The 6-lane alternative also includes minor improvements to eastbound SR 520 between I-405 and 124th Avenue NE. Also, both the 4- lane and the 6- lane alternatives could include a Pacific Street/Arboretum interchange.

The Governor sponsored Westside Mediation Process has come to a close and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is beginning to prepare a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) to analyze the three new alternatives which came from the mediation process. The Westside Mediation process included representatives from neighborhoods surrounding the SR 520 project and the Montlake interchange, and the City of Seattle, University of Washington and the Arboretum Foundation. The mediation was led by private mediators hired by the governor's office. They met for approximately eighteen months. The goal of the mediation was to have the participants reach consensus and forward a preferred alternative to the Governor. Instead, the process yielded three alternatives which are variations on the original alternatives. These new alternatives are significantly different from the originals, however, such that they warrant additional environmental review under NEPA/SEPA.

WSDOT's current schedule indicates that the SDEIS will be issued towards the end of 2009. The new alternatives are similar to the previous alternatives, with the following distinctions (refer also to the attached graphics which provides a comparison between the new alternatives):

- Alternative A: Similar to the base 6-lane option with the addition of a second bridge over the Montlake Cut
- Alternative K: Similar to the Pacific Street interchange with the intersection moved west from Marsh Island to McCurdy/East Montlake Park; the actual interchange is sixty feet below grade and there is a tunnel under the Montlake Cut which connects to Pacific Street and Montlake Boulevard at

the entrance to the Husky Stadium parking lot. There is also a land bridge/berm over SR 520 which connects the north and south halves of Marsh Island.

Alternative L: Similar to the Pacific Street interchange with the intersection moved west from Marsh Island to McCurdy/East Montlake Park; the actual interchange is elevated and there is a bridge over the Montlake Cut which connects to Pacific Street and Montlake Boulevard at the entrance to the Husky Stadium parking lot. Access between the north and south halves of Marsh Island is under the freeway similar to what exists today. Note that the berm/land bridge could be added here.

The Seattle City Council is working on a resolution to offer guidance to WSDOT on these three alternatives. The sum of Councils' resolution encourages WSDOT not to choose a preferred alternative until the environmental review undertaken through the SDEIS has been completed and the potential impacts can be adequately understood. The Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC) has also recently passed a resolution favoring Alternative K. The ABGC previously commented on the DEIS. The Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks has also been very involved throughout the process.

### **Public Involvement Process**

WSDOT has and continues to hold numerous public meetings with community groups, organizations and public agencies. Seattle Parks and Recreation is one of the many public departments and agencies which has been and continues to work with and comment on WSDOT's proposal.

### **Issues**

There are potentially significant issues associated with the project and its impact to the Arboretum and other parks within the SR 520 corridor. The project will impact the following parks/park facilities:

- Bagley Viewpoint;
- Montlake Playfield;
- East Montlake Park;
- McCurdy Park;
- The Arboretum;
- Lake Washington Boulevard (a Park Boulevard);
- The Japanese Garden; and
- The Arboretum Waterfront Trail.

Impacts to these Parks and park resources include:

- Loss of Bagley Viewpoint;
- Impacts to submerged park lands/loss of aquatic recreation opportunities at Montlake Playfield;
- Structure width - Shading of vegetation, impacts to terrestrial and aquatic habitat and passive recreation areas at Montlake Playfield and the Arboretum;
- Structure height (positive & negative);
- Through traffic on Lake Washington Boulevard in the Arboretum;
- Noise and traffic impacts on the Japanese Garden;
- Permanent closure of the Lake Washington Boulevard on/off-ramps to SR 520 (reduces traffic through the Arboretum - positive impact);
- Visual impacts of noise walls on the Arboretum;
- Pacific Street/Arboretum Interchange – direct impacts to the north end of the Arboretum, particularly Marsh and Foster Islands and East Montlake and McCurdy Parks; spillover traffic impacts throughout the Arboretum;
- Loss of the MOHAI building;
- Loss of McCurdy Park;
- Impacts to East Montlake Park;

- Use of the WSDOT peninsula;
- Construction and construction staging impacts; and
- Mitigation package.

Note that there are also potentially significant natural resource and cultural impacts which are being reviewed by State and Federal agencies and the Tribes. The City is comprised of many agencies and Parks is coordinating with the other departments to ensure that we speak as a coordinated whole at the most opportune moment(s).

### **Schedule**

WSDOT expects to issue the SDEIS some time in late 2009. The current alternatives may change as the year progresses and WSDOT discusses the project with the State and Federal regulatory agencies and the Tribes. Once the SDEIS is issued there will be a public comment period. Additionally, the City will coordinate its internal review of the project such that we can provide a coordinate response to WSDOT. The SDEIS will also be an opportunity for the Board of Parks Commissioners to comment on the project.

### **Additional Information**

If you any questions regarding the SR520 project, contact David Graves at 684-7048 or e-mail to [david.graves@seattle.gov](mailto:david.graves@seattle.gov).

WSDOT's SR 520 Project Website is: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/SR52>

### ***Verbal Briefing/Board Discussion***

Bob Powers, Deputy Director of the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), gave a brief overview of the plans to replace the Alaskan Way Viaduct. After 18 months of planning and negotiation, agreement was reached between Seattle, the State and King County to replace the viaduct with a bored tunnel. Improvements to the waterfront, the reconnection of downtown with Elliott Bay and the maintenance of vehicle capacity were reasons cited for the tunnel option. Responding to a request from Commissioner Ramels, Mr. Powers stated he would be happy to return to a future Board meeting to provide a more detailed briefing on the viaduct replacement project.

David Graves, Parks Senior Planner, provided an overview of the three alternatives being studied for SR 520 replacement. The options, described in the written briefing paper, have different levels of impacts on parks, with Options K and L having the worst traffic impacts on the Washington Park Arboretum. Option A has the least impact of the three on the Arboretum.

The next step is the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) environmental review process, with the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement due in the fall. This document will provide a thorough analysis of the three options. The City of Seattle will be commenting and the impacts to parks will be addressed. Mr. Graves offered to return to the Board after the SDEIS has been issues, so that he can better discuss the specific impacts of each of the alternatives. The Commissioners expressed interest in this fall briefing, noting their concerns about alternatives having damaging impacts on parks and the Arboretum.

### **Update Briefing: Beach Fires**

Eric Friedli, Director of Seattle Parks Policy and Business Analysis, presented an update briefing on beach fires. Prior to the meeting Commissioners received a written briefing paper, which was also posted on the Board's web page, and is included below.

## *Written Briefing*

### Requested Board Action

No action is requested at this time. The Board was provided a briefing on the beach fire program in June 2008. The purpose of this memo is to provide a summary on the beach fire program for 2008.

### **Background**

The Alki summer beach fire program operated from June 8 through September 30, 2008. The Golden Gardens program ran from May 23 through October 24, 2008. These programs include staffing during the evening hours to educate park visitors about the rules and procedures for beach fires and to help enforce the park rules. Program staff was on-site at Alki Beach and Golden Gardens from 2:30 pm to 11 pm. Golden Gardens staff worked a ten hour shift (2 pm to 12:30 am) between July 8 and August 19. Attachment 1 summarizes the staffing levels and other related costs.

Certain behaviors continue to be a challenge including parking at Golden Gardens, alcohol consumption at both parks, and burning of inappropriate material that cause hazards and illegal fires. Parks staff is effective at eliminating illegal fires when they occur and report that most people are cooperative when it is pointed out that alcohol is not permitted. The Seattle Police Department (SPD) is contacted regarding incidents such as fights and significant parking issues.

Overall, the beach fire program was successful in preventing illegal fires, use of illegal burn materials and enhancing the general adherence to park rules. Attachment 2 provides a review of data collected for the beach fire program.

### **Plans for 2009**

No changes are planned for the number of fire rings or for general operating protocols.

Parks staff will review with Seattle Police challenges experienced in 2008 and further develop a plan for response.

To further educate and encourage the public to burn only clean wood, Parks anticipates issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) in the first quarter of this year for a pilot program for a concessionaire to sell fire wood to the public for use at the beaches. A successful concessionaire will have exclusive right to sell firewood that meets Parks' standards and specifications at Alki Beach and Golden Gardens. The primary goal of this RFP will be to implement some level of influence and control, via a permitted concessionaire, in the use of environmentally friendly firewood at our beaches. The RFP is expected to advertise in February with proposals due in March. Following the implementation of the pilot, Parks will evaluate and make recommendations for the following season.

## **Attachment 1**

### **Beach Fires 2008 Cost Summary – Alki (15 wks) - Golden Gardens (22 wks)**

<b>Elements</b>	<b>Alki</b>		<b>Golden Gardens</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>
<b>Program Schedule</b>				
Week day	2:30 p.m. – 11 p.m. W/Th/Fr		3:30 – 12:00 a.m. Th/F/M	
Week end	2:30 p.m. – 11 p.m. S/Su		3:30 – 12 am S/Su	

			2 pm – 12:30 am 7/8-8/19	
<b>Program Costs</b>				
Staff/ FTE	1,338 hours / .64 FTE		2,640 hours / 1.27 FTE	3,978 / 1.91
Seasonal staff costs	\$27,380		\$55,800	\$83,180
Equipment / material costs	\$316		\$1,639	\$1,955
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	\$27,696		\$57,439	\$85,135



**Attachment 2**  
**2008 Beach Fire Program Review**

	<b>Alki</b>	<b>Golden Gardens</b>	
Program Dates	6/8 – 9/30	5/23/08 – 10//24/08	
<b># of Fire Rings</b>			<b>Totals:</b>
2007	6	11	17
2008	5	13	18
<b>Staff</b>			
Utility Laborer	1	1	2
General Laborer (Seasonal)	1	2	3
<b>SEASON TOTALS</b>			
<b>Legal Fires</b>			
Rings in Use at Start of Shift (3:30 pm)	16	None	16
Rings in Use at Close of Shift (10:00 pm)	319	1350 (All in use)	1669
Occurrences of Illegal Fuels removed from Fire Rings.	56	770	826
<b>Illegal Fires (fires started outside of rings in sand)</b>			
Found at Beginning of Shift	5	0	5
Burning At Some Point in Shift	73	770	843
Staff Prevented	84	330	414
Total Illegal Fuel Removed	523 Lbs	4,400 lbs	4,923
<b>Other</b>			
Number of Portable Grills	38	Did not track	
Number of Legal Fires With	64	None identified	

Manufactured Logs			
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***Verbal Briefing***

Eric Friedli, Parks Manager of Policy and Business Analysis, presented the Board with information on the beach fire program. Also attending to respond to Board member questions, were staff members Cheryl Fraser, Linda Hubert and Becky Goldy. The Board was last briefed on beach fires in June 2008. Since then the summer program was implemented and staff believe the program went pretty well, with the beaches more family friendly than last summer and more success in closing down illegal beach fires. However, there continue to be illegal fires and problems with alcohol and fights.

The program for summer 2009 will remain the same as for 2008 – there will be no change in the number of fire rings and staff will continue the same level of fire management. There will be the addition of firewood sales at the beaches. It is hoped that by selling appropriate firewood, the incidence of burning illegal products will be reduced. The firewood sales will be a pilot project, with an assessment to be conducted at the conclusion of the beach fire season.

Commissioner Adams asked about an education component to the program – what outreach/education efforts is Parks making. Cheryl Fraser responded that Parks has a brochure detailing fire responsibility which is handed out at the beaches; in addition, illegal wood is tagged as vehicles enter the parking lots.

Commissioner Barber asked about enforcement efforts. Superintendent Gallagher responded that we tried using park rangers to police beach fires, but were prevented because the City ordinance approving the rangers limited their activities to downtown parks.

Commissioner Holme asked why there is more illegal burning at Golden Gardens than at Alki. Mr. Friedli responded that this was largely a result of the fire pits at Golden Gardens being more secluded than at Alki, providing more isolated locations for illegal activity to occur. At Alki businesses and residences are closer to the fire rings.

Commissioner Kostka asked about the environmental air quality issues related to beach fires. Mr. Friedli responded that we do not have the ability to monitor specifically for beach fires, but that Parks worked with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency regarding the quality of what is burned, this has an impact on air pollution. This is one of the reasons for the pilot program to sell firewood at the beaches.

**Old/New Business**

California Place Park: Commissioner Ramels noted that she had been requested to make a presentation at or facilitate the community meeting regarding the Neighborhood Matching Fund project at California Place Park. She turned down this request because it was not an appropriate role for a Board member, as the project may come before the Board for a recommendation. Ms. Ramels plans to attend the meeting, but will not make any statement or take any official role.

There being no other new business, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Jackie Ramels, Chair  
 Board of Park Commissioners

DATE \_\_\_\_\_