

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
Meeting Held at Discovery Park Environmental Learning Center
February 14, 2008
Web site: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkboard/>

Board of Park Commissioners:

Present:

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

Excused:

Amit Ranade, Chair

Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:

Tim Gallagher, Superintendent
Christopher Williams, Deputy Superintendent
Sandy Brooks, Park Board Coordinator

The focus of this evening's meeting is Discovery Park. Prior to the meeting, Parks staff led the Commissioners on a tour of the park to the historic district, chapel, Nike warehouse, and other sites. Several members of the public joined the tour.

Commissioner Ramels called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and acknowledged the record of correspondence received by the Board since its last regular meeting of January 24, 2008. **Commissioner Holme moved, and Commissioner Adams seconded, approval of the February 14 agenda and December 13 retreat minutes.** The January 24 minutes will be approved at the February 28 meeting.

Superintendent's Report

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

Camera Installed at Cal Anderson Park: One camera was recently installed at Cal Anderson Park, due to an increasing problem of illegal behavior in this popular park. The cameras are on the tall light poles just south of the shelter house on the north end of the field. One camera will also be installed at the playfield behind Yesler Community Center. Parks staff will soon go before City Council to request additional cameras in other downtown parks. For more information on Cal Anderson Park, see http://cityofseattle.net/parks/park_detail.asp?ID=3102.

Coyote Informational Meeting Held Last Week at Discovery Park: Following recent concern over a coyote in Discovery Park, <http://cityofseattle.net/news/detail.asp?ID=8134&Dept=14>, Seattle Parks held an informational meeting attended by 100-150 people. Russell Link, Washington State Fish and Wildlife wild animal biologist, gave a very informative presentation. Other participants included staff from Seattle Parks, Woodland Park Zoo, and Seattle Animal Shelter. There is a good resource, "Living with Coyotes," on the Fish and Wildlife web site at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/living/coyotes.htm>.

City Neighborhood Council Budget Conference: Several Parks staff and Superintendent Gallagher attended last Sunday's budget conference, as well as five City Council members, Mayor's staff, and 100+ citizens. For more information on the Conference, see <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/events/CitizenBudgetConference.htm>.

Number of Garbage Cans Reduced in Parks: In an effort to provide more efficient garbage pickup service, the number of available trash cans in parks has been reduced by 10 percent, with a focus on removing remotely-placed cans. Staff will watch carefully to see if this results in efficiencies for the crew and whether it results in an increase in litter.

Leaf Blower Usage Reduced in Parks: As an element of Seattle Climate Action Now and Seattle Park's efforts to reduce its CO2 emissions, the Department is reducing its use of gas-powered leaf blowers and other small equipment. In addition, staff are trying out new "green" equipment and acting as a test agency for new technologies. Initially, the frequency of mowing, blowing, trimming, and sweeping will be reduced in 25 parks around the city. The pilot period is February 15 through October 1. At the end of the pilot, staff will report their findings to the Park Board.

Volunteer Park Off-leash Concerns Addressed: Off-leash dogs at Volunteer and Discovery Parks are having a negative impact on wildlife. Parks' staff are developing a good working relationship with Seattle Animal Shelter officers to address the problem in Volunteer Park. At the officers' suggestion, Parks staff are noting vehicle license plate numbers of offenders and sending in an affidavit to Seattle Animal Control with the description of the person and dog and time of day. Based on this information, Animal Control is able to mail tickets to offenders. For more information on Volunteer Park, see http://cityofseattle.net/parks/park_detail.asp?ID=399. For a list of off-leash areas in Seattle's Parks, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/offleash.asp>.

Commissioner Adams noted that he sees more and more dogs off leash at Lincoln Park and supports this effort. Commissioner Larsen also voiced support. Superintendent Gallagher stated that dogs off-leash often chase sea life, shore birds, and other wildlife in the City's parks.

Chinese New Year Celebrated at Magnuson Park: On February 1, Magnuson Community Center celebrated its 3rd annual Chinese New Year with a very festive special event highlighting games and prizes, Chinese crafts and treats, and live entertainment featuring music from China, the Melody Xiao Youth Dancers, martial arts demonstrations, and the Mak Fai Lion Dancers. An estimated 500 people of all ages enjoyed the evening festivities in Hangar 30. Gung hay fat choy! For more information on Magnuson Park events, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Magnuson/>.

EarthCorps Accomplishments Noted: Earthcorps reports that its work in Seattle's parks during 2007 was a huge success. Accomplishments include: training 100 young adult leaders, utilizing 11,500 volunteers, planting 62,000 native plants, construction of 25 miles of trail, removal of 110 acres of invasive plants, saving 4,700 mature trees, watering 113,000 native plants during dry summer months, maintenance of 182 acres of restored land, restoration of local salmon streams and Puget Sound shoreline, and removal of 500 tons of waste from project areas. For more information on EarthCorps, see <http://www.earthcorps.org/index.php>.

New Horticulture Manager: Seattle Parks' new Horticulture Unit Manager, John Thomas, starts work March 5. John comes to the Department from Washington, D.C., where he most recently directed the Urban Forestry Administration for the District of Columbia Department of Transportation. In that capacity he managed 144,000 street trees and 50-plus employees and 70 contract employees. He was responsible for development of the Urban Forest Plan and Native Reforestation Plan, and worked closely with the Casey Trees Endowment and other nonprofits to coordinate reforestation policy initiatives and citywide green renovation projects. Before that he worked for the District as a supervisory horticulturist and a lead horticulturist, and for the United States Botanic Garden as a horticulturist. Commissioner Barber was a member of the interview panel. For more information on Seattle Parks' Horticulture Unit, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Horticulture/default.htm>.

18th Annual Daddy Daughter Dinner is Another Success!: Ballard Community Center hosted a luau for 250 dads and daughters at the annual Daddy Daughter Dinner sponsored by the Ballard Advisory Council. Participants were treated to a complimentary photo, a hand-crafted photo frame, and entertainment from the Southwest Community Center's Polynesian Club hula dancers. For more information on Ballard Community Center events, see: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/centers/Ballard.htm>.

Arboretum Damaged from Broadmoor Construction Site: Parks' Property Management and Engineering and Design staff met with staff from the City Attorney's Office and Department of Planning and Development prior to meeting with Broadmoor Golf Club regarding damage to the Arboretum caused by construction at Broadmoor. Broadmoor's erosion control measures failed during the December rain storms, resulting in a significant mud flow onto park property and the fouling of Arboretum Creek and ponds that outflow to Lake Washington. For more information on Washington Park Arboretum, see <http://depts.washington.edu/wpa/>.

Northgate Urban Center Park Moves Ahead: A contract has been finalized with Mithun for initial design services for this new park just north of Northgate Mall. Parks is engaging the community with the first project advisory team meeting on February 13 and the first community meeting on February 20. Superintendent Gallagher will attend the community meeting. For more information, see <http://www.seattle.gov/news/detail.asp?ID=8160&Dept=14>.

KUOW Radio Airs Show on Gangs: Andre Franklin, Recreation Specialist for Southwest Teen Life Center, participated in a radio program on KUOW on the topic of gangs. The guests included Lt. Ron Wilson from Seattle Police Department, a sociologist who works with at-risk teens in Pierce County, and a psychologist from the University of California-Santa Barbara who treats at-risk youth. Andre did a great job talking about how City programs offer alternatives to kids who might be headed for trouble. Mickey Fearn, Seattle Parks' Community Connections Manager, is working with the Mayor's office to help deter this very serious, and growing, problem. To listen to the program, see <http://www.kuow.org/defaultProgram.asp?ID=14332>.

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 three 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. Five people signed up to testify.

Pete Galloway: He believes the Landmark Preservation Board made a serious mistake in designating the chapel as a landmark because: (1) the chapel is in direct contrast to the Master Plan and he then quoted language that addresses the chapel; (2) the chapel is a religious symbol in a park dedicated to open space and he questioned whether it is appropriate for it to be in a park; (3) and the chapel is not aimed at serving diverse religions and it offends him. He recommended that if Seattle Parks must keep the chapel it be "mothballed."

Julia N. Allen: Ms. Allen is a member of the Discovery Park Advisory Council and sent the Commissioners written testimony and gave verbal comments. She read three items from her handout: (1) use of the Historic Buildings in the Fort Lawton Landmark District in Discovery Park; (2) parking of United Indians of All Tribes' vans and buses on the Parade Ground in the Fort Lawton Landmark District, which she believes is an inappropriate use of the park; and (3) the rabbit relocation project housed in Discovery Park, which she believes was misguided and mismanaged. Rotting vegetables and

straw were scattered around the chapel and the rescue of 101 feral rabbits cost \$70,000, plus Seattle Parks is now spending thousands more to repair the chapel floor damaged by the rabbits being housed there during the rescue effort. Ms. Allen's written comments included two other subjects: (1) reorganization of Discovery Park's maintenance crew and (2) recycling in Discovery Park.

Heidi Carpine: She is Co-chair of Friends of Chapel on the Hill and urged that the chapel be used as a community gathering place or wedding chapel. She noted that the Board of Park Commissioners, Landmark Preservation Board, and City Council voted to save the chapel. She asked that it not be “mothballed.” She stated that the Discovery Park Advisory Council has not taken a vote on the chapel and that four members of the Council signed a letter asking that the chapel be mothballed. It is important that the public understand this.

Thomas Palm: He is the Discovery Park Advisory Council President and has volunteered at the park for 11 years. For a number of years, Discovery Park has had its own maintenance crew, as has Magnuson Park. Recently, Seattle Parks reorganized and the Discovery Park maintenance crew has been assigned to the West Central District maintenance crew, while Magnuson Park has retained its crew. He is concerned that staff not assigned to Discovery Park might not be aware of the restoration projects at Discovery. He asked that the staff be re-assigned to Discovery Park or to the Horticulture unit, which works more closely with restoration efforts.

He also recommended that the chapel be added to the Historic District buildings, that it be closed, and no funds spent on its restoration.

Thomas McKay: He is a member of American Legion Post 23 and strongly supported the chapel being saved. He talked about the history of the chapel and stated that the deed to Discovery Park reads that the chapel will be maintained. He urged that some use for the chapel be determined at a later time.

Commissioner Ramels asked if the future of the chapel will come before the Park Board. Kevin Stoops, Interim Director of Seattle Parks’ Projects and Development Division, answered that there is no active proposal for the chapel to be restored and used.

Written Briefing

Briefing: Discovery Park Master Plan

Mr. Stoops presented an overview of the Discovery Park Master Plan. Commissioners received a written briefing prior to the meeting and Mr. Stoops reviewed that information in a verbal briefing.

Requested Board Action

This is a briefing for informational purposes only. No action is required. The intent is to provide a context for issues associated with the acquisition of the Capehart housing area at Discovery Park and for other issues that may come before the Board in the near future.

Project Description and Background

Discovery Park, on Seattle’s Magnolia Bluff, was originally created in 1972 from surplus portions of the Army’s Fort Lawton. Additional properties were added to the park as the Army vacated remaining areas of the fort, such that the park now consists of nearly 550 acres. Most recently, the West Point Light Station and the “500 Area” parcels were added to the park. The parks adopted plan calls for it to be an open space of quiet and tranquility. Over the years since 1972, old army structures and roadways have been removed and the site restored to create a large naturalistic park that capitalizes on the site’s forests, meadows, and shoreline.

Planning for the park started in 1970 and in 1972 the Fort Lawton Park Plan, by the landscape architectural firm Dan Kiley and Partners, was issued. The plan was revised in 1974 and subsequently adopted by the Seattle City Council, but this action was vacated in a King County Superior Court ruling that the plan was adopted absent proper environmental review under the then new State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). From 1976 through the early 1980’s a series of environmental impact statements (EIS), supplemental EIS and addenda document were issued on the overall plan for the park and on specific development proposals. A long range development plan, based on the original “Kiley Plan” as modified through initial

operation and development of the park, was drafted in 1983 and after numerous revisions, adopted by the Seattle City Council in 1986 (Resolution 27399).

The Long Range Development Plan is a thematic statement; there is no overall park map or graphic to portray the plan. The potential for the park was stated as follows:

The site is one of breathtaking majesty. Lying at the northern tip of Seattle's crescent on Elliott Bay and thrusting westward into Puget Sound, this promontory commands dramatic views up and down the Sound and across the water to the snow-covered Olympic Mountains.

The seclusion of the site, the magnificent vistas, the stretches of tidal beaches, the stands of native trees, the meadowlands – all combine to make this site one of surpassing beauty and serenity. As a park site, its potential is bounded only by the vision and resolution of those into whose hands it is entrusted.

The long-range plan establishes guidelines which, if followed faithfully, cannot fail to create on this site a park which will be one of the great urban parks of the world - and a joy to this City forever.

And, the theme of the park plan was stated as follows:

The primary role of this park in the life of the city is dictated by its incomparable site. That role should be to provide an open space of quiet and tranquility for the citizens of this city - a sanctuary where they might escape the turmoil of the city and enjoy the rejuvenation which quiet and solitude and an intimate contact with nature can bring. It should be accepted that this park cannot satisfy all of the recreation need of all of the citizens of Seattle. It can only complement the other elements in the park system. This park should not be asked to serve too many functions. It will best serve this city if it is permitted to serve one primary function and to serve that function well.

To this day, the description of the park as "*an open space of quiet and tranquility*" is the guiding principle of the park development and its ongoing management. This principle is reflected in the resolution adopting the plan and has been repeated in subsequent legislation related to the park.

The 1986 plan described the site, and further described the park's purpose as follows:

Discovery Park's uniqueness in this system is attributable to its size, location, and topography. It is the largest park in the city. With over 530 acres, Discovery Park represents roughly 10% of the total system and one fourth of the City's natural open space. As such, Seattle's citizens originally perceived it as an unparalleled opportunity to provide them with a "taste of wilderness" inside the city limits. Other parks have been intended to do this to some degree, among them Schmitz, Ravenna, and Carkeek Parks. No other is so vast, so varied, or so beautifully located.

At Discovery Park, beaches, bluffs, sand dunes, meadows, cliffs, and forests are all combined in one vast peninsular park with views encompassing the Sound and two mountain ranges including Mt. Rainier and Mt. Baker. This is what inspired the original 1972 Master Plan, and the citizens of Seattle have shown that they are willing to go to great lengths to protect this legacy.

In summary, Discovery Park is intended to be an open space park with only those facilities and developments which are absolutely necessary for the enjoyment of the open space experience. Discovery Park is a "people park" but also a place in which park visitors can find "quiet and tranquility." It cannot be a "wilderness" in a pure sense of the term but it will be a relatively natural park, a place where visitors can learn to respect their environment as well as enjoy the beauty of nature.

Since 1972, the park has been built from the former Army base. Initially, work was undertaken to remove Army buildings, roadways and parking lots; and, utilities were modified. The park's Loop Trail, four comfort stations (restrooms), two parking lots, and the "Neighborhood Playground" were also developed in the early to mid-1970's at the perimeter of the park.

In the 1980's, other demolition work was undertaken after the Fort Lawton Uplands were acquired, following the deactivation of the Army's Nike missile system. In later years, certain historic buildings were removed and others stabilized, extensive habitat restoration undertaken, and a new visitor's center built. The park is the focus of environmental education programs in the Seattle park system.

Other development has occurred at the park as well, including the initial development of the United Indians of All Tribes Foundation's Indian Cultural Center on leased lands at the northern edge of the park; and the expansion of the King County (formerly Metro) West Point Treatment Plant. This latter development, one of the largest public works project ever undertaken in Seattle, involved rebuilding the roadway through the park (along with new utilities), creation of a massive retaining wall along the property line between the plant and the park's north bluff, and extensive landscape work around the perimeter of the treatment plant and in adjacent part of the park to screen views of the plant.

Recently, Seattle Parks and Recreation has acquired the first 6-acre portion of the Capehart property from the Navy's housing developer and site manager; and will later acquire the balance of the Capehart property when the Navy has replacement housing developed in the Everett-Marysville area. The Navy's housing developer will sell the historic Fort Lawton housing to private parties but the long term management of those houses will be governed by landmark regulations to preserve their architectural qualities.

In the next two to three years, further development will occur at Discovery Park consistent with the Long Range Plan. The Nike missile master building and a related structure will be demolished later this year. Roadways in the north forest of the park will be removed as well. The West Point Lighthouse and related structures at the light station will be renovated. After the Navy vacates the Capehart housing, it will be razed and the site restored to natural conditions. All this work is funded from a settlement agreement between plaintiffs and King County related to the use of West Point for certain treatment facilities.

Public Involvement Process

As noted above, the plan for Discovery Park was put in place after numerous environmental reviews, public hearings, and community meetings and input from the Discovery Park Advisory Council over a long period of time.

Issues

At this time, there is the possibility to acquire additional portions of the former Fort Lawton for Discovery Park. The Army Reserve will be vacating the Reserve facilities on the northeastern edge of the park in 2009. Seattle Parks and Recreation has indicated interest in acquisition of the Texas Way entry and the wooded north slope as additions to the park. The balance of the Reserve site will be developed for mixed income housing, including housing for homeless families and individuals.

Additional Information: Kevin Stoops: 684-7053 or kevin.stoops@seattle.gov

Verbal Briefing/Board Discussion

Mr. Stoops reviewed information in the written briefing and answered the Commissioners' questions. He displayed a large map of Discovery Park and pointed out various elements and locations. Commissioner Barber asked about the deed restrictions referred to by Mr. McKay during Oral Communications. Mr. Stoops answered that the chapel is to be maintained for its economical life for non-denominational worship. An unanswered question is what is the chapel's economical life? Mr. McKay (a member of the audience) then asked why the Nike site is being destroyed. Mr. Stoops answered that the 1986 plan calls for the removal of the site, which will cost \$1 million to remove.

Commissioner Holme noted that the trails in this popular park is one of the most important trail system in the city. He hikes there frequently and has noted that the fence on the north bluff from the Daybreak Star road is falling down and asked if Parks maintains this. Mr. Stoops and Ms. Rose answered that the largest landslide in Puget Sound occurred at this site two years ago and trails leading to this area are not now maintained. Two years ago, the fence was moved back from the bluff approximately 40' and is again falling away. Superintendent Gallagher responded that the fence will be repaired to help keep park users away from the bluff. Commissioner Kostka suggested that the fence be moved further back from the bluff and staff agreed. Parks has geo-tech specialists who monitor the area for earth movement.

Commissioner Larsen asked how many full-time Parks staff are designated to care for the 550-acre park and staff answered that there are five assigned.

Briefing: Discovery Park Capehart Housing

Mr. Stoops next briefed the Board on the Capehart Housing in Discovery Park. Commissioners received a written briefing prior to the meeting and Mr. Stoops reviewed the information.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action: This briefing is for informational purposes only. No Board action is required.

Background and Project Description: The City recently acquired a 6-acre portion of the Capehart Naval Housing Area, an in-holding of approximately 24 acres within Discovery Park. Purchase of the remaining 18 acres is scheduled for December 2009. The property is currently used for military housing by the Navy and is occupied by 66 housing units, a base exchange store and a maintenance building. A map showing the Capehart housing area and the initial area purchased is attached.

In 2004, after concluding that they would no longer house any military families in Discovery Park, the Navy entered into an agreement with American Eagle, LLC to form a joint development group known as Pacific Northwest Communities (PNC) for the purpose of developing replacement housing for Naval personnel housed in the Puget Sound area. The sailors and other service people housed in homes on the in-holdings within Discovery Park are among those whose housing will be replaced. In return for development of this replacement housing, PNC will receive title to these properties.

There are three in-holding areas within the Park: Montana Circle, Washington Avenue properties, and Capehart (shown on the overhead photo attached to this briefing paper). The Montana Circle and Washington Avenue housing areas are designated as historically significant and are within a Historic District. These homes will be sold (not for park land) subject to the historic restrictions that apply to the District. The homes may be upgraded by the owners, but subject to the architectural controls that pertain to the district. The Capehart housing is not historic and will be demolished.

Additionally, certain portions of the water and wastewater infrastructure currently serving the Montana Circle and Washington Avenue housing areas are believed to be in deteriorating condition, beyond their useful life, and do not meet current Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) infrastructure standards. Much of this infrastructure underlies park property. As part of its development project, PNC or its successor will make the necessary improvements to bring the water and wastewater infrastructure servicing these areas up to current SPU standards and then convey the ownership, operations and maintenance rights and responsibilities, together with any necessary and related easements, to SPU. This is standard development practice and there will be no direct fiscal impact of this activity to the City.

On December 21, 2004, the City and PNC entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that set out the basic business terms that would be the foundation of the City's acquisition of the Capehart Naval Housing Area. The MOU also spoke to the mutual commitment of the parties to protect the historic character of the Historic District houses. The total purchase price set out in the MOU was \$11.1 million. On June 20, 2006, the parties executed an Addendum to the MOU modifying the terms. The amended terms included extending the deadline for completing an agreed upon Purchase and Sales Agreement to June 30, 2007; and a modification in the compensation. The first agreement contained language that part of the purchase price for Capehart was to include an exchange property. The second amendment reflected the fact that no "trade" property was currently available in the City's inventory that would satisfy the original MOU's intent to include a parcel of land as partial compensation to PNC.

The purchase price of the property was supported by an independent fee appraisal prepared under contract for the City in 2004. The price remained the same since the Addendum, although the value of the property likely has increased significantly since the original agreement date.

The City and PNC negotiated the details of the transaction, completed the City's environmental due diligence processes, and awaited the Navy's completion of various environmental reviews and documents that were prerequisite to their conveyance of the property to PNC. The City's due diligence efforts did not reveal any significant environmental risks.

In addition to the purchase price and typical terms related to closing the transaction, the agreement also provides for PNC's removal of the homes down to their foundations prior to closing. The removal of the base exchange and the maintenance building along with utilities and hard surfaces will be the City's responsibility.

Additionally, the Agreement calls for the acquisition to be phased (as shown on the attached map) with the initial parcel of approximately 6 acres acquired by November 30, 2007 for a purchase price of \$2,775,000. The second parcel will be acquired by the end of 2009 (depending on the exact date the replacement Navy Housing is available and the houses can be demolished). The City made a deposit of \$1,225,000 toward that second phase along with the purchase price of the initial parcel. This deposit will be retained in escrow until the close of the second phase and will be credited to the final payment of \$8,325,000 plus closing costs.

Several fund sources are being used to cover the purchase of this property. The City has been very successful in attracting grants and support from other agencies including the State Capital Budget (CTED); the State Interagency Committee; and King County Conservation Futures Funds. Funds also include \$1,300,000 proceeds from the sale of surplus property.

The City's demolition of the Capehart infrastructure and hard surfaces along with the area's restoration to a meadow-like character will commence likely in 2010. The restoration will be carried out consistent with long standing plans for the development of Discovery Park.

Public Involvement Process: The Navy had an extensive public involvement process related to their decision to select and convey their properties to the potential developers of their replacement housing. The City actively participated in that process. Prior to the acquisition, staff briefed the Discovery Park Advisory Council with two updates and various press releases were generated by the Mayor's Office regarding the status of negotiations during the course of discussions with the Navy and Pacific Northwest Communities.

Issues: There has been little or no opposition to the acquisition of the Capehart housing and the eventual restoration of the area to a meadow. The major issue that arose related the potential re-use of some of the housing by homeless or other under-housed individuals. The City Council addressed this issue by committing to finding replacement housing units in the Fort Lawton Reserve Center at such time as it is abandoned by the Army Reserve.

Additional issues were raised regarding the historic housing areas and the restrictions on the use and development of the historic areas.

Environmental Sustainability: The acquisition will ultimately result in an increase of permeable surfaces within Discovery Park as a result of removal of the improvements. Valuable vegetation and habitat will be added to an area currently covered with hard surfaces.

Budget: The budget for this project is \$13 million. The purchase price, \$11.1 million has been encumbered by the authorization of the purchase by the City Council. The project is on budget and the funds obligated for phase 1 have been spent.

Schedule: The remaining schedule calls for the final acquisition of Phase 2 to be completed in December 2009. The close of the acquisition is contingent, however, on the Navy's replacement housing being available for the current residents. There is a high probability that this schedule will be delayed in order to accommodate the Navy's move. Delay is likely to be six or more months, based on current information.

Additional Information: If you have any follow-up questions, please feel free to call Terry Dunning at 684-4860 or contact via e-mail at Terry.Dunning@seattle.gov.

Verbal Briefing/Board Questions and Answers

Mr. Stoops pointed out the Capehart Housing area on the large map and reviewed information from in the written briefing. The Commissioners visited the site during the pre-meeting tour.

Commissioner Holme asked about the timeline of the City's purchase, the deadline for the Navy to have left the site, and whether the City will be compensated if the Navy hasn't left by the deadline. Mr. Stoops answered that the Navy may be there through the end of 2009.

Commissioner Adams commented that it is clear a lot of planning has gone into securing this property. A challenge is how this new property fits with decisions made in the 1986 Long Range Plan (LRP.) Mr. Stoops answered that the Discovery Park Long Range Plan is not a typical Master Plan in that it establishes objectives that are being worked toward. It gives some guidance; however, it also contains many nuances. Commissioner Adams asked if the LRP is widely accepted and Mr. Stoops answered that it is. Commissioner Ramels asked if the Kiley Plan is still used as a reference and Mr. Stoops answered that the LRP states that it is based on the Kiley Plan and portions of it carry the spirit of the Kiley Plan.

Commissioner Larsen referred to the privatization of the officers' quarter. Is the selling of these homes for private use in the middle park land a done deal? Mr. Stoops answered that the community meetings about this were very well attended and the federal government's decision to sell the property, located within Discovery Park, to private developers, was bitter news to the community and the City. Mayor Nickels worked very aggressively to acquire this property. It is possible that a foundation will buy the land and transfer it to Seattle Parks. Commissioner Kostka asked if the property could be used for non-profits and Mr. Stoops answered that has been suggested and touched a raw nerve in the community.

Commissioners thanked Mr. Stoops for the briefings and the tour.

Briefing: Discovery Park Wildlife

Patti Petesch, Seattle Park's Environmental Learning Centers Manager, next briefed the Park Board on two recent wildlife issues at Discovery Park: coyotes and the feral rabbit rescue. Commissioners received written briefings prior to the meeting and Ms. Petesch reviewed that information.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action:

None, this program update is for information purposes only. The rabbit relocation program was endorsed by the Board of Park Commissioners in December, 2005, and it included trapping, health checks, neutering, and relocation of feral rabbits from Woodland, Green Lake, and Meridian Parks. The program is completed.

Project Description and Background

For at least the past 25 years, abandoned and feral rabbits have inhabited Woodland Park and several other parks. Increasingly, the forested landscape in Woodland and Green Lake Parks was negatively affected by the ever-increasing feral rabbit population and severely damaged by the colonies' extensive burrowing. The Woodland Park Vegetation Management Plan, completed in 2003, recommended removal of the rabbits because they are a threat to the parks' landscape assets.

The Rabbit Relocation Program began in 2006; its primary goal was to protect the landscape assets of Woodland and Green Lake Parks, and to discourage rabbit abandonment and feeding through public education efforts. The relocation program began as a partnership with Redmond Meadows Sanctuary to remove, sterilize, and relocate feral and domestic rabbits from Woodland and Green Lake Parks on an ongoing basis. Redmond Meadows organized and implemented the entire program, which included fund raising, humane trapping, veterinary care, sterilization, and relocation of the rabbits to Redmond Meadows Rabbit Sanctuary in Redmond, Washington. Parks provided temporary housing at Magnuson Park for interim care of the rabbits during sterilization recovery. 54 rabbits were successfully relocated to the Sanctuary, at no cost to Seattle Parks.

In 2007, the Friends of Park Rabbits became the program partner. The Chapel at Discovery Park was used as the temporary housing facility, and 101 rabbits were relocated to Precious Life Animal Sanctuary in Sequim, Washington as soon as their care was complete.

Today there are fewer than 10 rabbits left in Woodland and Green Lake Parks, and four or five in Meridian Park. Because there are so few, the Seattle Animal Shelter has offered to take newly abandoned rabbits into their Feral Rabbit Adoption Program into the future, at no cost to Seattle Parks. Right now there is no agreement in place with any partner for trapping and relocating rabbits.

Public Involvement Process

The Board of Park Commissioners held a public hearing and recommended the program be implemented in December 2005.

Issues

Citizen Concerns/Opposition: There were supporters and opponents of every issue. Parks spent many staff hours delivering program information to interested parties, and interest in the program has continued into 2008. In addition, there was some opposition from an anonymous e-mailer, "Peter Rabbit." He criticized the program itself, the volunteer organization that ran the program, the methods used to trap and relocate, the use of the chapel at Discovery Park, and humane treatment of the rabbits in the building.

At the start of the 2007 program, Parks identified three sanctuaries as potential relocation areas, and by July, only one was available, so the rabbits were relocated to Precious Life Sanctuary.

Subsequent cleanup at the Chapel was conducted by Parks staff and revealed that damage had been done to the floor area. Parks is completing the repairs of the floor. The estimated completion date is late spring, as the carpenters must wait for warmer weather to put the finish on the floor.

Environmental Sustainability

While rabbit populations have been successfully suppressed at the target parks, in the long term, Parks needs to develop a low cost solution for the ongoing issues of wildlife feeding, pet abandonment, and the impacts of feral, non-native populations for the whole park system. We will continue to develop programs that focus on low cost, humane treatment of the animals, discouraging public feeding of wildlife, and public education on living with urban wildlife.

Additional Information

Barbara DeCaro, Resource Conservation Coordinator, Horticulture and Forestry, Seattle Parks, 206-615-1660, Barbara.decaro@seattle.gov

Verbal Briefing/Board Questions & Answers

Ms. Petesch reviewed information in the written briefing. Commissioner Kostka asked if lessons have been learned from this experience and whether a plan is being developed for any future rabbit rescues. Ms. Petesch answered that yes, the lesson learned is not to house rabbits in the chapel, although the rabbits fared well and the rescue itself was considered successful. Staff will work to keep the rabbit populations lower and if a future rescue is needed, they will plan for an appropriate site to store the rabbits.

Superintendent Gallagher stated that when wildlife doesn't have predators, there are periodic "blooms" of particular species. An added problem is pet owners dropping off no-longer-wanted rabbits and other pets in Seattle's parks. He has asked Barb Decaro, Seattle Parks' Resource Conservation Coordinator, to work with the University of Washington to find food with birth control to keep rates reduced. Commissioner Holme had read that the rabbit relocation did not cost the City and he asked for the actual cost. Ms. Petesch answered that \$63,000 of Parks' budget was used for the rescue.

Briefing: Coyotes at Discovery Park

Ms. Petesch next gave a briefing on the recent public interest in a particular coyote living in Discovery Park. Prior to the meeting, the Commissioners received a written briefing, which is included in these minutes.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

This is an informational briefing only. Discovery Park and the surrounding neighborhoods have recently become aware of the presence of a coyote. The coyote has become comfortable in and around the Navy housing within Discovery Park. The Navy residents want the animal trapped and removed.

Project Description and Background

In mid-January, Discovery Park visitors and staff first saw a coyote in the park. At the same time, Parks Staff received complaints from Forest City Properties, the manager of Navy housing located within the park. Naturalist staff at Discovery discussed the coyote's presence in the park and advised the housing residents to be sure they were not inadvertently feeding the coyote and encouraging it to wander in the housing area. They also provided educational materials for the residents.

The Navy requested help and advice from Washington Fish and Wildlife to remove the coyote. DFW referred them to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Animal Division. The USDA agreed to set leg traps on Navy property in an effort to trap and euthanize the coyote. The traps were placed on January 19.

On January 23 the City asked the Washington Fish and Wildlife to revoke the permit to trap the coyote, as they posed a safety hazard to regular park users, pets and other wildlife. The permit was revoked and the traps were removed. On January 26, Discovery Park staff learned that the USDA, at the request of the Navy, was planning to shoot the coyote on January 28. Parks initiated discussions with the USDA on January 31. Parks announced the USDA had agreed not to pursue the coyote, and Tim Gallagher said, "Our hope is that we can change the behavior of humans living in and around the park and that will cause the coyote to change his behavior."

In partnership with several other agencies, including Seattle Animal Shelter, Progressive Animal Welfare Society, the Woodland Park Zoo, and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Parks hosted a "Living with Wildlife" open house Thursday, February 7, at Magnolia Community Center. At the open house we will inform citizens that:

- The presence of coyotes is not unusual or unexpected in a natural area park such as Discovery Park. The incidence of coyotes is evidence of a well-functioning ecosystem in the park and is welcome. In recent years, coyotes have been seen throughout the City of Seattle, both in natural areas and in residential neighborhoods.
- Coyotes are very intelligent animals and are quite adaptable to urban areas. They are primarily scavengers, but this trait also makes them opportunistic with regard to food sources and this can lead to human-wildlife conflicts.
- With this understanding we hope to encourage city residents to understand the steps they can take to protect their animals in the future, and to work to prevent coyotes and raccoons from being attracted to the housing areas. In this way we can continue to work together to solve the conflicts.

Issues

Citizen Concerns/Opposition: We are hearing from citizens on both sides of this issue. There are homeowners in Navy housing and outside the park who feel the coyote should be removed as they perceive it is a danger to them and their pets. There are also many friends of the park and neighbors who support Parks' policy on urban wildlife.

Superintendent Gallagher is working with the Law Department to draft legislation that would prohibit dogs/cats and other uncaged domestic animals at residences which are "in-holding" within a public park.

Environmental Sustainability

Coyotes are opportunists, both as hunters and as scavengers. They eat small animals they can capture, including mice, rats, gophers, mountain beavers, rabbits, and squirrels, also snakes, lizards, frogs, fish, birds, and animal carcasses. They eat grass, fruits, and berries during summer and fall. Therefore they are helping balance the ecosystem within the park.

Additional Information

- Patti Petesch, Environmental Learning Manager
- <http://wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/living/coyotes.htm>

Verbal Briefing/Board Discussion

Ms. Petesch reviewed material in the written briefing. Commissioner Ramels asked how many coyotes live in Discovery Park and Ms. Petesch answered that two are known. Superintendent Gallagher added that coyote pups have been sited at Carkeek and Seward Parks and the Washington Park Arboretum. Estimates are that 50-100 live within the city limits.

Commissioner Adams asked if the public meeting “Living With Wildlife” was filmed to show again. Superintendent Gallagher answered that the public meeting may be replicated for other areas of the city. Ms. Petesch and others put the class together in just a couple days and did a great job. Commissioner Adams suggested the presentation also be given at schools and on local public television. Ms. Petesch added that there is discussion of tagging the coyotes and following their movements by GPS as a learning resource for school children. Superintendent Gallagher remarked that Chicago learned from a study of its coyote population that the families do not “drift” as much as a lone coyote tends to do.

Commissioner Larsen recalled the controversy several years ago when Canada geese in Seattle’s parks were euthanized and asked what lessons were learned from the rabbits. Discussion briefly turned to the goose management program. Parks staff stated that the geese are especially attracted to grass that is kept mowed, such as park land and sports fields. Ms. Rose commented that there are few geese at Discovery Park because there is little mown grass. Mr. Stoops added that the Lake Washington Basin Goose Management program included relocating the geese and adding eggs so they would not hatch. The program is currently in suspension. Superintendent Gallagher commented that oiling the eggs is also a successful approach.

Briefing: Discovery Park Chapel

Ms. Petesch next gave a brief review of the written briefing paper on the Discovery Park Chapel. Commissioners received the written briefing, included in the minutes, prior to tonight’s meeting.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

- The Chapel briefing is for informational purposes only.
- This briefing for the Board is to bring Commissioners up to date about public issues regarding the chapel during the past year.

Staff Recommendation (if applicable)

n/a

Project Description and Background

- In 2001, the City worked with the greater Magnolia community on how to use mitigation money from the West Point Treatment Plan, known as the Shoreline Park Improvement Fund (SPIF). At that time, the chapel was recommended for demolition.
- The chapel, built in 1942, was on a list for potential landmark status. Parks was obligated to nominate the chapel as a City Landmark. Parks went through the process and the chapel was designated as a landmark in December 2004.
- Landmark status applies to the exterior and interior of the building. It excludes the mechanical room, kitchen, vestry, and restroom. The land area that is landmarked includes the area from the front door to the road and ten feet around the rest of the building.
- The Landmarks Board reviews the physical changes to the landmarked elements (building and land area). They do not have authority to rule on land use.

- Parks staff discovered leaks in the chapel, and Parks entered an agreement with a Magnolia service organization to work on roof replacement. While the agreement did not come to fruition, the roof replacement met the criteria of the Parks small roof program, and Parks decided to move to protect the building envelope as we are obligated to preserve its integrity.
- The chapel roof replacement occurred in fall 2007.
- In 2007 the floor was further damaged by the rabbits which were housed in the building for some months in 2007. Parks crews have sanded and bleached the floor and will replace the finish this spring when the weather is warmer.
- In April 2007, the chapel annex was demolished with funding from SPIF, and the lawn was restored consistent with the guidelines of the Discovery Park historic district, though the site is not within the historic district.
- Nothing has changed in our plans for the building. It will remain vacant.

Public Involvement Process

n/a

Issues

Citizen Concerns/Opposition

- There is a group of “Friends of the Chapel” who would like to see Parks restore the chapel for gatherings.
- Another group of Discovery Park stakeholders (Friends of Discovery Park and others) still want the chapel demolished. They are firm in their desire that the building not be used, as they believe that is not consistent with the master plan for the park.

Environmental Sustainability

n/a

Budget

n/a

Schedule

n/a

Additional Information

Patti Petesch, Environmental Manager, 684-7085, patti.petesch@seattle.gov

Kathleen Conner, Parks Planner, 615-1299, kathleen.conner@seattle.gov

Verbal Briefing/Board Discussion

Ms. Petesch reviewed the information in the written briefing. Commissioner Kostka stated that she was a member of the Discover Park Advisory Council and the chapel was a very divisive issue for the group. She hopes that Parks has a process soon to help resolve this issue. Superintendent Gallagher agreed that the issue cannot be ignored; however, Parks will first focus on the lighthouse; then develop a clear vision of what is happening to the officers’ housing; and then will address the chapel issue. The chapel is closed for the next year.

Commissioner Holme recalled that when he was a new member of the Park Board, the Board held a public hearing on the chapel and other uses at Discovery Park. The Board had a split decision on whether to save or demolish the chapel and narrowly voted to save the chapel. Parks Superintendent Ken Bounds determined that the chapel be razed and the Landmark Preservation Board landmarked the chapel, which put the Superintendent’s decision aside.

Commissioner Kostka noted that the chapel isn’t included in the Master Plan, perhaps intentionally. Once the building reached 50 years it then became eligible as a landmark.

Commissioner Ramels thanked Seattle Parks' staff for inviting the Board to Discovery Park and stated that she is in awe of the work accomplished by Parks staff.

Old/New Business

Elect Vice Chair: At the January 24 meeting, Commissioners agreed that rotating the offices of chair and vice-chair between various Park Board members is important. The Board then voted that a member may hold the office of vice-chair for a one-year term and be elected for a second one-year term. Tonight **Commissioner Larsen moved that a member may serve as vice-chair for the two years, take one or more years off, and then run again. Commissioner Barber seconded. The vote was taken and the motion carried.**

Commissioner Ramels has served as the Board's vice-chair since February 2007 and voiced interest in running for the position. Commissioner Holme next temporarily chaired the meeting to hold election for the vice-chair, with the term ending on 12/31/08. **Commissioner Barber nominated Commissioner Ramels for the position and Commissioner Adams seconded. There being no other nominations from the floor, Commissioner Holme closed the nominations. The vote was taken and was unanimous in support of Commissioner Ramels as vice-chair through 12/31/08.**

Agenda Matrix Items: Commissioners briefly discussed the 14 agenda items proposed by Deputy Superintendent Williams. Commissioner Barber clarified that the items he did not mark "yes" did not mean that he didn't think they should be brought forth; staff will adjust the matrix accordingly. Superintendent Gallagher stated that most of the 14 items can be worked into the agendas by the end of 2008. Commissioners will be asked to vote on some and others will be for informational purposes and to get the Board's feedback.

Commissioner Barber asked about the UW 50-meter pool and Superintendent Gallagher stated that the site is available; however the University of Washington must come up with the funding. This project probably will not happen in 2008. Commissioner Barber also asked about getting new items suggested by the Commissioners onto the agendas.

Commissioner Adams asked if new items that develop from the Department's Strategic Action Plan will be brought to the Board and the Superintendent answered yes, most likely in the second half of the fiscal year.

Magnuson Park Sports Fields: Commissioner Holme asked about the status of the lawsuit filed by several citizens in response to the Army Corp of Engineers issuing permits for the Department to move ahead with the fields. Superintendent Gallagher answered that the City's Law Department thinks that Parks has a strong case and the Department is moving ahead with the project. Bids were opened last Friday and will be awarded by the end of February. The notice to proceed will be issued in 4-6 weeks.

Capitol Hill Parks Correspondence: Commissioners were recently cc:'ed on correspondence on the new Capitol Hill Parks and found the four-page letter complicated and difficult to follow. Superintendent Gallagher stated that the Department has since resolved the issue with the two citizens.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
Amit Ranade, Chair
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE _____