



Department of Parks and Recreation

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
May 24, 2007

Board of Park Commissioners:

Present:

John Barber
Terry Holme
Jackie Ramels
Amit Ranade

Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:

B.J. Brooks, Interim Superintendent
Christopher Williams, Interim Deputy Superintendent
Susan Golub, Strategic Advisor

Commissioner Ranade called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Holme moved, and Commissioner Ranade seconded, approval of the agenda and May 10 minutes as amended. The vote was taken and motion passed.

Superintendent's Report

Interim Superintendent Brooks reported on the following items. For more information on Seattle Parks and Recreation, please visit the web pages at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/>.

Ella Bailey. We had a great dedication and celebration for this Pro Parks Levy-funded park. There were almost 200 people there, and everyone had an excellent time!

Summer sports camps. Citywide Athletics will sponsor free summer sports camps this season. These programs, offered to youth ages 6-14, will provide youth the chance to experience different sports in a positive learning environment.

Ross Park Shelterhouse Renovation. This Pro Park Levy-funded shelterhouse renovation project, completed in April of 2006, received a Citation Award in the AIA Washington 2007 Civic Design Awards program.

Center City Parks. Music will be an on-going theme in Center City Parks this summer. In addition to the Downtown Seattle Association's usual Out to Lunch series, Parks funding is supporting five "Free Music Fridays" in Cascade Park and twenty three concerts in Occidental Park. The Center City Parks busker program will provide street performers to perform at lunchtimes in Hing Hay, Occidental, Freeway, Westlake, and Waterfront Parks beginning in the second half of June. Most of these performers are musicians, though the group also includes portrait artists and balloon artists.

Lower Woodland Skate Park. Washington State Superior Court denied the appeal on the original SEPA determination for the Lower Woodland Skate Park, effectively clearing the way for construction to begin in 3 to 4 weeks. The petitioner to the Court still has the ability to appeal the ruling, but Parks can begin processing the paperwork to bring the contractor on board.

Loyal Heights Playfield Improvements. All improvements are now finished and being enjoyed by the public.

Delridge Parks: A festive Opening Day Dedication event took place on Saturday, May 19, to celebrate completion of Pro Parks projects at Greg Davis, Cottage Grove and Puget Boulevard Parks in the Delridge neighborhood (between Delridge Way SW and 26th Ave S, north of SW Brandon St.).

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. No one signed up to testify.

Briefing: Wallingford Park/Hamilton Middle School Project

Terry Dunning, Parks Manager of Major Transactions, presented a briefing on the Hamilton Middle School project and the impacts of the project on Wallingford Park. Commissioners received both a written and verbal briefing. The briefing attachments are not included in these minutes.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action: The Superintendent of Parks and Recreation respectfully requests that the Board of Park Commissioners hold a public hearing and take testimony on proposed improvements to Hamilton International Middle School that will have an impact on the adjacent Wallingford Playfield. Seattle Public Schools (SPS) has asked Seattle Parks to:

1. Enter into an agreement to adjust the legal boundary between Hamilton Middle School and Wallingford Playfield, deeding 27 feet of park property to the School District. In compliance with Ordinance 118477, which implemented Initiative 42, SPS would be required to provide a replacement property of like size, value and usability.
2. Enter into an agreement to allow SPS to install 132 geothermal wells below the surface of a portion of Wallingford Playfield.

After due consideration of testimony at its May 24 meeting, the Board will reconvene at its next regularly scheduled meeting on June 14 to discuss the testimony and to generate recommendations to the Superintendent.

Project Description and Background: More than a year ago, SPS approached the City to discuss improvement plans for Hamilton Middle School. The school remodel includes a new gymnasium and a parking structure. The combination of these two structures is driving SPS's need for additional property.

Lot boundary adjustment: The 27 feet that SPS would like us to deed to them is a vacated street right-of-way formerly a portion of N 42nd Street. When the street was vacated, the City and SPS each got 27 feet. Although the City retains ownership of its half of the right-of-way, functionally, our half has always been used by Hamilton

Middle School. Currently, the City's 27 feet is being used as a hardscape play surface for the children at the school. To the casual visitor, the City's 27 feet appear to be part of the school yard. (See Attachment A1 and A2)

Geothermal wells: SPS would like to employ an innovative and sustainable heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system at Hamilton Middle School, which involves the use of geothermal wells. They would like to install the wells under the existing playfield at Wallingford. The wells would extend from six feet below the surface to depths exceeding 300 feet. The wells use the ambient temperature of the earth to either heat or cool water circulating from the building's heating and air conditioning systems. SPS anticipates that these wells could result in significant utility savings, both in cost and use. The use of innovative systems that reduce the impacts of global climate change and create cost savings for taxpayers is consistent with the City's goals and objectives. There is an existing geothermal well system in use at Madison Middle School.

Sunken garden: The lot boundary adjustment proposed by SPS will have an impact on the community-built sunken garden along the southern edge of the park. The southern side of the garden will, at a minimum, be disrupted by utility work and the need for working space while the school parking garage and the north face of the new gymnasium are under construction. SPS has offered two design concepts to connect the school and the park. SPS has communicated with us that these are design *concepts*, and are not intended as final drawings.

- **Site Plan A** would demolish the garden and connect the school to the park with a hardscape plaza. (See Attachment B)
- **Site Plan B** would re-establish the garden and connect the school and park with a pedestrian bridge over a sunken section of the site. (See Attachment C)
 - *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED):* Parks has contacted the Seattle Police Department to request an official CPTED analysis of this concept.

Mitigation/compensation: The lot boundary adjustment will result in a requirement, under Ordinance 118477, which implemented Initiative 42, for SPS to provide the City with replacement property. This initiative provides that the City cannot sell, transfer, or take from park use any property unless there is no viable alternative and after a public hearing, and that if park property is changed from park use, the City will receive a property of equivalent or better, size, value, and usefulness in the vicinity serving the same community and the same park purposes in return.

The granting of rights to install the well field likely does not trigger Ordinance 118477 as it does not change the use of the park property (except for a temporary construction period). However, if the City were to grant the District permission to install a geothermal well field, SPS would be required to compensate the City. While SPS has expressed a good faith willingness to mitigate the impacts of the school improvements and compensate the City, we have held no substantive discussion with them about this because our public process has not concluded and the Park Board has not yet made a recommendation to the Superintendent. Mitigation/compensation would most likely be provided in the form of real property.

Community issues:

Access to gym for residents: In the event SPS proceeds with the project as currently designed, Parks and citizens will have convenient access to the new school gymnasium, including bathrooms, through the Joint Use Agreement that allows City use of SPS facilities during non-school operating hours. Use of the new gymnasium will provide the community with a valuable recreational asset currently not available in the area.

Sunken garden: The community has expressed anguish about the disruption the construction would cause to the sunken garden. Neighbors applied for and received a Neighborhood Matching Fund grant to build the garden, and put in many hours of volunteer time to build it. Site Plan B (Attachment C) would have the least impact on the garden; however, it would require a portion of the garden be demolished and rebuilt. Parks staff believe most of the plants could be moved.

District issues:

Redesign possibilities: SPS has indicated that if we are not able to come to an agreement on the 27-foot lot boundary adjustment, the District will go back to the design drawing board. Parks' not allowing the lot boundary adjustment would have potential negative impacts for the following reasons:

1. The current design includes a lobby that provides community access to bathrooms and the gym, while shutting off access to the rest of the school. A re-design would not include that lobby, which would make it more difficult and costly for Parks staff and community members to access the gym for community programming, meetings, events and recreation.
2. Parks would be left with 27 feet of unusable concrete surface. At this time, Parks does not have resources to develop this property into usable park land.

Public Involvement Process: There have been two public involvement processes: one conducted by SPS and one conducted by Parks.

SPS process: SPS has conducted an extensive, ongoing process related to the re-development of Hamilton School. A description of the meetings is attached (see Attachment D.) Parks staff have participated in some SPS meetings. In addition, SPS conducted a poll of community members (see Attachment E.) They received about 150 responses. Respondents indicated that they support the installation of geothermal wells – 67 percent. Respondents also said their preferred design concept is Site Plan B, or the bridge option.

Parks' process: On May 2, at the request of the Wallingford Community Council, Parks staff attended the regular meeting of the Council to explain how the Hamilton remodel might impact the park.

Parks also distributed a questionnaire to the community asking for opinions about how the proposed remodel would affect the park. The survey was sent to all those who wrote to us expressing an interest in the project, as well as to those who signed up for our mailing list during the public process conducted for the Pro Parks Levy Wallingford Playfield improvement project in 2001-2002. In addition, we sent the survey to all households within 300 feet of the park. The boundaries of that mailing are approximately N 45th Street to the north, N 37th Street to the south, Stone Way N to the west and Bagley Avenue N to the east. In all, the survey was sent to about 2,600 households. In addition, it was posted on the Wallingford Playfield web page.

Parks received about 280 completed questionnaires by the May 7 deadline. About 18 additional questionnaires came in after the survey deadline. The information in the late questionnaires was not included in the final results.

Most of the respondents – 59 percent – did not support a lot boundary adjustment. However, most respondents did support the installation of geothermal wells – 58 percent. A majority of respondents did not favor changes to the garden to accommodate the bridge – 65 percent, or replacement of the sunken garden with a plaza – 72 percent. Attachment F includes all the survey results and about 15 pages of comments from respondents.

In addition to the questionnaire responses, Parks has received about 30 pre-printed cards circulated by a citizen group expressing support for proposed improvements and Hamilton Middle School, but not specifically addressing the proposed modifications to park property. Parks has also received several petitions, totaling 100 signatures, in support of the project. We have fulfilled one public disclosure request. And we have received a handful of letters from the community. The letters are split almost evenly between those who support the project and those who do not. Parks staff has also been cc'ed on communications from citizens who have contacted Councilmember Della to express their interest in the project, and we have received a request from Councilmember Sally Clark's office for additional information on the issue.

Once the Board of Park Commissioners has heard testimony from the public, we ask that you deliberate at your next regularly scheduled meeting and provide Interim Superintendent Brooks with recommendations about the proposed Seattle Schools actions relating to the park. Interim Superintendent Brooks will consider the recommendations along with other information and provide direction to Parks staff regarding follow-up actions.

Schedule: It is important to note that this is not a Parks project. SPS has provided a draft construction schedule. (See Attachment G)

Additional Information: An aerial view of the park, school and surround neighborhood has been provided. (See Attachment H)

Verbal Briefing/Board Discussion

Commissioner Ranade stated that the Board would accept citizen comments on this project by e-mail or regular mail up until the next Board meeting on June 14.

Mr. Dunning stated that the School District is requesting two things from Parks: a lot boundary adjustment and the placement of geothermal wells underneath the playground. The lot boundary adjustment is regarding 27 feet that once was street right-of-way. It was vacated years ago to become part of the Park, but has been incorporated into the school yard. The lot boundary adjustment and well placement are just two steps in the process for the School District's Hamilton project; others include Department of Planning and Development approval of code departures for parking, bus access and density.

The proposal is for 132 geothermal wells to be buried under the field. The field will be closed for eight months to one year while the wells are placed. Mr. Dunning stated this aspect of the project is consistent with the City's objectives for sustainability.

Commissioner Barber stated that the project would locate a 30 foot high wall directly adjacent to a park. He asked Mr. Dunning whether he knew of other examples where a high wall is right next to a park. Mr. Dunning responded that Commissioner Barber's statement was correct, that the wall would create a shaded area and that there were other locations where a wall abutted a park. Commissioner Barber asked whether the placement of wells beneath a park was consistent with Initiative 42 which placed limits on the disposition of park land and restrictions on the non-park use of park land, and asked whether there had been a legal assessment of this use. Mr. Dunning responded that I-42 was concerned with the use of park land and since the wells would have no impact on the long term use of the surface of the park, the placement of the wells met the intent of I-42. The City's Law Department is satisfied with this analysis of the Initiative and Mr. Dunning noted that the use was similar to underground utility work that has been previously done under parks.

Commissioner Barber questioned what the property exchange, required by Initiative 42, would be. Mr. Dunning said that determining the replacement property would be a later step in the process, after there has been an approval to proceed with the project.

Responding to questions from Commissioners Ramels and Barber about whether there would be public access to the new school gym, Dennis Cook, Parks Athletics Manager, responded that the gym would be available for public use after 5:00 p.m., similar to other school facilities that are covered by the City/School District Joint Use Agreement. Parks provides staff for and schedules the public use.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Ramels, Mr. Dunning stated the Joint Use Agreement has been successful, giving the public use of school facilities throughout the City. Commissioner Ramels asked whether the school property would be fenced and Mr. Dunning responded no. Mr. Dunning added that the sunken garden was built 8 years ago and the Pro Parks project which included a new walkway and play area was completed in 2002.

Commissioner Holme noted that there was a mixed response to the safety of the sunken garden and asked whether there was any data regarding accidents there. Mr. Dunning stated that Parks has asked the Police Department for information regarding this type of design and that Parks has not yet received a response.

Commissioner Barber asked if there has been an exploration of alternative locations for the wells; for example, under the parking strips or a parking lot. Mr. Dunning responded that Parks pursued this issue with the District and has been told that the wells need to be under open space, that it is not practical from an engineering standpoint to locate them under a building. Also, there are too many of them to fit under the structure.

Commissioner Barber stated that the 1996 Neighborhood Plan for Wallingford recommended the transfer of Hamilton to the Lincoln High School building, noting that it was a better, bigger site. The 1999 Seattle School District Master Plan recommended the same. In 2006 the School District Master Plan recommendation to move to Lincoln was re-affirmed by the School Board. The current proposal does not conform to the planning process.

Mr. Dunning stated he could not speak to the School District history regarding Lincoln, but noted that it has been used as the interim site for schools when they are being renovated, and that the District has plans to move additional schools into Lincoln.

Commissioner Ramels noted that the issue before the Board is the property line adjustment and the location of the wells under the playfield, and suggested that questions regarding the planning for Lincoln High School site be directed to the School District.

Commissioner Ranade asked whether the School District prefers a plaza or bridge connection between the park and school. Mr. Dunning responded that the District did not have a preference and that it was up to Parks to determine which was preferable to us.

Public Hearing Testimony

Katie Cryan-Leary, principal of Hamilton starting next school year, stated she was excited to strengthen the relationship between the school and Parks and the neighborhood. Regarding the School District's planning, she said that the District needs Lincoln for use as an interim site – it is not available for Hamilton. The area proposed for the lot boundary adjustment is a paved, blacktop area used by the school. It is not in park use and is needed for the new gym. The geothermal wells will model green technology, and while it is unfortunate that the park will be closed for up to one year, the long term use is very positive.

Jesely Alvarez, the assistant principal at Hamilton, expressed support for the project, noting that a new gym will allow the entire school to gather for assemblies, something that is not possible now. Also, it is not possible to gather with families, or play athletics on their own campus.

Lee Edlefsen, a 30 year Wallingford resident, wants a strong school and park. He expressed support for the lot boundary adjustment and the wells, noting the long-lasting benefits of the wells, which offset the short term loss of the playfield closure. The lot boundary adjustment transforms a run-down play court into a gym that will be available to the public during non-school hours.

Nancy Clinkenbeard, the Hamilton Parent Teacher Student Association president, stated that the PTSA voted in favor of the remodel and doesn't want the learning oriented design to be compromised. While she shares the concerns regarding the park closure, she thinks the sacrifice is important for the greater good. She expressed a concern that if the gym design is changed, public access to the restrooms may be limited.

Sharon Rodgers lives 4 blocks away and has a student at Hamilton. She asked the Board to please approve the lot boundary adjustment, noting that the area is black top, not green space. She stated that while open space is needed in the neighborhood, the benefit to the School District and the City warrants the lot boundary adjustment. She did not agree with the planning history presented by Commissioner Barber, stating that the 2006 School District Master Plan shows Lincoln as an interim site for schools undergoing renovation. She is pleased that Hamilton will not be moving to Lincoln because the Hamilton building needs renovation. She stated it was important to improve a substandard building to make it a school neighborhood children will want to go to.

Brooke Freeburg, a Hamilton teacher of emotionally disturbed children, described the bad environment of her classroom: the radiators are on during the heat of spring/summer and it is cold in the winter. It is not a good environment for learning.

Chris Jackins opposes the School District proposal for Hamilton for several reasons: 1) it will tear up the park during construction; 2) it places big buildings too close to the park with a zero setback and will reduce open space; 3) the project covers 81% of the site whereas the Code calls for 35%; and 4) the District should learn from Madrona School where elimination of a playground caused conflicts at a nearby park.

Jennifer Veninga, a Wallingford resident with children at Hamilton, expressed her support for the lot boundary adjustment. The new gym will be an asset to the community by providing more recreational facilities.

Nancy Merrill, the co-designer of the sunken garden, stated she wants the best Hamilton we can envision. She noted the park is a great habitat for wildlife. She stated that Hamilton needs a new school, but not at this location with the impact on the park. She asked that earlier work not be dismissed; if the sunken garden is unsafe, make it safe. She worked on the tree project in Wallingford which has planted 1,000 street trees in the neighborhood. She is against the lot boundary adjustment and stated that the wells should be placed on school property, not on the park, and that the sunken garden should not be used for construction staging.

Susan Ranney, a 25 year Wallingford resident and regular user of the playfield, expressed strong support for the lot boundary adjustment and the placement of the wells under the playfield. The 27 additional feet will allow the gym and outdoor court. The Wallingford Plan recommends redevelopment of Hamilton for education and school use. She recommended working with the School District to plan a good interface between the school and park, and expressed support for preserving the sunken garden. Speaking in support of the wells, she stated that we owe it to the children to take this action and that most of the park will be unaffected by the construction. She provided a historical note stating that when former Seattle Mayor Bertha Landis dedicated the playfield she spoke about school and community use which was a forerunner of the Joint Use Agreement.

Patrick Long lives adjacent to the park and his children attended Hamilton. He is a member of the Friends of Wallingford Playfield organization and has been active in improving parks. He supports renovation of Hamilton, but the issue is can the Park Department continue to be a park steward in light of the Hamilton renovation and its impacts on the park. He noted he has had a great relationship with park staff and appreciates the previous park improvements. Now he wants Parks to help the District but also protect the park; therefore, the park area should be protected and the lot boundary adjustment should not be approved. Keep the sunken garden intact, and don't develop a plaza as it is not good for a middle school with a closed campus. All previous planning efforts assumed Hamilton would move to Lincoln. He urged the District to design a project that fit the current site.

Christie Rodgers, a 10 year Wallingford resident with 3 children in public schools, supports the lot boundary adjustment. The 27 foot area in question is asphalt and has been part of the school's play court. She hoped the mature vegetation could be preserved on the school/park boundary.

Mary Heim, a 14 year Wallingford resident with a child at Hamilton, expressed support for a strong school and vibrant park, and a good interface between the two. She stated that sharing resources between the school and park is a good idea and noted that it has been a long term partnership. In support of the lot boundary adjustment and location of the wells under the park, she asked people to embrace the vision of shared use.

Bill Denny, who lives across the street, wants a better Hamilton, but wants the District to look at alternatives. He noted that the property cannot be transferred unless there are no alternatives. He suggested re-orienting the gym and putting the wells on the school property. He spoke against the lot boundary adjustment which would lead to a 30 foot wall and a garage which would take up park space and reduce sunlight in the park.

Andrea Otanez, a Wallingford resident and parent of a Hamilton student, noted she is a regular park user and loves the park. She supports the lot boundary adjustment and location of the wells under the playfield. She said space should be shared between schools and parks. Hamilton has great diversity and is an asset to the neighborhood, and it is important for the school to have a more vibrant program.

Amy Chinn, a 20 year Wallingford resident with a child at Hamilton, stated that it was necessary to have the 30 foot wall in order to have a full sized gym. The gym will allow the students to have home games and gatherings of the entire school. Wallingford is a dense neighborhood needing more open space, but we need to recognize the school need as well.

Greg Flood, a 20 year Wallingford resident, wants the best Hamilton program possible, but the School District is putting too much on a small site. The number of students exceeds by 7 times the School District standards, and by 3 times any other school in the District. The District has stated that alternatives won't allow a full-sized gym, but they will if the gym is rotated and redesigned. Mr. Flood is a mechanical engineer who worked on the playfield design; it was a huge effort to create a park. He is a member of Friends of Wallingford Playfield and the Lincoln Liaison Committee. Alternatives would not require taking park property, and the proposal will cause a reduction in play area. Also, the District's comparison of the energy savings from the geothermal wells is not a fair comparison because you can't compare a new system with an 80 year old system.

Phil Czosnyka, a park neighbor, is concerned about the District's request to take park property. The District is trying to put too much on a small site. The play surface on top of the parking lot will create safety concerns as it will be 8 feet above the sidewalk on Woodlawn; it will need to be fenced for safety. The design is wrong and alternatives have not been evaluated. The plan should stick to the use of School District property and the proposed 30 foot wall will create shaded green space and a loss of open space. Mr. Czosnyka expressed support for renovating Hamilton, but within the Hamilton site. He is an architect and has developed alternatives that work better than what is being proposed.

Bill Robertson, a new Wallingford resident, stated he has great new neighbors and appreciated the discussion taking place at the Board meeting. He expressed concern about the crowding in the school itself.

Mary Slotnick, representing the near 90 crowd, is in favor of moving Hamilton to Lincoln. Seniors love the park. She noted she moved to Wallingford 10 years ago when there was a playfield but not a nice park. But now, thanks to the Park Department and the neighbors, she and other seniors go there all the time to enjoy the park.

Lianne Sheppard, a 20 year Wallingford resident, supports parks and schools, but not this plan. The proposal pits the needs of students against parks. Her concerns are that 1) the site is too small for too many students; 2) the neighborhood investment in the park will be destroyed; 3) there are 2 schools within 2 blocks and no long term plan for Lincoln; and 4) voters voted for Hamilton to move to Lincoln. The school needs should be met, but not at the expense of the park.

Frank Fay, a 23 year Wallingford resident, worked on the neighborhood plan. He is opposed to the lot boundary adjustment because it gets rid of the sunken garden. He also resents that the School District plan pits neighbors against one another. The District's proposal needs 6 departures from the code and does not conform to student density requirements; therefore, the site is too small for the plan. The Park Board shouldn't have to bail out the School District, and the District will break faith with the neighborhood if they go ahead. Park funds will have to be used to staff the gym and relocate the sunken garden and Parks doesn't have enough money already.

Victor Obeso, a 23 year Wallingford resident, lives across the street from the playfield and is a big user of the park and school. He supports open space. The school has been at this location for 8 decades. He supports the District's use of the site for full education capacity and is OK with the proposal. He expressed concerns about parking, but stated that these are not Park concerns. He supports the lot boundary adjustment and noted that the lot boundary adjustment area is not green space, and he was surprised it actually is part of the park because it looks like school

property and is used by the school. He supports the wells and long term benefits from this technology. The current garden is a safety issue because of its seclusion.

Phil Wood, a parent with children in public schools, wants a vibrant school. He stated that the park won't be affected by the lot boundary adjustment and that the gym is needed so that the entire school community can gather together at the same time. The wells are an important improvement and should be supported.

Tim Gilmore, a 25 year Wallingford resident, raised his family in the neighborhood. He stated that parks are essential to a good community. He believes there are other ways to achieve the geothermal improvements, rather than taking away park land, and questioned whether well maintenance would require additional park closure. During 2 of the last 4 years there has been limited park access. He asked that the park be left alone, noting that the sunken garden is great.

Mike Ruby, a 40 year Wallingford resident, knew the park before the playfield was there. He suggested using the lot boundary adjustment leverage to protect the park. Hold the School District's feet to the fire to make sure what is done is beneficial to the park. He spoke against a 30 foot wall adjacent to the park with no setback. Mr. Ruby is in favor of the wells being located underneath the playfield, noting that this type of technology is vital for the world. He stated there would be little or no maintenance on the wells and that problems with the wells, should they occur, can be fixed without major park disruption.

Shirley Nelsen, a park neighbor, noted that Wallingford is a dense neighborhood, an urban village with very little green space. The Park Department needs to take care of the park, which is loved by the neighborhood. They should draw a line in the sand and make the School District take a second look and not use property they do not own. The site is small and the 30 foot wall next to the park is a big problem.

Scott Adolphs, a Hamilton teacher, expressed appreciation for the depth of the comments at the hearing. He noted the building needs renovation and that one of the biggest scheduling problems for the school results from the small gym size. He acknowledged there would be a shadow from the gym onto the park and that perhaps the location right next to the park should be looked at again.

Tami Oki, a parent with children at Hamilton, expressed support for the lot boundary adjustment and the geothermal wells. If the lot boundary adjustment is not approved there will be a 27 foot strip of asphalt with no use. It will not be good for the park. The school is crumbling and there will be a huge difference for students if they have a better building, as it is hard to appreciate a good program in a crumbling building.

Carole Barrer, a 25 year Wallingford resident and teacher, stated that parks are about open space and this role should be honored. The sunken garden is an asset and students could become involved and use it. She is against the lot boundary adjustment and the location of the wells under the playfield.

Commissioner Discussion and Questions

Commissioner Ranade informed the citizens that testimony will be accepted in writing until June 13, just prior to the June 14 Park Board meeting. He listed his questions for staff:

- Where is the construction staging area?
- What consideration has been made for design alternatives?
- What can be done with the 27 foot paved area if it is not used for the school?

Commissioner Ramels listed her questions for staff:

- What is the history of the earlier proposal from the School District for this school?
- How high off of the street is the gym abutting the garden?
- What is the code requirement for lot coverage and how does the 80% coverage of this project relate to the requirement?
- Please provide more information about the geothermal wells.

- If the Board recommends against the lot boundary adjustment, will the public still have access to the gym. *Patti Petesch, Parks Manager, replied yes, through the Joint Use Agreement we will have access during non-school hours.*

Commissioner Holme listed his questions:

- Will the geothermal wells create soil instability issues for the playfield?
- If the 27 foot lot boundary adjustment is not allowed, specifically what condition will the area be in?
- Are there restrooms at the northeast corner of the park?

Patti Petesch, responded that yes, there are restrooms elsewhere in the park. The gym restrooms will be available to the park and gym users and are important as the other restrooms are closed during the winter.

- Is there any impact on the area of the park that was improved with Pro Parks Levy funds?

Terry Dunning responded that there is no impact on the Pro Parks area.

- If the ballfield is resurfaced with sod, which has been proposed to shorten the time the field is closed, will this create long term issues, because a stronger turf is created when seed is used? Please provide the benefits/deficits of resurfacing with sod instead of seed.

Commissioner Barber indicated he will submit his questions for staff in writing and noted he wants to see alternative proposals.

New/Old Business

Committee Assignments: Commissioner Ranade suggested that the Board wait until the newest nominee to the Board, Neal Adams, is confirmed before assigning Commissioners to Board committees. The Board agreed.

I-520: Commissioner Barber raised the issue of a letter from the I-520 Citizens Advisory Committee, and asked whether the Board should weigh in on this issue. Commissioners responded that the Board considered this issue earlier in the year.

Zoo Parking Garage: Commissioner Barber raised the issue of the zoo parking garage and asked Interim Superintendent Brooks whether the Zoo Board discussed alternatives to the discussion of the zoo garage and at the Executive session of the Zoo Society’s Board meeting. Commissioner Ranade suggested Commissioner Barber contact the Zoo’s Executive Director, Debra Jensen. Commissioner Ramels noted that when she was on the Associated Recreation Council Board it was important that Parks not be involved in the executive sessions of that Board, and believed Parks should respect the executive session of the Zoo Board.

Volleyball at Alki: Commissioner Ramels asked staff to find out if a volleyball tournament is scheduled for Alki Beach for the summer.

APPROVED: _____

Amit Ranade, Chair
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE _____