

Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
July 8, 2010

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
Jourdan Keith
Diana Kincaid
Donna Kostka
Jackie Ramels, Chair

Absent:

Jourdan Keith

Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:

Christopher Williams, Acting Superintendent
Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Note: *The Board of Park Commissioners meetings are taped for viewing by Seattle Channel and posted to the Board's web page. Beginning with the May 13, 2010, minutes, the written briefing paper for all non-public hearing topics will be included in the written minutes. The minutes will not include the verbal staff presentation and the Board's question and answer segment. To listen to the briefing and hear the discussion, please see the tape at:*

<http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/watchVideos.asp?program=Parks>

For public hearings (where the Board is asked to vote on a recommendation to the Superintendent), the minutes will include the written briefing paper and any subsequent updates, a summary of the verbal public testimony, a summary of the Board's discussion and recommendation, and a link to the Seattle Channel tape.

The minutes will continue to include a summary of the Superintendent's Report, Oral Communications, and Old/New Business.

This meeting was held at Seattle Park Headquarters. Commissioner Ramels called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, introduced herself, welcomed the audience to the meeting, and reviewed the meeting agenda. **It was moved to approve the revised agenda, corrected June 24 meeting minutes, and correspondence received by the Board since the June 24 meeting. The vote was taken and motion carried with Commissioners Kincaid,**

Ramels, Barber, and Holme in favor. Commissioners Adam and Kostka were absent from the June 24 meeting and abstained from voting.

Superintendent's Report

Acting Superintendent Williams reported on the following items. To learn more about Seattle Parks, see the website at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/>.

Park Rangers at Alki Beach over the 4th of July Holiday: Park Rangers performed targeted enforcement at Alki Beach over the 4th of July weekend, focusing particularly on beach fires. The department has received several complaints so far this year about illegal fires at Alki Beach. Rangers contacted several groups for illegal fires, and issues related to drinking/public intoxication. Park Rangers will continue this targeted enforcement for at least the next two weekends, and will continue checking the situation out there for the rest of the summer.

Zoo Elephant Lawsuit: A civil lawsuit filed was recently filed against the City of Seattle argues that "inhumane and unlawful" treatment of the Woodland Park Zoo's three elephants violates local anti-cruelty laws. The City's Law Department has reviewed the claim and determined that the suit targets the conditions in which the elephants live, which is controlled by the Zoo Society, and not the City of Seattle. The Law Department will not defend the City against the lawsuit and has turned the suit over to the Zoo Society to respond. Seattle Parks Department will closely monitor this. For more information on the lawsuit, see http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2012239465_elephants30m.html

Meeting Regarding Creation of Clothing Optional Beach in Seattle's Parks: Acting Superintendent Williams and Parks staff recently met with four of the proponents to develop a clothing option beach. Parks staff explained that this is not part of the Department's current strategic planning. The decision on whether to move forward with this is bigger than just this Department and must involve the Law Department, Seattle Police Department, and City Council. The development of a clothing optional beach needs broad community, as well as political, support. Acting Superintendent Williams explained that the off-leash areas were developed by a similar process. After proponents developed the broad community and political support, they were successful in developing the first off-leash areas by City Council ordinance. This effort may go in that same direction.

Mayoral Priorities: The Department is working to align its work program and Strategic Action Plan with the Mayor's priorities of safety and security; vibrant and fun communities; celebrating our people; and sustainable economic vitality. Parks staff will brief the Board when this effort is completed.

Wallingford Solar Proposal: The Department is working with a community group on a public-private partnership to install solar panels at the Gas Works Play Barn and has developed a good general agreement on how to proceed. After installation, Parks would own the panels, which will generate enough revenue to pay electricity for the irrigation system and the community group would receive approximately \$2,000 per year. There are solar panels on five facilities across the City of Seattle. Acting Superintendent Williams believes the public/private partnership for installing solar panels is a trend that will be seen more and more frequently.

Sewage Spill at Pritchard Beach: Pritchard Beach Park was closed from Tuesday, June 29, through Friday, July 2, due to a sewage leak into the parking lot from nearby private residences. Working with Seattle Public Utilities, the homeowners fixed the leaking pipes, which had been damaged by tree roots. Parks staff tested the water two times during the week, and both tests came back indicating that the water was safe for swimming. After cleaning up the parking lot and getting back the second set of tests, the park was reopened just in time for the holiday weekend.

Golden Gardens Creek Water Update: Acting Superintendent Williams sent the Board an update earlier this week regarding the levels of fecal coliform in the water, as reported by Surfrider, a volunteer group that tested the water. Following press reports that Surfrider had found very high levels of fecal coliform levels (as high as 1,000 parts), Seattle Parks requested Seattle Public Utilities to test the water. SPU's tests found levels between 1-100 parts, considered a low level. This number can fluctuate according to rainfall and the level of animal excrement in the water. [Commissioners also received recent news articles that Surfrider had misread the test results and reported the overall coliform parts as being the fecal coliform parts.]

Hempfest Update: The organizers of Hempfest canceled their request to add a third day to their event, which is scheduled for Myrtle Edwards Park. The event will only take place on August 21 and 22. The organizers had asked to expand the event and include Friday, however; the City's Special Events review committee (made up of representatives from Fire, Seattle Police Department, Parks, Seattle Department of Transportation, King County Health Department, and others) unanimously voted against a third day due to the impacts on the parks, streets, and neighborhood around Myrtle Edwards Park. Hempfest had initially asked for an administrative review of the Special Events Committee's decision to deny a third day but after further discussion with the City they decided to forgo the request.

Junction Plaza Park Dedication: The neighborhood packed the new pocket park at an official ribbon cutting ceremony for Junction Plaza Park on Tuesday, June 29. City Councilmembers Sally Bagshaw and Tom Rasmussen, Acting Deputy Superintendent Eric Friedli, Seattle Parks Foundation Executive Director Karen Daubert, and community leaders thanked the neighborhood, the architect, and Seattle Department of Transportation for all their great work and generosity. The .15-acre parcel, located at the northwest corner of 42nd Avenue NW and SW Alaska Street in West Seattle, is an excellent example of public/private partnership. Both the acquisition and the development were funded by the Pro Parks Levy Opportunity Fund and Neighborhood Matching Fund awards. Commissioners and the audience were encouraged to visit this new park.

New Park Names Announced: Two new parks in the Ballard area have been named, and a playfield in West Seattle has a new name. They are:

Crown Hill Park - This new park, located at Holman Road NW and 13th Ave NW, will include new ballfields, open space, and seating areas. Construction will begin next spring and should be completed in the fall of 2011.

Kirke Park - Located at 7028 9th Ave NW in Ballard, plans for the park include a community garden, a sitting wall, a lawn, a sledding hill and a small play area, as well as a planted buffer along the back edge with a trail. Construction on the site is scheduled to begin this fall, with completion expected in 2011. "Kirke" (keer'kuh) means church in Norwegian. This name pays

tribute to both the Norwegian heritage of the neighborhood and the history of the site. The location was home to the Church of Seventh Elect Church in Israel for more than 90 years.

Walt Hundley Playfield - Seattle Parks and Recreation acquired the playfield at High Point, located at 6920 34th Ave SW, from the Seattle Housing Authority in 1977. The 11-acre playfield, developed in 1980, consists of two baseball fields and a lighted soccer field.

The new name will honor Walter R. Hundley, the first African-American superintendent for Seattle Parks and Recreation — a position he held from 1977 to 1988. Hundley was instrumental in acquiring the High Point site for the community center and playfield. He was also the former administrator of the Central Area Motivation Project (CAMP.) Mr. Hundley died in 2002.

RFO on Central Waterfront Project: The Central Waterfront project Request for Qualifications (RFO) went out last week. It is a two stage RFO, with one being an urban design group and the second a project management engineering group. Once the selection is done the two will form one team. The project will include the urban design, streets and utilities, and general redevelopment of the Central Waterfront once the Alaskan Way Viaduct comes down. The team will also be responsible for coordinating with the Seawall design team. Submittals are due in early August.

America's Great Outdoors Listening Session: On July 1, the Director of the National Park Service was in Seattle for what was called a listening session. This was one of 15 or so public meeting around the country where citizens were invited to participate in small group discussion sessions about how President Obama and the federal government can make the outdoors more accessible. A report is due to the President by November. Seattle was unique in that a listening session for youth was held in the afternoon, with Seattle Parks' Teen Development Leaders coordinating and facilitating the youth session.

Aquarium Management Transition: At 8 am on July 1, the Acting Superintendent had the honor of turning over a ceremonial key to the Aquarium to the Seattle Aquarium Society. The non-profit group is now responsible for the operation of the Aquarium. It was a momentous occasion and many of the people who worked for years on the transition process were dutifully recognized.

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, will be timed, and are asked to stand at the podium to speak. The Board's usual process is for 10 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 Old/New Business. Two people testified, with a brief summary of their testimony included below. To hear the full testimony, see: <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=5591053> and move cursor under screen to position 23.

Don Harper: Mr. Harper is a member of the Queen Anne Community Council Parks Committee and spoke to the Thomas C. Wales Park issue. He has been involved in this project since its inception in 1998-1999 and has attended every public meeting. He stated that, while the project got off to a rocky start, he has been impressed with the responsiveness of Seattle Parks'

staff, and the end result being a beautiful park. He addressed the current controversy around the wooden fence that separates the park from the adjoining Windwatch Condominiums. During the park's development, members of the public expressed their interest in walking trails and park viewpoints. However, some owners at next-door Windwatch Condominiums expressed concern about public access to their property. It was discussed that a fence between the park and adjoining public property would solve this problem. As the park was being constructed, there were concerns that the funding would not be adequate to include the fence. However, the bid climate weakened and the project bid was low enough to include the fence.

He is extremely happy with this new park for the Queen Anne community.

Carol Fisher: Ms. Fisher stated that there are not enough senior programs. She believes that Seattle Parks focuses more on programs for children and youth, and less on senior programs. The Lifelong Recreation program takes financial hits when other programs aren't cut. This is a unique program that serves many seniors who live on a fixed income. Lifelong Recreation staff understands the needs of seniors. She reminded the Board and Superintendent that seniors support park levies with their votes.

Commissioner Ramels thanked audience members for testifying.

Award Presentation: John C. Little Award

Acting Superintendent Williams next presented the John C. Little Award to Royal Alley-Barnes, an annual award given to one of the Department's staff.

Prior to the presentation, Acting Superintendent Williams announced Ms. Barnes as the award winner and shared the following with staff:

*"I am pleased to announce that **Royal Alley-Barnes** has been selected as the 2009 recipient of the John C. Little Spirit Award. She will be receiving the award at the Board of Park Commissioners meeting on July 8, 2010.*

This is the eighth year we have awarded the John C. Little, Sr. Spirit Award. Past recipients have been Pat Warberg, Elaine Dunn, Don Ganchorre, Dennis Cook, Tom Ostrom, Isiah Anderson, Patti Petesch and Folsa Titiali, Jr.

In addition to his countless honors and volunteer positions, John C. Little, Sr. served the community as a member of the Seattle Board of Park Commissioners from 1990 - 1997. In John's seven years on the Board of Park Commissioners, he is most remembered for his gentle judgment of how a proposed policy or new undertaking would be perceived by the people we serve, particularly by the young people. His sensitivity to the needs and the attitudes of youth was extraordinary. If the Board wanted a thoughtful, wise opinion on a subject, it turned to John.

John C. Little's motto was, "In order to improve the life of all people, you must improve the life of young people."

We created this award in his honor. To be eligible for nomination, the individual must demonstrate the following characteristics: mentoring our youth; providing leadership in the community; making a difference in young lives; and going above and beyond the call of duty.

In Barnes' nomination application, the following reasons were mentioned as to why she should receive the award:

- "She has an agenda with youth; to give them opportunities to challenge themselves and a platform to speak their mind. She gives them work, not advice, she gives them a standard to aspire to, not pats on the back for just being."*
- "For as long as I have known Barnes, she has worked tirelessly to bring the resources of the City to the community, and the needs of the community to the City. She has attended meetings, written policy, advocated for youth, racial equity, jobs and economic development in Seattle, especially in communities of color."*
- "When she first was assigned to Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center, she walked in and said that it needs to be a better place, a welcoming place where youth and families could come and feel good about who they are and love where they are. She did just that; by working hard, she helped to make things happen – paint appeared, a facelift both inside and out began to change the way people looked at Langston, all because of her." "When it comes to caring and working for our youth Barnes walks the talk. She fights for our kids so that they have a fighting chance. She takes the time out to provide guidance for our youth and of equal importance encourages and listens to our young people. She sets high standards for youth and keeps them accountable."*

Some examples of her successes are:

- She created a program called Youth Fit, which allows youth to participate on any program at Langston Hughes.*
- Barnes worked with The Seattle Youth Employment Program to provide 22 paid summer jobs for youth at Langston Hughes this summer, doubling the amount of youth normally placed at LHPAC for summer jobs through SYEP.*
- She spends her personal time on the weekends speaking at and facilitating youth anti-violence events.*
- Barnes made it her mission to challenge a key program that serves youth this past summer. She felt they were not focused on the youth and were putting up road blocks that prevented them from being served. Barnes pressured them about their procedures until they provided what was needed to serve the at-risk youth.*
- She will make time for others that may be in need of attention and guidance from her that no one else may provide.*
- She has done a tremendous job as the Seattle Parks and Recreation lead on the Youth Violence Initiative and Director of the Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center.*

Following a verbal presentation from Acting Superintendent Williams, remarks were made by Ms. Alley-Barnes and members of the John Little family. Commissioners offered congratulations and a reception followed. To listen to the presentation, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=5591059> and position cursor under screen at 29.

Update Briefing: Dodge Ball in Seattle's Park Facilities

Dennis Cook, Seattle Parks' Athletic Manager, introduced himself presented an update on dodge ball opportunities. The Park Board held a public hearing on the proposed use of tennis courts at Cal Anderson Park for dodge ball. Following public controversy about the use of tennis courts for this sport, the Department agreed to look for other suitable locations. This briefing was to update the Board on this effort and was for informational purposes only. The Board was not asked for a recommendation. To hear the verbal briefing and Board discussion, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=5591059> and drag cursor under screen to position 41.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

This is an update briefing on the use of tennis courts for activities other than tennis; including dodge ball, bike polo and inline hockey.

Project Description and Background

Beginning in 2007, a group of dodge ball players began playing on a tennis court at Bobby Morris Playfield and played there twice a week. This created conflict with neighbors and tennis players. The tennis players requested the department uphold the Parks and Recreation policy that states that tennis courts are to be used only for tennis.

Parks initially proposed a pilot project that would allow the dodge ball players use of one court twice a week. However, because of concerns about tennis courts doubling as dodge ball courts and the resulting impact on playable time, the Superintendent decided not to proceed with the pilot program. The policy to prohibit non-tennis use on tennis courts was affirmed and signs were posted at the Bobby Morris courts stating that dodge ball was prohibited. The department committed to allowing indoor dodge ball at Miller and Yesler community centers at no charge for three months. At the end of the 90 day free period the dodge ball players did not request additional indoor playing time. The group of players who originally began playing at Bobby Morris continues to play there, despite knowing the use is not allowed.

Parks staff conducted a study of potential sites for future development of a dodge ball court. The two courts located at Judkins Park emerged as the best location. Conversion of these courts will have limited impact on tennis players because within one mile or less of the Judkins courts are the Garfield tennis courts (three courts), Sam Smith Park courts (two courts) and the Amy Yee Tennis Center (four outdoor and ten indoor courts).

Issues

There is no identified funding for potential conversion of the Judkins courts for other uses. The cost to convert for dodge ball is minimal as it simply involves painting new lines. Building a wall to contain balls and pucks will cost approximately \$6,500. Bike polo organizers are currently working with the South Division Athletic Field Coordinator to apply for grants to develop the court, following the public involvement process and department approval of the change of use.

Public Involvement Process

Dodge ball was discussed at Park Board meetings in 2008 on May 22, July 24 and August 8; the July 24 meeting included a public hearing on dodge ball use of tennis courts. Parks staff will

begin a public involvement process this summer to assess community support for the conversion of the courts at Judkins Park from tennis to non-tennis uses.

Additional Information

Dennis Cook: dennis.cook@seattle.gov

Briefing: Atlantic City Nursery Site Use

Michael Shiosaki, Seattle Parks' Planning and Development Division's Deputy Director introduced project manager Emily Fuller and himself. They presented a briefing on the site use of the former Atlantic City Nursery. This briefing is the first of a three-part public hearing process. The Board will hold a public hearing at its August 12 meeting, and plans to vote on a recommendation to the Superintendent at the September 9 meeting. Prior to the meeting, the Board received a written briefing paper, included below and posted to the Board's web page for public review.

To hear the verbal briefing and Board discussion, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=5591059> and drag pointer under screen to position 52.

Commissioners were invited to tour the facility and Mr. Shiosaki and Ms. Fuller will work with the Board's coordinator to arrange the dates. The Board thanked Ms. Fuller and Mr. Shiosaki for the briefing, and will accept public testimony on this project until Tuesday, September 7.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

On July 8, Parks staff will provide a briefing on the proposed change of use for the Atlantic City Nursery site. A Park Board public hearing is scheduled for August 12. The Park Board will be asked to make a recommendation to the Superintendent on the change of use at the September 9 Park Board meeting.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the change of use for the Atlantic City Nursery site to public open space including urban agriculture, wetland restoration and public access.

Project Description and Background

The 10.9 acre Atlantic City Nursery is located at 5513 S. Cloverdale St. in the Rainier Beach neighborhood of South Seattle. Pritchard Beach Park is located adjacent to the site to the north and Beer Sheva Park is located adjacent to the site to the west and southwest. The Pritchard Island community is adjacent to the site on the eastern boundary.

The northern portion of the site has been operated as a plant nursery by Parks and Recreation since the 1940's, while the southern portion near the shoreline of Lake Washington includes wetlands that were restored as part of a Sound Transit mitigation project a few years ago.

Due to previous use as a nursery, there are some rows of large planted trees (birches) and other volunteer deciduous trees that have grown at the southwest corner of the site. There is also a blueberry patch in the central western side of the property. The site is fenced along the perimeter with gated access from S. Cloverdale Street. Utilities run throughout the site,

including power, gas and electrical service to existing buildings. An irrigation system also exists on-site.

There are six buildings at the nursery site, including two greenhouses, three lath houses (similar to a greenhouse, but without plastic siding) and one office/shed. There is a single lane gravel road which begins at the northeastern corner of the site and continues along the perimeter and is intersected twice by two east/west connecting gravel roads.

Due to Parks budget reductions, the nursery was closed in January 2010 and the nursery operation was consolidated at the City-wide Horticulture facility at Jefferson Park.

Since the closing of the nursery, Parks has begun the process to identify a new use for the site that benefits the public, is compatible with the natural systems of the site, and partners with a group to eliminate or significantly reduce the operations and maintenance costs for the site. The public involvement process began in the fall of 2009 as outlined below.

Please see the attached vicinity map (aerial photo) of the site (Exhibit A) and Conceptual Use Plan (Exhibit B).

Strategic Action Plan

The proposal to change the use of the Atlantic City Nursery to open space is consistent with the following items in Parks Strategic Action Plan:

Goal 1: Steward Seattle's Parks and Open Spaces for Long-Term Sustainability

B. Increase restoration of Seattle's natural ecosystem

Goal 2: Provide Recreation and Learning Opportunities

B. Foster environmental appreciation and enjoyment through programming

Goal 3: Actively Engage and Build Relationships with Seattle's Diverse Population

A. Establish and implement new approaches to outreach and relationship building

C. Provide volunteer opportunities and community stewardship projects

Goal 4: Maintain Parks and Recreation's Land and Facilities

C. Expand green management practices to reduce Parks and Recreation's carbon footprint and enhance habitat.

Goal 6: Strengthen Organizational Systems and Structures

A. Identify partnerships that support efficient and effective service and program delivery.

Public Involvement Process

The first public meeting for the Atlantic City Nursery planning project, was held on December 3, 2009. Roughly 80 people attended the public meeting.

Public comments were focused on:

- connecting the nursery site with the adjacent Parks to the north and southwest
- maintaining and improving the existing critical areas on-site
- converting the nursery use to urban agriculture/farming.

Other comments include working with local schools' horticultural programs, and having a Farmers Market.

A "Friends of" group, the Friends of the Atlantic City Nursery, have come to the forefront of this planning process. The group would like to convert the site to urban agricultural uses and renovate the existing wetlands on-site. The group has applied for funds through the Parks and Green Spaces Levy Opportunity Fund.

The proposal from the Friends of Atlantic City Nursery for the site includes reusing the nursery site for Urban Agriculture and restoring the wetlands on-site. Urban Agriculture would include the reuse of existing buildings and in ground farming for growing produce. All aspects will be educational opportunities to promote social equity and inclusion. The existing lath houses would be converted into greenhouses and then all greenhouse buildings would be used to grow produce. Produce may also be grown in ground or in raised beds provided it does not interfere with the wetland areas. The produce harvested from this agriculture effort would then be donated to different local food banks. A small market or 'starts' sales may be held on-site for profit.

Pritchard Island residents have also been closely involved with the planning for the future of the site. Many of these residents have voiced their concerns with opening the site to the general public and are especially concerned with safety and security. General comments include removing vegetation along Cloverdale for better sight lines, retaining perimeter fencing, and improving site access and parking.

Site tours were held December 12-13, 2009 and May 15, 2010. Roughly 50 people attended the site tours. A second public meeting is scheduled for June 30, 2010. Staff will provide a verbal update on this meeting at the July 8 Park Board meeting.

Per the Department's Public Involvement Policy, the meetings were advertised by project sign, Parks webpage and web calendar, over 3,000 mailers (in 6 different languages) were sent out for each meeting, electronic mailings, and the Rainier Valley Post.

Issues

The key issue for the future use of the Atlantic City Nursery site is finding a future public use that meets the Department's needs to reduce Parks maintenance costs, while providing public access. The Department has a desire to provide open public access through the site to link the Pritchard Beach Park site to the north with Beer Sheva Park to the southwest as well as restoring the wetlands on the site.

The key concerns that have been raised in the public process are about opening the site to the general public for park uses. Pritchard Island residents to the east have had an essentially inaccessible Parks Department facility adjacent to their neighborhood that has provided a neighborhood buffer from the surrounding community. Opening the site to the public has raised significant concerns for these residents about safety and security.

Environmental Sustainability

The project supports environmental sustainability through:

- Wetland Restoration
- Continued Shoreline Preservation
- Urban Farming sustainable practices.

Budget

There is no budget assigned to this planning project. The intent of the change of use is to provide the groundwork for a future partnership to eliminate or drastically reduce maintenance and operations costs for the site.

Schedule

Event	Purpose	Schedule
ProView #1	Approval of Project Program.	November 3, 2009
Public Meeting #1	Site Analysis, Input on Community priorities for use of the site	December 3, 2009
Site Visits		December 12-13, 2009
Research		January- April 2010
Site Tour	Mayor McGinn	May 15, 2010
ProView #2	Approval of Conceptual Use Plan	June 22, 2010
Public Meeting #2	Present Conceptual Use Plan for the Site	June 30, 2010
Park Board	Briefing	July 8, 2010
Park Board Public Hearing	Public Hearing	August 12, 2010
Park Board Recommendation	Make Recommendation	September 9, 2010
Final Approval	Superintendent's approval	September 2010

Additional Information

Emily Fuller, Planner; Planning & Development Division; 206-684-7047; emily.fuller@seattle.gov
 Project Website: http://seattle.gov/parks/projects/atlantic_city/nursery.htm



Atlantic City Nursery

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Briefing: Seattle Public Utilities – Combined Sewer Overflow

Kevin Stoops, Seattle Parks' Planning and Development Division Director, introduced himself and briefed the Board on Seattle Public Utilities – Combined Sewer Overflow program. Mr. Stoops also introduced Andrew Lee, Seattle Public Utilities Drainage and Wastewater Division. Prior to the meeting, Commissioners received a written briefing, below. This briefing was for informational purposes only and the Board was not asked for a recommendation. To hear the verbal briefing and Board discussion, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=5591059> and drag pointer under screen to position 80.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

No action is necessary. This is a briefing for informational purposes at this time.

Staff Recommendation

No recommendation is offered at this time.

Project Background

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) is in the process of undertaking improvements to sewage storage, conveyance and pumping systems to control combined sewer overflow (CSO) that result from stormwater entering the local sanitary sewer system. Much of Seattle is served by partially separated sewers, where storm drainage from roadways has been handled in pipes separate from sanitary sewers. However, roof drains and footing drains from most homes still connect to sanitary sewers, and rainfall can enter the sanitary sewers through manhole covers. When this happens, sewer capacity is exceeded and overflows of sewage occur to adjacent bodies of water. State law allows no more than one overflow event per location per year in order to protect water quality in receiving waters such as Puget Sound and Lake Washington.

At this time, SPU is focusing CSO control in northeast Seattle in their "Windermere" basin and several basins in Southeast Seattle known as their "Genesee" and "Henderson" basins. These basins all are tributary to Lake Washington. Over the next twenty years, such work will occur elsewhere in the City to control other CSO. It should be noted that this CSO work is underway as King County is upgrading the regional sewer system to control CSO as well.

Windermere Basin: The current Windermere project follows several previous projects that have been undertaken in northeast Seattle to control CSO to Lake Washington. The current project involves building a 2 million gallon storage tank on a parcel at NE 65th Street that was formerly part of the Sand Point Naval Air Station and is now owned by the City of Seattle for housing purposes. Adjacent to the west is a parcel that is part of **Magnuson Park**, to the south is University of Washington married student housing. To the north, across NE 65th is the main part of Magnuson Park.

The SPU project will involve construction of an underground tank approximately 110 feet by 210 and 25 feet deep, plus a structure for odor control. The construction will necessitate temporary tie backs under the adjacent park property and likely some degree of construction staging on that parcel as well as contractor parking in the nearby parking lots at Magnuson Park. There will be incoming and outgoing pipelines installed in NE 65th that will affect access to Magnuson Park. When construction is complete, the tank area of the housing parcel will be covered to

serve as open space for a future housing development that eventually will occur on the remainder of the property. There will be extensive improvements made to NE 65th Street to create lanes of proper width, to complete the intersection with Sand Point Way NE, and to complete the bicycle and pedestrian path on the south side of the street. Temporary use of park property during construction will be covered in a revocable use permit and fees will be collected for such use.

Henderson and Genesee: Planning for the Henderson and Genesee basins is not as advanced as that for Windermere, and in some cases, various alternatives are under consideration to address the CSO.

At the northern Genesee basin, SPU has settled on an alternative that will involve development of a .43 million gallon tank at a parking lot on the southerly side of **Lake Washington Boulevard at 49th Avenue South**. The tank would be below ground, as would an odor control facility. There would be access hatches at the surface and some sort of small structure for electrical controls and an odor control stack. Use of this parkland will trigger Initiative 42, non-park use of parkland issues, including a legislative finding that this is the only feasible alternative for such an installation, and compensation for use of the parkland. In that all previously considered alternatives involved parkland (Genesee Park and Lake Washington Boulevard), this is the least damaging option, but will require compensation for the underground tank and the above ground appurtenances.

For the next basin to the south, the leading alternative involves development of .19 million gallons of storage in large diameter pipes under parkland on **Lake Washington Boulevard at South Alaska Street**. The alternative would involve pipes in 54th Avenue South, affecting other utilities and affecting access to homes during construction. The Initiative 42 issues noted above would apply to this site as well.

For the basin lying westerly of **Seward Park**, a range of alternatives are under consideration. One would create a 2.4 million gallon tank under the south parking lot at Seward Park. Other alternatives would transfer flows by gravity through an upgraded "lake line" or through a new force main to storage at **Martha Washington Park**. The force main alternatives would involve a pump station at Seward Park or at Lake Washington Boulevard and South Orcas Street. The storage at Martha Washington would involve a 2.6 million gallon tank that would have a footprint similar to that described for the Windermere project. The upgrade of the lake line would require cutting through the two tennis courts at Seward, necessitating their replacement, and a large tank at the shoreline of Martha Washington. The force main alternatives would allow for the tank to be built in large open areas upslope at that park.

All these alternatives affecting Seward Park and Martha Washington Park raise Initiative 42 issues, and in the case of Seward Park, "conversion" issues associated with using parks improved with federal grants for non-park uses. (Seward Park was improved with federal Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program grant money to provide handicapped accessible picnic facilities.) Discussions with the National Park Service indicate that onsite mitigation and surface restoration for underground facilities can avoid the conversion issue that otherwise would require replacement parkland. Permanent above ground facilities that impact the park would require replacement parkland or transfer of the federal covenants to existing parkland elsewhere.

For the Henderson basins northerly of South Henderson Street, SPU's favored alternative involves upgrades to the existing pump station off South Grattan Street on SPU property at **Pritchard Beach Park**. Sewage flows would be transferred to the King County system. The alternative, if the transfer is not feasible, would necessitate development of storage facilities at Pritchard Beach. This would be done with large pipes under the parking lot at the park and would involve Initiative 42 matters as noted at the other parks.

Other basins to the south will be addressed by storage pipes in street rights of way in the Rainier Beach area and do not affect parks.

Public Involvement Process

SPU has held various public meetings on the Windermere project as they considered other alternatives involving the Burke Gilman Trail, a church property and Sand Point Way NE and will hold additional meetings as their plan for the Sand Point housing site is further defined.

A public outreach plan is being formulated for the Henderson and Genesee basins. Parks has suggested following our public involvement policy that involves notification of such meetings by mailings to all known community organizations as well as to individuals within 300feet of the affected sites. There have already been meetings with certain community groups and later this month, with the Southeast District Council. Discussion with the Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks may be appropriate as well. Initiative 42 ultimately will require presentations to the Board of Parks Commissioners.

Issues

There are construction phase impacts as well as long term non-park use issues associated with all the CSO facilities. Parks potentially will be affected by odors from these facilities and by occasional maintenance activities associated with these facilities. Vent stacks, access hatches and other appurtenances will be surface features that will affect the parks in which these are located. From a policy perspective, the utility or non-park use issues are paramount and must be addressed within the context of Initiative 42 (Ordinance 118477). The non-park use of Seward Park will trigger conversion issues that must be resolved with the National Park Service. While not designated as a Seattle Landmark, Seward Park is the anchor of the original Olmsted plan for Seattle's parks and parkways.

Environmental Sustainability

While it is important for SPU to address the public need for clean water, achievement of this objective should not come at a sacrifice to the public need for quality recreational open spaces along Lake Washington.

Schedule

SPU must submit a preferred plan for the Henderson and Genesee basins to the Washington Department of Ecology by December 31, 2010. Environmental review and design would occur in 2011-12. Construction would follow in 2013.

Additional Information

For more information, please contact me by phone at 206 684-7053 or e-mail at kevin.stoops@seattle.gov. Cheryl Eastberg is our planner assigned to this issue and she may be reached by phone at 206 386-4381, or e-mail at cheryl.eastberg@seattle.gov.

Old/New Business

Seattle Park Budget Discussion: Commissioner Kincaid referred to the June 24 meeting, where Parks Director Robb Courtney described how this year's mid-year cuts resulted in the loss of 24 maintenance positions. She asked what other options the Department is considering to deal with the anticipated additional cuts to the 2011 budget. She would like the budget process to be transparent and asked when the Board can weigh in on the options.

Acting Superintendent Williams explained that, historically, Seattle's mayors have used a deliberate budget method, whereby their proposed budget is delivered to City Council in late September. During preparation of the proposed budget, Department staff cannot talk about any of the specific proposals. This method allows the mayor to make tough decisions, without being lobbied.

Commissioner Kostka asked when it is appropriate for the Board to weigh in. Acting Superintendent Williams responded that the Board could identify its areas of concern and write a letter to the mayor in the next month or so, listing those concerns. Commissioners asked that New/Old Business be scheduled near the beginning of the July 22 meeting, with at least 20 minutes to start formulating these areas of concern. Commissioners were asked to send their areas of priority to the Board's coordinator prior to the July 22 meeting. She will assemble a list and distribute to help with the discussion. The Board will complete this discussion at its August 12 meeting and send a letter to the mayor. This will be one of only two agenda items at that meeting.

Acting Superintendent Williams stated that the Department submitted first, second, and third tier options to respond to varying levels of budget cuts. The Department will send the Board what information it is allowed to share about its program areas to assist the Board in identifying its priority list.

Detroit Closing 77 Parks: Commissioner Kincaid expressed dismay at the recent news article forwarded by the Board's coordinator stating that the City of Detroit is closing 77 of its parks due to budget problems.

There being no other new business, the meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
Jackie Ramels, Chair
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE _____