

Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
December 9, 2010

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Board of Park Commissioners:

Present:

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

Excused:

Jourdan Keith

Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:

Christopher Williams, Acting Superintendent
Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

This meeting was held at Seattle Park Headquarters at 100 Dexter Avenue North. Commissioner Ramels called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and Board members introduced themselves. She welcomed the audience to the meeting, and reviewed the meeting agenda. **Commissioner Holme moved and Commissioner Barber seconded approval of the December 9 agenda, November 18 minutes, and the record of correspondence received by the Board since the November 18 meeting. The vote was taken and motion carried.**

Commissioner Ramels noted that Commissioner Adams' term expires on December 31 and he is not seeking an additional term. He has been an important member of the Board and will be greatly missed. This is also Commissioner Ramels' last meeting as Park Board Chair, although she will remain as a member. Commissioner Holme will assume the position of chair, beginning in January 2011, and Commissioner Kincaid will be vice-chair.

Superintendent's Report

Acting Superintendent Williams reported on the following topics. To listen to the report, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=5591086> and move cursor to position 3.30.

Acting Superintendent Williams thanked Commissioner Adams for his excellent work as a member of the Park Board. He also thanked outgoing Chair Ramels, who stepped in as chair when the former Chair vacated the position due to work conflicts, and served two terms as chair. The Department and City are grateful for the many hours the commissioners give to Seattle's parks and recreation systems.

Denny Awards Presented: The Department held its annual Denny Awards on Tuesday, December 7, at Lake Union Armory. Several of the Commissioners attended the event, which recognizes the contributions of volunteers to Seattle Parks and Recreation parks and programs. They are named after David T. and Louisa

Denny, who donated land for the first Seattle park in 1884 (Denny Park), where Parks' headquarters are located. The winners are a cross-section of Seattle's most tenacious, creative, and hard-working volunteers who donate precious time and energy to improving Seattle's parks and programs.

"It is always difficult for us to choose winners," said Acting Superintendent Christopher Williams. "All of our volunteers make valuable contributions for which we are deeply grateful. Our intention is to single out those whose work builds community, inspires others, and improves lives."

He reviewed the names of the winners, as follows:

Leading By Example Award: Patrick Jones, Plymouth Pillars Park Dog Off-Leash Area Steward

Clean Seattle Award: Mike Hemion, Underwater clean-up Volunteer with Divers Institute of Technology

Making a Difference Award: Paul Kurose, Karate Sensei at Rainier Beach Community Center

Up and Coming Youth Award: Natalie "Wolfy" Whithan, Hiawatha Community Center Teen Council

Conservation Award: Heron Habitat Helpers, Habitat Restoration at Kiwanis Ravine

The Heron Habitat Helpers (HHH) successfully nominated and achieved the first Wildlife Sanctuary in the City of Seattle at Kiwanis Ravine Park. Home of Seattle's largest nesting colony of Great Blue Herons, the rookery has more than 80 nests. For the past 10 years, HHH has been a leader in conservation, demonstrating exceptional stewardship for the park, providing stellar leadership in enhancing the park, showing significant personal commitment, and generating a sense of community around the park. Commissioner Kostka is a member of this group.

Associated Recreation Council Volunteer of the Year Award: Darrell Glover, Alki Community Center Advisory Council

Community Stewardship Award: Seward Park Playground Improvement Foundation, Playground Development

Lifetime Achievement Award: Fran & Bunny Wood, Leschi Natural Area

Superintendent's Award: Freeway Park Neighborhood Association, Freeway Park Oversight

CleanScapes to Adopt Westlake Park: CleanScapes performs garbage hauling and maintenance in the downtown area and would like to donate some services to parks, due to the City's budget cuts. The challenge to this proposal is labor issues. CleanScapes has agreed to adopt Westlake Park and an agreement will be drawn up for the donated services. For more information on CleanScapes, see <http://www.cleanscapes.com/>.

Seattle Management Association (SMA) Awards: The SMA presented six awards recently to City of Seattle Departments, with the Parks Department being awarded two of those. The first award went to the Recreation Division's "Big Day of Play" at Magnuson Park. Over 3,500 people participated in this day of fun, part of the Department's Healthy Parks, Healthy You initiative. Belinda Gigliotti, Senior Recreation Program Coordinator, won the award for management support. Ms. Gigliotti has filled in as manager when needed and does a great job as a mentor and coach to other staff.

Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Projects: King County has selected private property across from Lowman Beach Park, rather than in the park, for its one million-gallon CSO tank. Parks continues to work with Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) on its CSO proposals that may affect Lake Washington Boulevard and other sites. SPU staff will be asked to brief the Park Board in January as they approach their siting decision and in advance of the Initiative 42 required City Council hearing for non park use of parkland. For more information on Initiative 42, see <http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~scripts/nph-brs.exe?s1=&s2=&s3=&s4=118477&s5=&Sect4=and&l=20&Sect2=THESON&Sect3=PLURON&Sect5=CBOR1&Sect6=HITOFF&d=CBOR&p=1&u=/~public/cbor1.htm&r=1&f=G>.

Acting Superintendent Williams and Parks' Planning and Development Director, Kevin Stoops, met earlier this week with the SPU Director, Ray Hoffman, and other SPU. SPU is looking at a number of sites for each CSO projects, and is looking to use parking lots, rather than open space, if a CSO is situated on park land.

Commissioner Holme noted that SPU is looking at locations along Lake Washington Boulevard, where parking lots have already been reduced in size over the past few years. Acting Superintendent Williams responded that SPU is looking at Stan Sayres Park and Lakewood Marina, with both located on the Boulevard.

Responding to a request from Commissioner Kostka whether Parks can regulate when the CSO projects are installed at a park (e.g., during Seafair), Acting Superintendent Williams responded that it can. He added that the CSO projects will require significant permits.

Opportunity Fund Project Recommendations: The Parks and Green Spaces Levy Citizens Oversight Committee finalized their project recommendations for Opportunity Funding. In the first cycle of the Opportunity Fund, \$7 million will be awarded to community-initiated projects. The Seattle City Council is expected to approve project funding recommendations in March 2011.

Highland Park Spray Park, Northacres Spray Park, and 14th Avenue NW Park Boulevard are three additional community-initiated projects that will receive funding from other Levy sources. An estimated \$1.5 million in 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy acquisition funds will be reallocated to the 14th Avenue NW Park Boulevard project. The goal is to convert two blocks on 14th Avenue NW (currently street right of way) from existing roadway and parking median into a community park with green infrastructure and safety improvements for pedestrians and cyclists. The community has prioritized this development project in lieu of acquiring additional property. The two spray park conversion projects will receive a total of \$905,000 in additional funding.

Community Center Statement for Legislative Intent (SLI) Process: The City Council asks Departments to do certain work by requesting a Statement of Legislative Intent. Council is requesting Parks to prepare an SLI for its community center operations, in lieu of the recent budget cuts to the centers. Acting Superintendent Williams explained the process, which will include a Project Advisory Team with a representative from the Park Board, and 13 community meetings across the city. Three broader community meetings will be held in April at Alki, Green Lake, and Queen Anne Community Centers. The Park Board will be briefed on the process at its January 13 meeting.

Executive Retreat: The Department's Executive leadership held a retreat last week and discussed the Strategic Action Plan and its focus in 2011. Other topics of discussion included work priorities, helping employees adapt to change, nurturing partnerships for new funding, communication and outreach, SLI for the small craft centers and for the community centers, and development of a new maintenance plan in response to the 20% budget cut. The Department will also look at facility operating hours and whether having consistent hours at all sites best serve each community. There may be unique needs that the Department is not now addressing.

Commissioner Adams is curious how managers determine where to cut back and what the determination process will look like. Acting Superintendent Williams met with various Advisory Councils this week for an initial discussion of a more limited use of community centers. Parks staff will begin posting information on the web pages that some maintenance will occur less or not at all. Staff will develop a schedule and keep the public informed as to what is happening. Acting Superintendent Williams clarified that the budget for both the grounds maintenance staff and the shops (electricians, carpenters, painters, metal fabricators, HVAC, plumbing, etc.) were both cut 20% in the 2011 budget.

Summit & John Park Hours: The Department has received a number of complaints of noise from this new Capitol Hill park, including a skatedot. The Superintendent has authority to change the parks' operating hours for up to nine months while staff work to resolve the problems. The hours will change so the park closes at 9:30 or 10:00 pm, rather than the current time of 11:00 pm. Staff will install buttons so skateboarders cannot skate on the sidewalk or hand rails and will install a gate between the sidewalk and skatedot.

Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience

The Chair explained this portion of the agenda is reserved for topics that have not had, or are not scheduled for, a public hearing. Speakers are limited to two-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. One person signed up to testify.

Paul Dorn: Mr. Dorn has concerns that outdoor restaurant seating is jutting into the park at Tilikum Place Park and wondered if Seattle Parks owns the property. Acting Superintendent Williams responded that Seattle Parks owns a small amount of the property. Both Parks and Seattle Department of Transportation issued the permits to allow the sidewalk seating, as the City of Seattle is trying to permit uses that allow its businesses to be more profitable.

Commissioner Ramels thanked Mr. Dorn for his testimony.

Briefing/Discussion/Recommendation: SR 520 6f Mitigation and Park Board's Comments to WSDOT

David Graves, Seattle Parks Senior Project Planner, presented a briefing on the Washington State Department of Transportation's SR 520 6f Mitigation process for the project's impacts to Seattle's parks. Prior to this meeting, Commissioners received a written briefing paper, included below, and made available to the public on the Board's web page. To hear the discussion, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=5591086> and move cursor to position 45.00.

Written Briefing

Background – Parks Impacted by the SR 520 Project

The SR 520 project raises a complex set of mitigation issues related to affects on parks and recreation facilities. This memo recaps these issues and potential mitigation to compensate for the loss or other affects to park land.

To the east of Montlake Boulevard and north of SR 520 lie McCurdy and East Montlake Parks and the Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI). These two parks are perceived by the public as one unit and the MOHAI building straddles both parks. The easterly portion of East Montlake Park, including the large parking lot, is on land owned by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). There is also a small fragment of land along the water that is owned by the Arboretum Foundation. Through the expansion of SR 520, McCurdy Park will be completely taken, and all of East Montlake Park will be temporarily taken for use as construction staging. Once construction is complete, the northerly half will be restored and returned to the City; the southerly portion will be kept as SR 520 right-of-way and developed with a stormwater treatment pond for the highway bridge. The MOHAI building, owned by the City of Seattle, will be taken and MOHAI will have to move its operations. As mitigation for the loss of East Montlake and McCurdy Parks, WSDOT is proposing a lid over the highway in this vicinity. The lid could be developed with a park-like setting but it will also have highway on and off-ramps over portions of it too.

The north end of the Arboretum is a mixture of property ownership; City of Seattle, UW, DNR and the Arboretum Foundation. The US Army Corps of Engineers also owns property along the Montlake Cut which is potentially impacted by the project. Of particular importance is the Arboretum Waterfront Trail which runs from the parking lot in McCurdy Park, across Marsh and Foster Islands, along the east side of Duck Bay, ending approximately at the intersection of Arboretum Drive and Foster Island Road. This trail was originally constructed with funds from the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund and then rehabbed with Washington State Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA) funds which gives the area special protection under Federal (Sec. 6f) and State legislation and requires very specific mitigation for impacts to this resource.

Finally, the project results in the complete loss of Bagley Viewpoint. Bagley Viewpoint is approximately 0.1 acre and located on Delmar Drive. The viewpoint provides views of UW, Lake Washington and the Cascades. WSDOT is proposing a lid over SR 520 in the same location to mitigate for the loss of the viewpoint. There are also impacts to submerged lands associated with the Montlake Playfield. Upland areas of the playfield that will be impacted by the project are actually owned by the State of Washington and within the SR 520 right-of-way.

Wetland Mitigation

The Arboretum area presents a unique suite of mitigation requirements across a variety of jurisdictions. The project will impact wetlands in the area of the Arboretum and Montlake Playfield. Impacts to the wetlands are under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Washington State Department of Ecology and potentially the Seattle Department of Planning & Development if a Master Use Permit is required. Impacts to wetlands must be mitigated by enhancing existing wetlands/wetland buffers and/or creating new wetlands at Code specified ratios depending on the rating (functions & values) of the impacted wetland. The focus of the wetland mitigation will be in the Arboretum and Montlake playfield areas first before looking outside of the area. The UW natural area on the north side of Union Bay may also present wetland enhancement opportunities.

Construction Impacts

There are going to be less quantifiable impacts to the Arboretum, both in the short term and in the long term, such as construction noise and highway noise from vehicles. There are also view impacts; i.e., views from and within the Arboretum may change significantly depending on the option chosen. The higher the main line of the highway, the more visible the structure. That said, a higher structure may lessen the noise impacts and could actually improve recreational access by making the area under the highway more open for canoe and kayak access and open up the area of the trail that passes under the highway to connect the north and south portions of Foster Island. Portions of the Arboretum and East Montlake/McCurdy Park will be used by the contractor for long periods of time for temporary staging and/or construction of the new highway and demolition of the existing structure. All of these impacts will warrant mitigation pursuant to NEPA. Temporary construction impacts may be addressed with compensation which could fund improvements to the Arboretum based on the Arboretum Master Plan. In addition, a contractor will be required to return any areas used but not retained by WSDOT to their pre-construction state exclusive of any mitigation.

Long Term Effect on Traffic

With no direct access to SR 520 from Lake Washington Boulevard; i.e., no Lake Washington Boulevard ramps, traffic through the Arboretum will likely decrease and potential project impacts related to through traffic on the boulevard are less of a concern.

Compensation for Park Land

Initiative 42 is a City ordinance which precludes the conversion of park property to a non-park use. In the end, WSDOT will have to compensate the City for any loss of park land. WSDOT will permanently take City-owned Parks' property including Bagley Viewpoint, submerged lands associated with Montlake Playfield, and McCurdy Park. Portions of East Montlake Park and the Washington Park Arboretum will be both temporarily and permanently taken by WSDOT. Land taken by WSDOT will require compensation.

Section 4f of the Federal Highways Act provides that no park land can be taken for transportation purposes unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative. For any park property that is taken for the SR 520 project, WSDOT will have to pay the property owner the value of the property. Analysis and associated mitigation for 4f impacts must be reviewed and approved by Federal Highways, with the affected jurisdictions' concurrence. To date, Parks has provided comments on the 4f Discipline reports associated with the DEIS process and continues to meet regularly with WSDOT to discuss mitigation opportunities. The final 4f/6f report will be issued in conjunction with the Final EIS in 2011.

The MOHAI building and underlying park property is owned by the City but operated by the museum. The MOHAI building will be demolished as part of the project and WSDOT will have to compensate the City/MOHAI

for the value of the building and the underlying property. Note that Arboretum Master Plan envisioned the MOHAI building as future space for Arboretum functions once the building is no longer used by the museum. MOHAI has entered into a Development Agreement with the City to develop a museum at Lake Union Park Armory which will replace their facility at McCurdy Park. An Addendum to the Development Agreement addresses the distribution of proceeds from the State's condemnation of the City's property at MOHAI (defined as the MOHAI Use Area, which is less than the totality of the State's acquisitions at McCurdy Park). Although the City owns the park and the buildings the agreement calls for MOHAI to share in the proceeds. The pending revision will increase MOHAI's share to up to \$7,000,000. Amendments to the Development Agreement along with authority to sell the property and to appropriate proceeds will be required as the State concludes its negotiations for the MOHAI Use Area, probably in August.

Finally, as previously noted, the north end of the Arboretum receives unique status due to 6f. If property that is protected under 6f is converted (taken), similar property must be provided. Monetary compensation is not an option. Property of similar recreational value must be provided as compensation. Equal value but not equal acreage is required. In this case, replacement property must be waterfront property with similar recreational utility. An additional point is that WSDOT can not condemn property for mitigation purposes; they have to find a willing seller and pay fair market value. Property that has previously been in recreational use is not eligible as replacement property. Finally, temporary impacts are mitigated by paying the lease value of the property. However, "temporary" is limited to 180 days by statute. The National Parks Service has the final say in the appropriateness of the replacement property, with input from the State Recreation & Conservation Office (RCO) and the City and UW. The local branch of the National Parks Service is pushing to loosen the "temporary" definition to allow greater flexibility. In the SR 520 case, there are areas that may be occupied by WSDOT for up to 5 years for construction, but ultimately the property will be returned to the underlying property owner.

Given this 6f requirement, WSDOT is interested in identifying early acquisition sites to replace the 3 to 5 acres of park property that will be converted and valued at approximately \$12 - 15 million. Note that the 3 to 5 acres is not exclusively Parks' property, it is also in UW and DNR ownership. There may be an opportunity to purchase private property to create expanded open space opportunities. There are currently two properties under consideration by WSDOT for purchase and development as mitigation sites. These two properties meet the dollar value and best meet recreation utility requirement from a list of approximately 80 sites originally screened by WSDOT with input from Parks, UW, RCO and the National Park Service. The two properties under consideration are the King Broadcasting site, located on Portage Bay, owned by UW and used by UW as the UW Police station and for storage and recycling; and, a private site on Fairview Avenue N at the intersection with Edgar Street, on Lake Union. The UW site is valued at approximately \$10 million and contains approximately 4 acres. It could be developed as shoreline open space with a connection along Portage Bay to the trail along Montlake Cut and to the Arboretum Waterfront Trail. The Fairview Avenue site provides an at-grade, waterside opportunity to address the "missing link" in the Cheshiahud Lake Union Loop. The Fairview Avenue site is valued at approximately \$2 million and contains approximately 0.3 acres. The Cheshiahud Loop is a predominantly flat loop around Lake Union located within public rights-of-way. Between Edgar and Hamlin Streets, the loop detours away from Lake Union through a steep up and down alley. Development of this parcel would provide a gentle connection to complete the loop.

The above is a sketch of the scope of mitigation/compensation requirements associated with the SR 520 project. With the final alternative chosen, the impacts have become more well defined and the requirements clearer. At this point, Parks is working with UW and the other City departments to ensure that the impacts to Parks' and thus City property are accurately presented so that we are prepared to work through the mitigation and compensation requirements, options and opportunities with WSDOT.

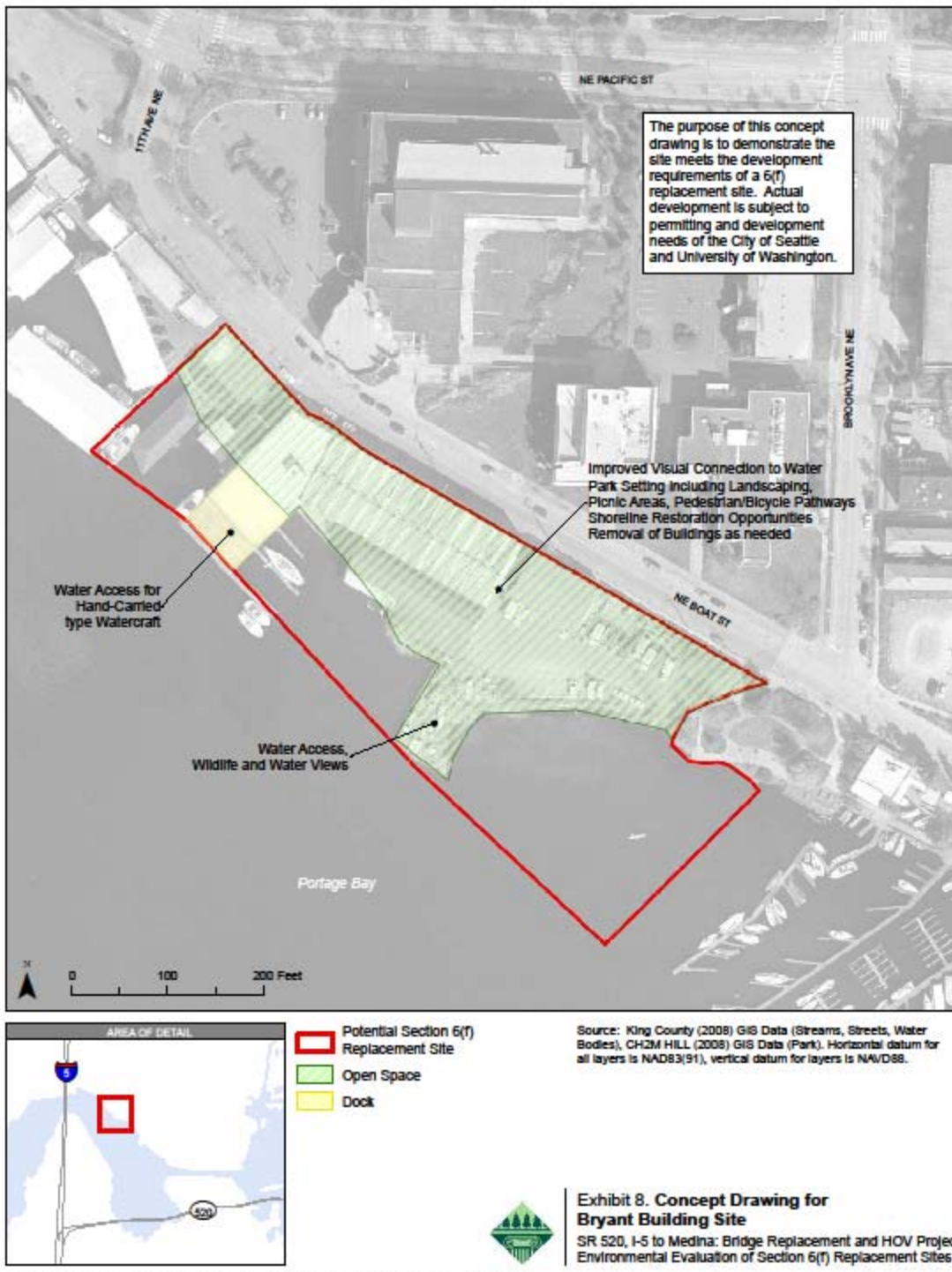
Verbal Briefing

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is accepting comments on the SR 520 6f Mitigation and the Board has drafted comments. Following Mr. Graves' briefing and a question and answer session, Commissioners finalized its comments.

Mr. Graves introduced himself and reviewed information from the written briefing paper. The mitigation on the west side of the bridge is vast and tonight's briefing deals only with the 6f portion. *[Section 6(f) of the [Land and Water Conservation Fund Act \(LWCFA\)](#) concerns transportation projects that propose to convert outdoor recreation property that was acquired or developed with LWCFA grant assistance, which in Washington is distributed by the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB), formerly the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC). For more information, see <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/environment/compliance/section6fguidance.htm>.]* The LWCFA requires that land developed by these funds must remain park land in perpetuity. If the land is taken or used for more than six months, it must be replaced dollar for dollar – not acre for acre.

Mr. Graves displayed a large map of the Arboretum and SR 520 project and pointed out the waterfront trail. WSDOT plans to convert only half of the waterfront project to permanent highway usage and the other half will be returned to the City as park land. However, because it will use the part it will return for longer than six months, it must reimburse the City for all the trail.

Seattle Parks and UW staff have looked at and considered over 80 properties that would fulfill the requirements (must be new, non-recreational property, and be waterfront property that is useful to both the City and University of Washington). The Bryant Marina site has been selected. See map on next page for location. WSDOT staff are now looking at the impacts of the Bryant Marina property.



Mr. Graves reminded Commissioners that the 4f process is administered by the Federal Highway Administration, rather than the National Park Services, and is more flexible than 6f. [For more information on the 4f process, see <http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/4f/index.asp>.]

Initiative 42 is a City of Seattle process and also looks at the taking of designated park land. [For more information on Initiative 42, see <http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~scripts/nph-brs.exe?s1=&s2=&s3=&s4=118477&s5=&Sect4=and&l=20&Sect2=THESON&Sect3=PLURON&Sect5=CBOR1&Sect6=HITOFF&d=CBOR&p=1&u=/~public/cbor1.htm&r=1&f=G.>]

Discussion/Recommendation

Commissioners asked several questions, which Mr. Graves answered:

What is the amount of land being taken? 4.7 acres, with part of that owned by the Department of Natural Resources. The Bryant property is 3.92 acres.

If the Bryant Marina property is found to be contaminated, will WSDOT pay for the remediation? There is currently a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to go forward with the mitigation. If it is determined that the site looks appropriate to move ahead, the next step is to develop a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) which would spell out any remediation. The City will include in the MOA that it will not pay for any remediation.

Will WSDOT demolish the Museum of History and Industry building? Yes.

Who will design the new park? WSDOT has prepared an early concept, with Seattle Parks handling the public process.

Will the new park be active or passive? It will most likely be passive; however, discussion is not that far along yet. The City wants a usable park at the end of the process.

The Mayor's recent letter to WSDOT refers to an archaeological investigation at the Bryant Marina site. What if substantive remains are found at the site? WSDOT will have to start the search process over again.

When will the 4f process be completed? During the next 6-9 months.

What is the deadline for the Memorandum of Understanding? Mid 2011.

Commissioner Barber suggested the Board send one letter with 6f comments (due on December 10) and a second letter on the Draft Arboretum Mitigation Plan (due on December 15.)

Commissioner Holme asked if the entire trail will be closed during the project. Will the Memorandum of Agreement include language to avoid public loss of the use of the trail? Mr. Graves responded that WSDOT will phase the work, keep the trail open as much as possible, and expects the closures to be of short duration. However, the Board could request the trail be open as much as possible in its written comments to WSDOT.

Commissioner Kincaid explained the process the Board used to develop its comments on the 6f process. The Board operates under the Open Public Meetings Act and holds its discussions in view of the public. At the Board's November 18 meeting, it agreed that Commissioner Kincaid would draft comments for the Board's review. Mr. Graves assisted with the draft, which was sent to commissioners by the Board's coordinator. Commissioners individually submitted edits through the coordinator and these were incorporated by Commissioner Kincaid. The Board received copies of this edited version at tonight's meeting, as did the public.

Commissioners agreed to add an additional sentence at the end of the second paragraph, as suggested by Acting Deputy Superintendent Eric Friedli. The Board spent some time discussing the letter. **Commissioner Barber moved approval of the letter as amended at tonight's meeting. Commissioner Adams seconded. The vote was taken and was unanimous.** The letter sent to WSDOT reads as follows:

Ms. Jenifer Young
Environmental Manager
Washington State Department of Transportation
600 Stewart Street #520
Seattle WA 98101

Dear Ms. Young,

The Seattle Board of Park Commissioners appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Environmental Evaluation of Section 6(f) Replacement Sites for the SR 520 project. The SR 520 Replacement project will have a profound effect on parks and natural areas throughout the SR 520 corridor. Impacts to 6(f) protected properties at the north end of the Arboretum, in East Montlake Park and along the Montlake Cut appear to have been minimized. The Commissioners support the proposed replacement site as a positive addition of park land in the University District, in close proximity to the Arboretum, which will also benefit the University of Washington. The park at the Bryant site will provide a valuable new public open space on the north shore of Portage Bay.

There are potential risks in renovating the site due to its historical nature.. Archaeologically significant items may also be found through this process. These complications could end up barring development or becoming very costly. There are also risks associated with the potential cost of environmental remediation of the site. It is likely that there are contaminants but there has been little information about contaminants and there is no cost information identified. Because of these unknowns, the cost of developing the park is truly unknown. All of these risks must be addressed as the process moves forward. We expect that WSDOT will bear the full costs of all analysis and resolving archeological issue and environmental remediation that may be associated with building the new park.

As the project does progress, the Board looks forward to being involved in the actual park design. Additionally, it is imperative that the community be involved as Parks and the University of Washington begin the design process for the development of this new park. The Board urges WSDOT to take every precaution to ensure that no additional 6(f) resources are impacted and that during construction, disruption of the Waterfront Trail will be kept to a minimum. Trail closure(s) must be kept to the minimum necessary and public access and safety are of paramount consideration.

To consider replacement of land, we need to match land values and provide comparable land that matches the unique visitor experience of what is lost. In addition to 6(f) requirements fulfilled by the Bryant marina site, we recommend the State returns the land currently occupied by the ramps to and from Lake Washington Boulevard to SR 520 to the Arboretum and City of Seattle. This includes the RH Thompson ramps and the Arboretum ramp to Lake Washington Boulevard. This will return "comparable" land – wetland – and is consistent with the Olmsted plan for continuous green space from East Madison Street to East Montlake Park. The SR520 Project should remove these ramps and restore the wetlands, providing trail access to the lagoons and marsh.

Boulevards are an important feature of our park system. Traffic patterns can greatly impact the quality of our boulevards, increasing noise, air pollution and reducing the safety for pedestrians and cyclists. We therefore strongly object to routing westbound traffic from SR520 southbound through the Arboretum by providing a left turn for all westbound vehicles on NE 24th. This was not included in the Nelson-Nygaard plan provided to the Seattle City Council. This is projected to increase the traffic through the Arboretum by 500 cars per hour. We think it is important to protect the quality and safety of Lake Washington Boulevard from the increased traffic this significant detail would create.

SR520 cuts the city in half along the eastern corridor, segregating communities from north to central and south Seattle. We therefore support the plan for the 2nd Montlake Bascule Bridge for pedestrians,

cyclists and transit, enhancing our Boulevard system, protecting Lake Washington Boulevard from increased traffic and reconnecting the chain of neighborhoods in this corridor

Park lands and natural areas adjacent to park lands are important. Any further expansion of the roadway, beyond what is shown in the preferred alternative, into undeveloped natural areas and/or Park lands is not acceptable. Waterfront public access, open space and natural areas are precious commodities which should not be compromised for the sake of automobile transportation. Thank you again for this opportunity to remain involved in the SR 520 project.

Sincerely,

*Jackie Ramels, Chair
Seattle Board of Park Commissioners*

Discussion moved to the Draft Arboretum Mitigation Plan. Mr. Graves briefly explained that the Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC) as part of the State Bill 6392, is requesting mitigation funds be spent to implement a set of prioritized projects in the 2002 Washington Arboretum Park Master Plan, as well as some wetland restoration. The ABGC has determined this as the best way to mitigate any damage the SR 520 project may cause to the Arboretum.

Commissioner Barber moved that the Park Board submit a letter of comments to WSDOT on the Draft Arboretum Mitigation Plan based on tonight's discussion and in support of the ongoing efforts of the Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC.) Commissioner Holme seconded. Mr. Graves will draft the letter. Commissioners authorized Commissioner Kincaid to review and edit the letter on behalf of the Board and to submit it prior to the December 15 deadline. **The vote was taken and was unanimous in favor. Motion carried.**

The comments submitted on the Draft Arboretum Mitigation Plan submitted to WSDOT read as follows:

*Washington State Department of Transportation
Online Comment Form*

RE: Comments on Draft Arboretum Mitigation Plan

The Seattle Board of Park Commissioners appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Draft Washington Park Arboretum Mitigation Plan for the SR 520 project. The SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project will have a profound effect on parks and natural areas throughout the SR 520 corridor, and particularly within the Washington Park Arboretum. State Route 520 has been a scar through the heart of the Arboretum since its construction. The highway's continued operation and future expansion will continue to dominate the natural environment and intrude upon the unique visitor experiences within the northerly portion of the Arboretum.

The Board wishes to recognize the work done by the Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC) in working with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to outline a set of mitigation measures based upon the Washington Park Arboretum Master Plan. Implementation of the Arboretum Master Plan is of critical importance to the long term operation of the Arboretum. We support the ABGC's work as they prepare for the future and urge WSDOT to completely fund the projects identified in the Mitigation Plan. Full implementation of the mitigation plan won't make the Arboretum whole again but it will help the Arboretum provide a living classroom and a unique natural experience for visitors in the heart of an urban city.

Park lands and natural areas adjacent to park lands are important. Any further expansion of the roadway, beyond what is shown in the preferred alternative, into undeveloped natural areas and/or Park lands is not acceptable. Waterfront public access, open space and natural areas are precious commodities which should not be compromised for the sake of automobile transportation. The Board urges WSDOT to take every precaution to ensure that no additional 6(f) resources are impacted and that during construction, disruption of the Waterfront Trail will be kept to a minimum. Trail closures must be kept to the absolute minimum and public access and safety are paramount concerns.

To consider replacement of land, we need to match land values and provide comparable land for the unique experience which is lost. In addition to 6(f) requirements fulfilled by the Bryant marina site, we recommend the State returns the land currently occupied by the ramps to and from Lake Washington Boulevard to SR 520 to the Arboretum and City of Seattle. This includes the RH Thompson ramps and the Arboretum ramp to Lake Washington Boulevard. This will return "comparable" land – wetland – and is consistent with the Olmsted plan for continuous green space from East Madison Street to East Montlake Park. The SR520 Project should remove these ramps and restore the wetlands, providing trail access to the lagoons and marsh.

Boulevards are an important feature of our park system. Traffic patterns can greatly impact the quality of our boulevards, increasing noise, air pollution and reducing safety for pedestrians and cyclists. We therefore strongly object to routing westbound traffic from SR520 southbound through the Arboretum by providing a left turn for all westbound vehicles on NE 24th. This was not included in the Nelson-Nygaard plan provided to the Seattle City Council and is projected to increase the traffic through the Arboretum by 500 cars per hour. We think it is important to protect the quality and safety of Lake Washington Boulevard from the increased traffic this significant detail would create.

SR520 cuts the city in half along the eastern corridor, segregating communities from north to central and south Seattle. We therefore support the plan for the 2nd Montlake Bascule Bridge for pedestrians, cyclists and transit, enhancing our Boulevard system, protecting Lake Washington Boulevard from increased traffic and reconnecting the chain of neighborhoods in this corridor.

Thank you again for this opportunity to remain involved in the SR 520 project.

Sincerely,

*Jackie Ramels, Chair
Seattle Board of Park Commissioners*

Commissioners thanked Mr. Graves for his exceptional assistance to the Board's understanding of the SR 520 mitigation process and thanked the ABGC for its work to protect the Arboretum.

Old/New Business:

To hear the Board's discussion of Old/New Business, see <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=4728> and move cursor to position 15.00.

Recognition of Outgoing Commissioner Adams: As mentioned earlier in this meeting, this is Commissioner Adams last as a Park Board Commissioner. All the other commissioners described his importance to the Board and how much he will be missed. Refreshments were served after the meeting.

Commissioner Selection for Atlantic City Nursery Site Request for Proposal Process: Commissioner Keith voiced strong interest, via e-mail, in this new committee. Acting Superintendent Williams agreed.

Other Park Board Committees:

- Commissioners Kincaid and Ramels volunteered to serve on the new Community Center Statement of Legislative Intent's Project Advisory Team.
- Commissioners will discuss all committee assignments at the January 13 meeting and determine any new assignments.

There being no other new business, the meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
Terry Holme, Chair
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE _____