

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
April 10, 2003

Present:

Bruce Bentley, Chair
James Fearn
Susan Golub
Sarah Neilson
Kate Pflaumer
Kathleen Warren

Excused:

O. Yale Lewis

Staff:

Ken Bounds, Parks Superintendent
Michele Daly, Acting Park Board Coordinator

Chair Bruce Bentley called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. The agenda consent items were approved as submitted including approval of the April 10 agenda, minutes of March 27 and acknowledgment of correspondence.

Superintendent's Report:

New Teen Loft at Loyal Heights Community Center. Loyal Heights Community Center's newly opened "Teen Loft" is bringing in 20-40 teens per day: we expect the numbers to rise as we get the word out.

"Life of a Drifter" - The Aquarium's new exhibit will open at 10 a.m. on April 28. The grand opening festivities will be sponsored and catered by Krispy Kreme Donuts and Starbucks Coffee. Also, KMPS 94.1 FM will broadcast their mid-day radio show (10 a.m. to 3 p.m.) live from the new exhibit.

Attendance. Aquarium attendance year to date has increased 9% over the same period in 2002. Aquarium family memberships sold year to date have increased 132% over the same period in 2002!

"Earth Month" Begins. We've expanded the celebration of Earth Day (April 22) to a full month of environmentally focused events and activities, including more than 100 "work parties" to restore and clean up our parks. A list of these is available on our web site and we are distributing an Earth Month poster to public facilities throughout the city.

Mothballing of Two Summer Beach Sites: Due to budget reductions, lifeguards will not be working at Pritchard and East Green Lake Beach in 2003. Plans are being developed and should be implemented by May 1st to prepare for this program change. Plans include signage, removal of towers and diving standards, public information materials and an emergency response plan for Green Lake. Publicity will focus on use of the seven remaining life guarded swimming beaches.

Senior Adults Learn Laughter is the Best Therapy: On Wednesday, March 26th Senior Adult Programs and Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center hosted 100 seniors for a Therapeutic Laughter Exercise Session. It was a giggling good time for every one as the contagious nature of laughter overcame the entire room.

Seattle Parks Youth Basketball Season ends in Seattle's own March Madness: The Seattle Parks and Recreation youth basketball season came to an end last weekend. This program provides organized play for 451 youth teams, 3,861 participants, played in 24 community centers and 62 school facilities. There are 442 volunteer coaches and 65 referees who supervise 702 practices and 176 games each week. This also translates to over 5,000 parent rides to practice and games each week.

Farmers Market Coming to Magnolia. We have agreed to a one-year pilot Neighborhood Farmers Market to be held in the Magnolia Community Center parking lot. Approval is contingent on the Farmers Market Alliance, the program sponsor, getting a temporary use permit from DCLU since the center is in a R5000 zone. DCLU staff is working on legislation to allow farmers markets to operate in R5000 zones citywide. The Magnolia market will operate from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Saturday from June through October.

New Construction at Carkeek: Construction of the new Environmental Learning Center at Carkeek Park is close to conclusion and the new building opening ceremony and dedication is planned for May 31st from 1:00 until 2:30 pm.

Kids Carnival. Ravenna-Eckstein Community Center held its annual kids carnival this Wednesday. There were many carnival booths, all created and run by older kids. The kids operating the booth get to keep half of the proceeds made at their booth. Over 500 children attend this popular event.

Parks sites Named: Names for three neighborhood parks are being announced; Cal Anderson Park for the reservoir site on Capitol Hill, Kiwanis Ravine Overlook for a parcel east of Discovery Park that is a wonderful ravine viewing spot, and Hitt's Hill Park for the old Hitt Firework Company site in Columbia City.

Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience:

Richard Ellison requested to speak regarding Gas Works Park. Chair Bruce Bentley informed him of the public involvement process. Project review meetings and tours were conducted and the Park Board public hearing process has been completed. This agenda item is for items that have not been scheduled for a public hearing.

Katherine Bragdon stated there has been so much talk about a lot of the other important issues such as the dogs off-leash area that others living in the park area had no idea about the proposed tree removal. The Park Board has Superintendent Ken Bounds acknowledged over 99 e-mails were received requesting trees not be cut for private view; 16 e-mails stated trees should not be cut for public view; 30 e-mails stated trees should not be cut for any reason and 2 e-mails hoped it was a rumor. Many phone messages in

opposing to tree removal were also received. The substance of the message has been received. Chair Bruce Bentley informed the audience that the Board works hard to educate itself on all the issues.

Seward Park Audubon Center Briefing/Public Hearing

Superintendent Ken Bounds reported the Department has been working with the Seattle Audubon to negotiate a partnership for the annex building at Seward Park for an environmental learning center.

Briefing

Cindi Shiota, Parks Strategic Advisor, introduced Joyce Kelly, Chair of the Seward Park Stewardship Board. The Stewardship Board was formed in October and is a diverse group of community residents from Seward Park and Southeast Seattle/Beacon Hill. Southeast Seattle has the highest number of kids from K-12 and also has the highest number of communities of color and individuals with diverse backgrounds. At the same time Southeast Seattle is lacking environmental education centers in comparison to other parts of Seattle. Ms. Kelly stated the Audubon is doing something of great value to Southeast Seattle and all of the communities in the area.

Cindi Shiota previously distributed a written briefing paper to the Board as follows:

Seattle's Department of Parks and Recreation and The National Audubon Society Agreement

Requested Action: Authorization of an ordinance relating to the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR); authorizing the Superintendent to execute agreements with the National Audubon Society, Inc., to renovate the Seward Park Music Annex Building and Hatchery for environmental education programs, and establishing the conditions under which Audubon may use and occupy portions of the named facilities. The term of the Use and Occupancy Agreement is ten years with an additional 10-year renewal option.

Renovation Project Summary: The Project includes renovation of the Annex Building and the Hatchery. The Annex Building will house offices for DPR's Teens for Recreation and Environmental Conservation Programs (TREC) and a Naturalist on loan to Audubon (a cost-shared position), as well as Audubon Center's staff. The Annex will also include classrooms/public accessible conference rooms and a large lobby for public inquiries regarding Seward Park.

The Hatchery improvements include renovation of an existing shed for an indoor classroom/lab, a shelter for covered, but outdoor programming, filling in most of the ponds for safety concerns, and road/site improvements and access controls to and from the Hatchery.

The total Project cost is currently estimated at \$1,991,469. City funding of \$618,600 was identified for this purpose in Ordinance #120024, which was subsequently approved by

the voters in the Parks and Green Spaces Levy on November 7, 2000. Audubon will raise and contribute to the project the balance of the funding of \$1,372,869. Upon approval of the Ordinance, project design will begin, with construction anticipated to occur in 2004.

Background: Renovation of the Annex Building into an environmental education center was one of the initiatives identified by the DPR as a priority in the Parks and Green Spaces Levy to further its commitment to environmental stewardship. Seward Park's natural assets afford a multitude of programming and stewardship opportunities and are ideally located to further the Department's outreach to communities historically underserved by environmental organizations. The National Audubon Society also views Seward Park as an ideal location to further its conservation mission and its 1995 Strategic Plan to develop 20 Audubon Centers state wide. With both organizations sharing a common mission and commitment to serving diverse audiences and a programmatic approach that utilizes natural areas as classrooms, this partnership will afford leveraging of resources, expertise, and outreach services. This partnership is also consistent with Ordinance 120024 which reads, in part, "Whereas, the City will seek to leverage funds through collaboration with County, State, and Federal sources and with private and non-profit organizations...through the development of partnerships for purposes of enhancing projects and programs funded through the levy lid lift..."

The Agreement: In July 2001, the City passed Resolution 30339 authorizing a Memorandum of Understanding between the DPR and Audubon which established a framework for the development of these agreements. The Development Agreement describes the parties' understandings and objectives pertaining to the provision of environmental education programs, project management, design and construction; the project budget, and Audubon fundraising requirements. The Use and Occupancy Agreement provides for an initial term of ten years, commencing on the date of certificate of occupancy, with a renewal option of an additional ten (10) years. As conditions such as the square footage to be leased by Audubon and the valuation of rent to be paid, cannot be identified until the design of renovation is completed, a "Form of Lease and Access Agreement" will be executed when this information is available (Exhibit D of the Use and Occupancy Agreement).

Process and Schedule: Development of these agreements has involved a number of public outreach efforts. To ensure that Audubon's environmental programs will meet the needs and interests of the diverse communities that reside in Southeast Seattle, Audubon conducted 15 in-depth interviews and four focus groups. The DPR conducted public meetings on March 6th, June 5th 2002 and March 25, 2003.

The Development Agreement - Summary of Terms and Conditions: The total estimated Project Cost is \$1,991,469. Audubon shall raise and contribute an estimated \$1,372,869 and DPR shall contribute \$618,600. Both parties shall review and participate in the Project's design and construction with DPR managing the Hatchery renovations and Audubon managing the Annex Building renovations. Prior to completion of the renovations, Audubon may use the current building's conference rooms as well as Seward Park's established trails and shoreline for their environmental programs, pursuant to DPR

Use Permit, subject to their availability. Contemporaneously with the Development Agreement, the Use and Occupancy Agreement shall be executed.

The Use and Occupancy Agreement - Summary of Terms and Conditions:

- Term of Lease: 10 years with a 10-year renewal option.
- Rent will be based on the fair market value of the space to be occupied by Audubon, including a pro rata share for the fair rental value of the Building's common areas, with annual adjustments based on the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers. For the duration of the lease, Audubon shall be entitled to an offset against their rent for the total amount of Audubon's capital contributions to the renovation project and for the value of the public benefit of Audubon's environmental programs. Should Audubon's capital contributions exceed the amount of offset, the excess shall be a gift to the City.
- Audubon will pay all the costs of utilities, custodial service, and security alarm costs at the Annex Building. DPR will pay the same costs at the Hatchery.
- Audubon's environmental programs will be open to all members of the public and be community responsive, particularly to south Seattle communities; culturally inclusive; compatible and coordinated with the City's environmental stewardship programs; and affordable.
- The public may rent meeting rooms and other Building common areas. Audubon will schedule such uses at the Annex and work to maximize availability during evenings and weekends. DPR will schedule the use of the Hatchery facilities.
- For the term of the lease, the Building will be temporarily renamed "Seward Park Environmental and Audubon Center" to reflect the partnership and to identify both DPR and Audubon programs housed in the Building.

Cindi Shiota reviewed the proposed agreement and pointed what is proposed on display boards. She pointed out three things that have been adjusted in the agreement since receiving suggestions and comments at the March public meeting: (1) one pond will not be filled in so that it may be used for a frog/lily pond, (2) language added regarding design considerations for the project that would look at ways access is controlled, such as by automated bollards, pass or some other design opportunities for controlling access onto the perimeter road, and (3) language has been added that the programming that is developed at Seward Park would encourage looking at ways where vehicle transportation of program participants can be minimized on the perimeter road between the annex and the hatchery. The building name has been modified to remove the word annex and be Seward Park Environmental and Audubon Center during the lease term.

Questions and Answers

Kate Pflaumer asked how long of a term of the lease is proposed. Cindi Shiota stated it is a 10-year term of lease with a 10-year option.

Kathleen Warren inquired how many Audubon staff would be present at the center. Three staff people are proposed, plus the shared-Naturalist position.

Kathleen Warren asked how long Audubon has to raise the money. There are two thresholds that have been built into the agreement. Before the design contract can be let, \$236,000 has to be raised by the first of June. Audubon has already raised \$200,000 without an agreement. Once the agreement is finalized, Audubon will be able to do more fund raising and obtain firm pledges. The second threshold comes in the 2nd quarter of 2004 when the construction contract is let and before that contract is let Audubon has to have the remaining \$1,391,000 raised.

Sarah Neilson asked if the \$1.9 million was for capital costs or does it also include operating costs. Cindi Shiota stated it is for capital costs only.

Kathleen Warren inquired if Audubon has design control over the annex. Audubon will be project managing the annex. Each party will give design approval of the other project throughout the agreement. Design and construction approvals have been built into the agreement.

Susan Golub inquired about the construction process. Cindi Shiota stated they are subject to the state laws but they do not have to go through the same process as city projects.

Kathleen Warren asked about bus transportation, bringing children in and out of the park, and how much traffic is anticipated. Cindi Shiota stated they are looking for ways to minimize traffic. Programming will encourage people to walk. There will be some accessibility issues for people that cannot walk far and alternatives are being reviewed. Programming will most likely be seasonal at the renovated hatchery area. There will be an indoor classroom/lab, a covered shelter for outdoor programming.

Bruce Bentley noted by the term "lease" the Department would be keeping ownership of the facility. He inquired if any overnight programming has been proposed. Cindi Shiota stated at this time no over night programming is proposed. Trek programming has one staff person. Bruce Bentley asked who would manage the site and making sure there is a "finger on the pulse." Audubon will be doing the scheduling, paying the utilities and the other operating costs. The Department has requirements in the agreement about preventative maintenance, joint inspections and other things to make sure the building is being maintained properly. Audubon will prepare an annual report.

Sarah Neilson asked if anything was being added to the existing building at the entrance of the park or if it was just renovations inside the structure and renovations at the hatchery. For what is being constructed, the \$2 million seems high. Cindi Shiota stated it is often times more costly than to build new. The building is older with a variety of issues and problems.

Bruce Bentley asked about the Naturalist position. Cindi Shiota replied there will be one Naturalist position and the salary will be split between the City and the Audubon.

Kate Pflaumer asked if Audubon does not raise the money if there was a Plan B. There are a variety of provisions that should either party back out of the deal of various stages of the project different things get triggered. For example, if Audubon was to leave the

table on this project before design is completed, they would have to make the Department whole for the money it spent so the building could be redesigned to a level of the money that it would have available.

Kate Pflaumer inquired if there were other instances where the Department has done this type of lease arrangement with other partners. Superintendent Ken Bounds gave the Zoo Society as one example for food concessions and Interbay was developed on a lease agreement. There are use agreements with Pratt Fine Arts, Madrona Dance Studio and Bathhouse Theater.

James Fearn asked if the agreement was with the National Audubon Society. The agreement is with the local chapter of the National Audubon, which is a completely separate 501c from the Seattle Audubon.

Bruce Bentley asked if the Friends of Seward Park would be the community connection in terms of public input. There are many community connections to this project. The Stewardship Board that has recently been organized has brought in a host of people that live in the community that heretofore have not been very active with park issues. Audubon has gotten underserved communities involved in the project.

Public Hearing

Dee Arntz, member of the Stewardship Board of the State Audubon Society, member of the Seattle Audubon Society, and a volunteer for Audubon for the last 15 years, stated Seward Park was the first place where she learned about the Pacific Northwest environment in 1987. She attended a class led by Estelle Leopold and learned about tree snags and qualities in old growth forests. It is a magical place and it is amazing that it is in the city. Audubon wants to have a chance to share that magic with all the people and children that live in the southeast portion of the city. Audubon has other centers in Los Angeles and New York and this will be a part of the network of centers. It will provide connections for field trips and provide access to scientific people.

Mike Waller recently joined the Stewardship Board of Audubon of Washington. The Board is excited about the network of environmental centers. The Board has committed to raising funds for five centers around the state in the next five years. He is speaking in support of the agreement and is generally in favor of partnerships to expand resources and to allow more programming by pulling in more partners. He further stated the Seward Park center will be great and you will not have to worry about the maintenance or programming as there is a strong commitment by a lot of folks including National Audubon to make this project succeed.

Mardi Roberts, President of Friends of Seward Park, informed the Park Board that in 1999 a group of people started meeting as they were concerned about preserving the uniqueness of Seward Park. In 2002 a Board was formed and received its 5013c designation last year with a current membership of approximately 300. The main focus is to support programs in the park. Volunteers have helped train Trek kids and helped to fund summer nature programs last year with proceeds from its plant sale. The Friends

value the existing environmental programs and work hard to support them. They believe the south end is underserved. Seward Park is second to Green Lake in daily use. Seward Park hosts 80% of the citywide large events. Seward Park is the only major park without a Volunteer Coordinator to support volunteer efforts and is also short changed in personnel for its environmental education programs. Mardi reviewed comparisons of other environmental centers and the Seward Park inequities. One of the Friends' members recently donated \$5,000 to the Seward nature program and another \$5,000 to Trek. The Friends believe an Audubon Center at Seward would help serve the needs for education and stewardship. The Friends wholeheartedly endorse the MOU between the City and Audubon. The Friends want the Pro Parks funds currently allocated to Seward to stay to support nature programs. Four items at the March public meeting were of concern: Increased traffic that is proposed for the nature programs. The Friends are adamant that they do not want to see increased traffic on the loop road. Community members that use the road have voiced strong opinions about this and this is one of the few places where citizens can escape to the solitude of nature. School children and others can walk to the hatchery as it is only ¼ of a mile from the upper loop. For people that are unable to walk, golf carts have been suggested. Therefore road improvements would not be needed and this would save money with more money available for nature programs. The Friends desire that the tanks be filled with dirt and not cement as they would like to write a grant to have the tanks restored and revamp the fish hatchery. Friends of Seward Park want to use the meeting rooms free of charge. The Friends have forwarded a list of suggested names for the Center such as Seward Park Environmental Laboratory and Learning Center. The Friends have been assured there would be no overnight programs at Seward and are against any overnights.

Melanie Weston, Seward Park resident, is very concerned about the traffic and does not want to see buses, vans and cars on the loop road. People can use the main trailhead to get down to the fish hatchery. She might be able to get golf carts donated.

Beatrice Booth, Chair of the Board of Stewards of Audubon Washington, stated Audubon has been in the field of nature education for many years. It was through an Audubon outdoor experience that showed her things that were around her but she never noticed that made her a life long searcher of understanding of nature. That is what city kids need. A center is needed close to their homes so they can come back on the weekends with their parents after they have gone to the center with school programs. They will come to love things that they understand and they will want to save them in other places that are not as well protected as Seward Park.

Josh Chaitin, resident of Southeast Seattle and member of the Seward Park Board for this project, stated his support for the project. As the father of two kids who will be attending public school in the neighborhood he thinks the need for a strong environmental education program in a neighborhood where the vast majority of school children is going to be a tremendous benefit for the residents of southeast Seattle as well as the city as a whole. It will help to educate children on the environment so that they will carry that into the rest of their lives. He would like to work with the Friends of Seward Park to figure out the best way to approach the transportation issues.

Dolores Ranhofer, Friends of Seward Park, is concerned about the reference in the agreement that the public may rent meeting rooms. She would like to know for what purpose. This park is one of the most utilized in the city with festivals, runs, Seafair and in the summertime it is very difficult to get into the park. Are the rentals going to include weddings, graduation parties, as she would be against that. They may be private events but they would create an atmosphere that would not be conducive to the park itself. She would like to see the public spaces better defined. She has concerns about the road being improved for any sort of vehicular traffic. There is a playground at the entrance of the park and any improvements allowing more vehicles would be very dangerous.

Richard Ranhofer, Seward Park resident, expressed concern that the amount of money that Audubon has raised for the park is fairly small compared to the value a private organization is getting for a ten to twenty year lease of public space. He would like to know how long the city is willing to wait to start renovations on a building with known electrical problems and other infrastructure problems. What would the explanation be should it catch fire or otherwise deteriorate. How would you explain the delay when Pro Parks money is unavailable for mediation if this building is demolished by neglect. Issues of the programming in the park have not been addressed. City process has been to give a group priority in subsequent years to reschedule events. If this is to be a public park what will be done to prevent this private organization to limit public access. If low-income people are the focus, what business plan does Audubon have to raise the \$300,000 annual operating budget. Consideration will be given to Audubon for the public good they provide, What formula and public input will be used to access this supposed giving.

Al Smith, Rainier Valley resident, donated \$10,000 to be used for nature programs at Seward Park. He is concerned where the learning center will be during construction and if there will be a construction shack on site. He wants funding to keep coming to Seward Park. Mr. Smith referenced park history regarding the loop road, fishponds and hatchery. Mr. Smith stated the least amount of motorized traffic the happier he will be and so will the community. On Thursday afternoons there are bicycle races on the upper loop.

Rich Ellison supports the Audubon Center at Seward Park. Audubon is very concerned about doing the least intrusive things to a community and also in the best of ecological consciousness. If there were any concerns or questions as the project was ongoing they would very much try to work and bend over backwards to make it work in the community. Mr. Ellison thinks anything you can do to help education through local kids would be a marvelous thing. It is such a win win opportunity he cannot imagine not allowing it to happen. He is sure it needs some fine-tuning but getting kids out into any ecological opportunity would be great. As far as future operating budgets he is sure money can be found, either public or private. It will all depend upon the success of the program. Mr. Ellison added that if there was an overnight program for little kids that might be great; at least have daycamps for small children in the summertime.

Stella Chao, Stewardship Board for the Audubon Learning Center, MEDC, and Executive Director of International District of Housing Alliance (which runs an environmental justice program for Asian/Pacific Islander youth) supports the center. Is it not the intent to have equal and equitable access for all Seattle city residents. Equitable

access is very important when thinking about perimeter roads, whether they should be limited overnight camps for kids who otherwise do not have opportunities or whose parents who are very uncomfortable because of other external societal issues of letting their kids go out into the wilderness overnight as well as access to camps and their fees that it costs for camps. The southeast area is an important area for us to focus on for a learning center because it has the most number of kids and is the most ethnic diverse community in the city. Access to parks and access to environmental programs is very important in that area of the community so that we can gain a better stewardship across our entire society. Ms. Chao stated the partnership with the Audubon is really important because when we move into areas of fiscal distress, sustainability of programming for low-income communities is very important. Because Audubon does not have the MOU yet it has been held back from really doing the major piece of fundraising. She thinks there are many community members and foundations who have the greater good of society in their hearts and fund low-income community things. What was planned for the park in 1926 was in a different era. She agrees that vehicles should be limited to certain areas of the park but it is important to keep in mind equitable access and the kind of outreach that is needed to bring in all communities of color and communities who have not traditionally accessed environmental programs.

Christina Gallegos stated the concept for the learning center was born many years ago. Ms. Gallegos worked on the Mayor's Task Force for Environmental Justice in 1995. Out of that task force came a policy statement that stated "the city will ensure equity in environmental policy making public involvement, public education and program and service delivery," One year prior to that, Councilmember Sue Donaldson sponsored Resolution 2889 which supported President Clinton's Executive Order on Environmental Justice. That Resolution stated in paragraph 3 that the city will conduct activities related to human health and the environment in a manner that does not discriminate or have the affect of discriminating against low income and minority populations." The plan for Seward Park, through Audubon, is one that helps meet those needs of the Rainier Valley community. Ms. Gallegos stated the City needs to be a true partner of Audubon and continue to staff and support Seward Park. In the MOU language should be included that makes a commitment not just connected to fiscal budget but makes the commitment in the same duration as the agreement - 10 years, plus 10 years.

Charles Kahle, Seattle Audubon Board member, member of the Board of the National Audubon Society, stated the National Audubon has a commitment to the learning center at Seward Park as it does to a number of other learning centers across the country. It is an opportunity to talk about environmental education and also show the impact it has on urban citizens and give them the opportunity to explore nature. It also represents an opportunity to build on the program that Seattle Audubon has in public schools in the area. National Audubon is committed to both in its promise of providing education but also backing it with their expertise in fund raising as well as staffing. He distributed a letter from the National Audubon Society expressing their backing for the center.

Chair Bruce Bentley thanked the audience for coming and participating in the hearing. The Board will have a discussion of the Seward Park Audubon Center at its April 24 meeting and make a recommendation to the Superintendent.

Kathleen Warren questioned the disabled access, use of golf carts and other transportation issues. Cindi Shiota will investigate the ADA access and if golf carts would be appropriate transportation.

Gas Works Park Improvement Plan Discussion/Recommendation

Chair Bruce Bentley thanked Commissioner Susan Golub for chairing the March 27, 2003 meeting.

Background

The Park Board had a briefing and held a public hearing at its March 27 meeting. The scope of the project based upon the Pro Parks Levy was very broad and a planning phase was needed to identify improvements for the westerly third of the Park that satisfied the Pro Parks scoping language and then to select those project elements that could be implemented with the funding. A written briefing paper was presented at that meeting which included background information, the summary of the planning/public process, and the revised plan recommendations. Seventeen people gave verbal testimony at the hearing.

Michael Shiosaki , Pro Parks Manager, stated the Park Board is being asked to make a recommendation to the Superintendent to accept the preferred project plan as presented or with modifications. A display board showing the preferred plan was shown. Areas would be regraded providing pathway connections from the Wallingford Steps into the rest of Gas Works. The preferred plan finishes up the major railroad break with a looping path and removal of selected portions of the concrete containment wall.

An off leash dog area is not proposed within the northeast corner of Gas Works Park. The Department has reviewed the policy and all the planning work that has happened before this piece. The Park Plan 2000 talks about providing one off leash dog area in each sector of the city. This sector of the city currently has three off leash areas. The adopted Wallingford Neighborhood Plan was reviewed which does not suggest an off leash area at Gas Works. An EIS was done in 1990 and this plan is very close to what was in that EIS. The Master Plan has an emphasis on the general open use areas and not single use areas. The Department is trying to keep within the integrity of that overall-planning concept for Gas Works Park. The Preferred Plan complies with the Pro Parks levy language.

The plan does propose some selected tree removal. Removing trees is a major consideration and not taken lightly. Michael Shiosaki stated when looking at the long term vision of Gas Works Park, the Department is trying to make sure the northwest corner becomes an integral part of the park. Visual connections from the northwest corner into the rest of the park are trying to be accomplished. It is currently an isolated and separate area. The number of trees proposed for removal is approximately 24. The Department is in the early stages of planning and it is not designed out and it can certainly look at minimizing any tree removals. The area proposed for tree removal was shown on a display board. The view corridor is from the public Wallingford Steps into

the park. The tree removal is not for enhancing private views. Approximately 90 additional trees will be planted in Gas Works Park; 30-40 trees would be going in during the first phase.

Michael Shiosaki stated there have been some issues that have come up regarding the public process. The Department is complying with the Public Involvement Policy. There have been three public meetings. Notices have been sent out in general to the south Wallingford neighborhood (2300 addresses) in addition to Department mailing lists to groups and individuals. Press releases were sent out and notices were in both the PI and Seattle Times. The meetings have been posted on the Department's web site and a large project sign has been posted on the concrete wall. Laminated 11" x 17" posters have been displayed. Guy Michaelson from the Berger Partnership, Mark Mead - Parks Urban Forester and Michael are available to answer questions from the Board.

Questions and Answers

Susan Golub asked where in general the new trees are going to be planted. The proposed groupings of trees were shown on the display board. Two or three types of deciduous trees are proposed with some fall color added to the Park.

Kathleen Warren asked about the health of the trees that are proposed for removal. Two Sycamore trees in a grove of six are out-competed. The Department has a strong policy of not cutting trees but sometimes you can improve what is there. How much thought went into the original planting. Are they the wrong trees in the wrong place or taller than what people expected. Guy Michaelson stated it is his understanding that the trees were deliberately planted. The trees were planted in an operational right of way and were a buffer to separate the railroad right of way. Originally there was a continuous loop that went through the park. Over time there is a gap and some trees have died.

Sarah Neilson asked if the trees are protected under Landmarks. The plan has been taken to Landmarks twice and they did not have concerns with the trees.

Kate Pflaumer stated that Catherine Maggio informed her the gap was actually an illegal cutting.

Susan Golub stated the view corridor that would be developed by taking out some of the trees would allow views into a broader part of the park. In one area Kite Hill would be visible. The other connections the Department is looking at is the cracking towers to the northwest corner.

Kathleen Warren inquired if the view would become protected. The Space Needle can be seen from the top of Wallingford Steps. There is not a protected view corridor there now. Mark Mead stated the protected view is the view of the Space Needle from the top of the mound.

Kate Pflaumer stated she finds this role very difficult because there is so much public process and staff work that goes before it and the reasons that are put forward all make a lot of sense to her and then you read hundreds of e-mails and letters that there was not enough public process. Kate has looked at all the overview and principle documents and letters. The only thing she has not seen is the petition with 1,400 signatures for the off leash area. Kate stated she is persuaded that there is a real public outcry in this area for an off leash area. She is aware there are a lot of off leash dogs in the area. There is a two-acre plot of which the dog owners want one acre. There are contamination issues. Kate is persuaded to make the western acre an off leash area. She is also persuaded that the tree area had an original design that still has a compelling interest, which is the framing of the park. Taking that framing out and putting in views to her does not really accomplish a lot. She is not persuaded that building a new pathway a few feet where there is already a pathway and putting in more parking on the other side where the parking there is sufficient is necessary. Kate asked why a path could not be put in through the trees that meets up with the other path and takes advantage of the framing. It is a beautiful walk into the park and the park opens up when you get inside the frame. What is there is so beautiful and ought to be enhanced. The acre that could be used for off leash is already fenced, very near the parking lot, out of the way and if you do not have tiny runs it won't turn into a mud pit.

Susan Golub disagrees with the off leash dog area in Gas Works Park.. A commitment has been made to people through the Pro Parks levy and we cannot rightfully make such a dramatic change in the purpose of a park. Areas have been specified in Pro Parks for off leash areas in the city. The Department has made a good faith effort to find another nearby site that does not conflict with Pro Parks money. If the park area is made into an off leash area you lose the connection and an open space. You do not get what you told people what you are going to do in that area.

James Fearn stated aside from the commitment to the voters, the off leash area is really a thing of itself and removes that portion of the park for public use. He is a dog fan but once an area is committed for off leash it would become a different park experience and he does not think it is appropriate. The Park is not off limits to dogs, it is just off limit to dogs off leash.

Kathleen Warren stated the Pro Parks money is spelled out. There is an Opportunity Fund set aside for things that were not anticipated but it is fairly specific. The Pro Parks Committee of 27 people spent two years trying to figure out how the levy money should be spent. The language was quite specific. Kathleen stated at Jefferson Park when they wanted to put in soccer fields in the meadow area, she voted against it because that was not committed to in the Pro Parks levy, even though there is a soccer field need It is not simply the issue of money can you juggle it around but the issue of intent. What was the vision of Gas Works and did it include an off leash area. There are 100,000 dogs in the City of Seattle but it is like other needs that might exist you can never meet. Kathleen mentioned one woman has three dogs. Is the Department responsible for the person who chooses to have three dogs in the city and find a place for those dogs to play. There are three off leash areas in that sector of the city.

Sarah Neilson agrees in a lot of ways with what Kate Pflaumer stated. She thinks the plaza and Wallingford Steps connection to the park is important. The connection is so that people can leave the neighborhood and enter the somewhat oasis of the park through the landmark trees. They do not need a view of the mound from the Wallingford Steps. The Department should maximize that connectivity while preserving every tree and even plant more. Sarah agrees with Kate about rather than having an entire new pathway, keep the same walkway, perhaps with cuts into the containment area so that area can continue as a picnic area. Sarah strongly opposes removal of trees to change the view. Sarah is not opposed to having a small off leash dog area. She suggests having a temporary dog area and see how the dog owners commit to stewarding that space for a year or two. Sarah is concerned about the toxic materials under the ground and wants to assure that area is capped with soil and gravel and other materials. Sarah asked if the cuts along the sidewalk would be on grade or steps. The area would be graded under the current proposal.

Guy Michaelson, Berger & Associates landscape architect, briefed the board of the containment area. It used to be sunken below ground. During the construction of the park it was the dumping ground for concrete and debris, which brought it up to grade. It is his understanding that some soil was imported which could be used as a cover system but it proved to have inappropriate qualities. The soil was moved to the northwest corner and spread out. From the budget standpoint the Department cannot touch any contamination issues. Scattered testing shows no surface contamination prior to the spreading of the dirt in the northwest corner. The wells do show contamination below soil levels. They are only going to grade and work within that imported fill because they do not want to touch anything below existing grade.

Susan Golub asked Michael Shiosaki to show on the display board where the existing trail is located.

Guy Michaelson stated the proposal is a result of a long design process. People loved the idea of a strong connection from Wallingford Steps and a strong axis being formed. The preferred concept is the merging of three concepts. People have said to have a visual axis is one thing but the path need not have that strong of a relation to the visual axis. He has a concern to put in an entrance but then to route people to an edge, which is really a sidewalk along the parking lot. He likes the idea of passing through a portal and being enveloped in the park and not the parking lot.

Michael Shiosaki referenced the levy language which states "and create a connection to Wallingford Steps."

Guy Michaelson stated the layout of the trail can be manipulated and woven around more trees. It begins to depart from the linear design process. At the first two community meetings the removal of trees was widely accepted and endorsed. People embraced the idea of the park opening. The architect can go back and take a look at how the path can be redesigned to save more trees. It starts to change some of the premises of the design.

James Fearn asked what the overall net loss or gain of trees. 24 are designated for removal and 98 proposed new trees.

Sarah Neilson inquired about how many were landmark cedars along the railroad. There are 15. Michael Shiosaki stated because the trees are landmark does not mean they cannot be changes to Gas Works Park. Landmarks did approve the removal of the trees.

James Fearn thinks the design of the park is an improvement of what is there. The question is, is it worth the trees? All the trees are going to go down in time. If you look at it in the long term, with the replacement of the trees, he thinks the whole thing will be an improvement. No old growth forest is being lost. There is not net loss of trees. It is far better to have the better design, lose the existing trees, replace the trees and put additional trees in other locations and the whole park will be better as a result.

Kathleen Warren stated one thing she noticed about the e-mail is it is hard to talk about taking down trees. The Park Board has been very adamant about cutting down trees for views. She referenced one e-mail that the Park Board was going to cut down all the trees for private views. She is not discounting public involvement or people's concern for the trees but how the message is first presented is important. Have all the people looked at the full plan. There have been opportunities for neighborhood involvement. The Department never cuts trees in any cavalier fashion.

Kathleen Bragdon noted there is also the view within the park and from the water that needs to be considered.

Kate Pflaumer thinks the original framing is valuable and she would like to see trees replaced in the chunk that has been cut out. She would like to maintain the historic sense of the right of way that the railroad went through here in the same way that we have preserved the historic gas works buildings because it is a sense of what the park was previously. It frames off the park when you are in the water looking in and when you are in the rest of the park and the mound you have a sense you are in this framed space. She realizes the challenges to connect that up with the northwest corner but she thinks the challenge can be met without losing that sense of the gem of Gas Works Park and the connection to the water.

Susan Golub stated what you have to weigh is the value of a public view from the mound area in the corner. The only way we would take out trees is to preserve a public view. Now it happens there is a spill over and there are some private views that gain from that but the Board needs to decide if preserving a public view is important enough to take out the trees. The park was created to have the diagonal view.

Kate Pflaumer stated you have think about the other end of the view. You are in Gas Works Park and look up and instead of looking at a lovely frame of trees you are looking at a condominium. You have to look at view both ways.

Sarah Neilson would like to see the trees remain and the additional trees planted. So rather than see a net gain of 70 there would be a net gain of 90. A slight adjustment of the new path would definitely create the same entrance in the Sycamore section.

Kathleen Warren moved that there not be an off leash area in the park itself. James Fearn seconded the motion. The motion was approved 3-2. Kathleen Warren, James Fearn and Susan Golub voted in favor of the motion. Sarah Neilson and Kate Pflaumer voted against the motion.

James Fearn moved approval of the proposed design. Kathleen Warren seconded the motion. Discussion: Sarah Neilson disagrees with cutting down 24 trees for a view. Bruce Bentley stated he is not convinced the trees need to be removed and we need to add as many trees as possible. He thinks having the park open up as you walk into it needs to be preserved. Susan Golub related she does not like the idea of the trail in the parking lot. She can see bringing the trail through the park on the axis is it is now and once you get below the parking lot cutting over. Ken Bounds stated it sounds like conceptually the trade off is opening the view up as one choice and the other is the physical connection proposed by designers. Guy Michaelson stated it is a departure from the linear design process, which was approved by the community up until the third meeting. The space was designed to look at the cracking towers. Jogging the path is doable but his concern would be what does that do to the validity of the other premises of the design that has been developed thus far. Kate Pflaumer stated the meetings were 90% about the dogs off leash area. Susan Golub stated there are always people who come in at the last minute. There was a lot of community notice and process. The recent public concern is a legitimate concern but it does not say that what has gone on is not the good and valid process that came up with a good plan. Ken Bounds stated the design is conceptual and the Board can say they want the Department to go back and look at the alternatives and come back to the Board. If the Board desires to keep the trees than keeping the visual connection that can be taken back through the design process and return to the Board showing the issues and the tradeoffs. There will be a public review in the design process. Sarah Neilson thinks this can be a space that can function as a nice park area without everyone in that space being able to see all of the other features of Gas Works. **The Board voted 0 for and 5 against approval of the proposed design. Motion failed.**

James Fearn moved that the existing plan be reviewed to determine what design changes can be made to preserve the maximum number of trees. Kathleen Warren seconded the motion. Discussion: Sarah Neilson made a friendly amendment that would include a couple of different versions with at least one stating zero trees be removed. James has a problem with that motion amendment as it makes the wrong thing a priority in his motion. Kathleen Warren suggested a friendly amendment to the motion to include some acknowledgment of the various conflicting views of the neighbors. The proposed plan does include what a number of neighbors desire and on the other side are neighbors who want zero trees removed. She would like to acknowledge the Board is sending the design proposal back because the Board cannot find a comfort level with what is being presented and it is hearing very different points of view from people who live near the park and love that park. The friendly amendment was not acceptable to James. He would

like to know what are the maximum number of trees that can be preserved in order to have the design. After the Board has that information it can better move forward. **The Board unanimously approved the motion.**

Michael Shiosaki stated there will be a community meeting in the neighborhood before the design comes back to the Park Board for a recommendation. Notices will be published.

Old/New Business: None

Items of Interest to the Board

Susan Golub acknowledged receipt of the First Tee invitation to attend their April 23, 1:30 p.m. event at Jefferson. She requested the Jefferson Clubhouse broken window and overall cleanliness be addressed prior to the event..

Terry Holme is awaiting word for his Board appointment hearing before the PEL City Council Committee. The next PEL meeting is scheduled for April 23 but he has not heard if he is on the agenda.

Susan Golub is excused from the April 24 Park Board meeting.

The Mayor has scheduled a Boards and Commissions reception on June 9, from 5-7 p.m., in the Benaroya Hall Grand Lobby.

Sarah Neilson will like a Myrtle Edwards Park status report, information regarding installation of bike racks at the Green Lake/Lower Woodland Park and also have a Skateboard Parks briefing.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

APPROVED _____ DATE _____
Bruce Bentley, Chair