

**Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
April 8, 2004**

Present: Bruce Bentley, Chair
James Fearn
Joanna Grist
Terry Holme
Sarah Neilson
Kate Pflaumer

Staff: Ken Bounds, Superintendent
Sandy Brooks, Park Board Coordinator

Note: Archived agendas and minutes from January 2000 to present may be viewed online at
<http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/parkboard>

The meeting was held at the South Lake Union Armory. Chair Bruce Bentley called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. **Terry moved, and James seconded, that the April 8 agenda, March 25 minutes, and acknowledgment of correspondence be approved. The vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.**

Superintendent's Report

Parks Superintendent Ken Bounds reported on the following:

Geese Control on Park Property Agreement: Ken distributed copies of the agreement signed with PAWS and the Humane Society pilot program for geese control on Parks property. The geese population is down this year at five parks: South Lake Union, Gas Works Park, and three swim beaches. For more information, please see: http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/communitynotices/2004/969_Seattle_Parks_Superintendent_Announces_Partnership_for_Goose_Control.htm

Downtown Park Project: The enhancement work at Freeway Park is going great, with a successful volunteer effort on April 7 to remove ivy, add mulch, and install new plantings. This followed two weeks of work by Parks Department crews at the site. The new off-leash area at Regrade Park is being well used. For more information, please see: http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/parks/communitynotices/current/view/View_46_3-5-2004.htm#3

Seacrest SCUBA: Parks staff will send a courtesy letter to 120 organizations and businesses that use Seacrest Park for access to Elliott Bay and the favorable diving conditions there. The popularity of the site has generated an increased number of citizen complaints about overuse and impacts on the neighborhood. The letter educates users about courtesies for use and laws in effect for the site. For more information on Seacrest Park, please see: <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/Boats/seacrest.htm>

Environmental Stewardship: Ken distributed Earth Month posters to the Board. The Parks Department has partnered with the National Parks Service, EarthCorps, Seattle City Light, Seattle Department of Transportation, Seattle Public Utilities, and the Office for Sustainability and Environment to produce and distribute (through City mail and a private events posting company) these "Earth Month 2004" posters, which aim to increase the public's participation in City Earth Month events and spread awareness of what the City is doing on behalf of the environment every day. The Department also has an Earth Month Calendar of Events web page that lists information for more than 175 events. For more information, please see:

<http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/environment/earth.htm>

Green Lake Alum Treatment: The alum treatment was successfully completed on the morning of April 7, after application of approximately 440,000 gallons of aluminum sulfate and sodium aluminate. Water quality improved markedly! The water is a glacial turquoise color and we are now able to see shopping carts, bikes, garbage cans, bottles, and other items on the bottom on the lake. Plans are being developed to invite volunteer SCUBA groups to help with the cleanup. <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/maintenance/greenlakealum.htm>

Van Asselt Community Center: Seattle Parks and Recreation has begun the first stages of the levy-funded Van Asselt Community Center expansion. The community center expansion is funded by 1999 Community Center Levy, which allocates \$3.9 million for about an 8,800-square-foot addition to the existing facility. Recently, Parks held the first Project Advisory Team (PAT) meeting, comprised of various stakeholders who make up this culturally diverse community in south Seattle. For more information, please see:

http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/Centers/current/Van_Asselt_Community_Center.htm

Youth Appreciation Week Awards: A diverse group of parents and teens were pleased to have the opportunity to visit with Mayor Nickels on Monday, April 5 at South Lake Union. The Mayor took the time to talk individually with each award winner. Park Board President Bruce Bentley spoke to the group as did the Mayor. For more information, please see:

http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/parks/communitynotices/2004/972_Youth_Appreciation_Week_-_engages_youth_on_spring_break.htm

Sand Point: The program brochure is out and looks great. We now have a fingers crossed that people will start registering for the classes. We have paid for banners to hang on the fence along Sand Point Way to announce to the neighborhood that the center is open. To view the on-line brochure, please see:

<http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/centers/SandPoint/Spring04.pdf>

Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience

Bruce explained that the general public comment portion of the agenda is reserved for topics that have not had or are not scheduled for a public hearing. No personal attacks are allowed. Testimony is limited to three minutes per speaker. Three people signed up to testify. A short summary of the testimony follows:

James Cole: He urged that the Scandinavian/maritime heritage be honored in the re-design of Bergen Place Park in Ballard. He has lived in Ballard for 25 years and spoke at length about the importance of this heritage and what it means to Ballard.

Bruce asked Parks staff member Cathy Tuttle for a brief description of this project. Cathy explained that Bergen Place is located about two blocks south of the Ballard Civic Center Park site, right on Market Street. Bruce stated that the Board of Park Commissioners heard an early briefing on this project about six months ago. The Park Board asked Cathy to provide a briefing on Bergen Place Park at the May 13 Park Board meeting.

(Note: Bergen Place Park opened to the public on April 20, 2004 and the Board was last briefed on Bergen Place Park project at its March 13, 2003, meeting. To view these minutes, please see: http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/ParkBoard/minutes/2003/03-13-03_Minutes.htm)

Lee Airhart: He urged that the mural currently at Bergen Place Park remain. He is a marine surveyor, Ballard citizen, and business person. The waterfront is Ballard history and part of the community. He stated that the Parks Department does not want to keep the mural.

Doug Nixon: Urged that the mural remain in Bergen Place. He is a manager at Pacific Fish and his heritage is fishing. He discussed the history and importance of the fishing industry to Ballard. The mural will now be a slotted viewing area. He requested that the Bergen Place project be adequately funded so the mural remains. He does not want the type of art that was installed at the Ballard Bridge. If this happens, he promises a backlash and ended his testimony by shouting at the Commissioners “You blew it! And you’ve got to stop - NOW!” This was followed by applause from some audience members.

Bruce stated emphatically that the Board has blown nothing. The Board of Park Commissioners involvement in the current Bergen Park project was an early project briefing six months ago. He reminded the speaker that the Board is a volunteer advisory group to the Department of Parks and Recreation and does not set the budget for projects.

Oral Communication testimony ended. Bruce stated that the next agenda item is a briefing on Ballard Civic Center Park project from Parks Department staff, followed by a public hearing.

Briefing/Public Hearing: Ballard Civic Center Park

Cathy Tuttle, Parks Department project manager, and Michael Shiosaki, Pro Parks Levy Manager, came before the Board to give a briefing on the Ballard Civic Center Park. The Board received both a written and verbal briefing. Both are included in these minutes.

Written Briefing

Action Requested

On April 8, Parks staff will provide a briefing and a public hearing will be conducted on the Ballard Civic Center park development.

On May 13, the Ballard Civic Center park project will return to the Park Board for a recommendation on the proposed park uses within the preferred schematic development plan for the new park.

Project Intent

The Pro Parks Levy provides \$2,474,000 to plan, design and construct a new Ballard Civic Center park at 5701 22nd Avenue NW on the site of a former Safeway two blocks north of NW Market Street.

The project description within the Pro Parks Levy states: “*Develop a park in conjunction with the Ballard Municipal Center development.*”

Project Background

The idea to create a central Ballard park grew out of the 1998 Crown Hill/Ballard Neighborhood Plan and was refined by the community in the Ballard Municipal Center Master Plan, approved by City Council in 2000. The Master Plan recommended the creation of a passive park within the Hub Urban Village to become the centerpiece of a new Ballard Civic Center, a park “characterized by a broad lawn for public gatherings and linked to the surrounding neighborhoods by pedestrian-friendly sidewalks.” The plan also made clear that “the actual design of the park will be determined in a design process that will be held after a site for the park has been acquired.”

In 2000, a group of skateboard enthusiasts approached the Ballard District Council, the Department of Neighborhoods, and Seattle Parks and Recreation about the possibility of locating a temporary street skate plaza on the park site (the old Safeway parking lot). The skateboard park was approved by all parties on a temporary basis. Later, the skateboard park group successfully petitioned and raised money to expand the skateboard park to include a bowl and a BMX bike jump.

The new park will be located across the street from the new Ballard Library and Neighborhood Service Center, and adjacent to a proposed mixed-use development that will combine retail and housing in a seven-story building. Approximately 270 apartment units are proposed for the mixed-use development.

Design

The Ballard Municipal Center Master Plan made specific design recommendations for both the park and surrounding sidewalks of landscaping, lighting, and furnishings. The Master Plan recommended a water feature, kiosk, and restrooms. Parking was not recommended as “the park is intended to primarily serve the surrounding residential and commercial neighborhoods.” At three community meetings, the park design evolved from the Master Plan vision of a passive park to a more active park. Elements were added to serve community needs including water swales and water drums, an artist-designed play area, a large amphitheater, lawn, paved entry plaza, and a contained street skate plaza. The preferred schematic design for Ballard Civic Center Park was approved by Parks staff and was presented to the community on March 9, 2004, by Parks staff and Swift & Company Landscape Architects. The staff-preferred schematic was reviewed by the Seattle Design Commission on March 18 and minor modifications to the design were made in response to the Design Commission’s directive to connect the park to the Ballard Library and modify the size of the amphitheater. The staff-preferred schematic design is on-line at <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/proparks/projects/ballardMunicipalCenterPark.htm>

Public Process

The design for Ballard Civic Center Park was developed by Swift & Company Landscape Architects, with input from three well-attended community meetings, Parks staff, and two Seattle Design Commission meetings. In addition, Parks staff met separately with residents adjacent to the park, with the QFC-Security Properties redevelopment team, Ballard High School students, Ballard Library staff, Ballard Chamber of Commerce, Ballard District Council, and the Ballard Civic Center Steering Committee.

Project Schedule

Construction documents will be completed in the fall of 2004. Park construction will begin in January 2005 and be completed by the end of 2005.

Project Budget

The Pro Parks Levy provides \$2,474,000 to plan, design and construct a new Ballard Civic Center park.

Additional Information

Cathy Tuttle, Seattle Parks Planner, 684-7033; or cathy.tuttle@seattle.gov

Verbal Briefing

Parks staff displayed a number of large drawings for the Board and public to view. Michael Shiosaki and Cathy Tuttle are presenting the schematic plan for the Ballard Civic Center Park. \$2.47 million in the Pro Parks Levy has been earmarked for this project. Cathy described the surrounding site. The Board received an early project briefing on November 13, 2003. (To read the minutes from this meeting, please see: http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/ParkBoard/minutes/2003/11-13-03_Minutes.htm)

Cathy discussed the adjacent Ballard area: Ballard already has high residential and commercial density and much more growth is anticipated in the Civic Center. More than 1000 residential units are currently in planning or design

review in or adjacent to the Civic Center including the adjacent QFC retail/apartment complex with 270 unit. The Neighborhood Service Center (NSC) and new Ballard Library across the street from the park are currently under construction. The Ballard Civic Center Master Plan encourages pedestrian access throughout this Hub Urban Village.

Next Cathy and Michael presented a PowerPoint presentation and discussed the evolution of the plans. The PowerPoint slides consisted of the following:

[Ballard Civic Center Park Municipal Center Master Plan \(drawing\)](#)

Pro Parks Levy language for the park reads “develop public park in conjunction with the Ballard Municipal Center development.” A temporary skate park was constructed in 2001 with funds from Neighborhood Matching Fund, Parks and the community, and occupies about 10% of the site.

[Ballard Civic Center Park Site Analysis \(drawing\)](#)

Staff pointed out the four sides of the park. On the north is residential property zoned to 60’, including apartments, senior housing and more single family housing to the north. To the east is a church and the new library and NSC. To the south is retail, which is zoned for mixed-use development to 65’. To the west is the QFC development of mixed-use residential development along the park edge planned for construction in 2005. The implication is lots of eyes looking on the park and a large potential-user population.

Staff described site characteristics of this project site as being a simple tilted plane with exposure to the storm/weather systems from the south. Sun and shadow will be significantly impacted by the build-out of the surrounding properties, resulting in shading in late fall through late spring. The sunniest areas will be in the east and northeast area of the site. Light and noise will be limited by the adjoining buildings. Street trees will surround the site and parking exists on all sides.

Market Street, two blocks to the south is the main retail corridor of Ballard and will bring many people to the park. Many users of this park will also come from nearby apartments and condos. These residents won’t have yards and will use the park as their yard. The northeast corner will be the sunniest area in the evening.

[Public process \(photo\)](#)

The three community meetings were very well attended. Cathy was impressed with the civility at these meeting, the respect that attendees had for each other, and their willingness to work together. During the three community meetings, approximately 1,000 community comments were recorded, with 700 of these comments either supporting or discouraging the skate element.

[Ballard Civic Center Park Design Principles](#)

Design principles were developed based on input from the first public meeting. Michael and Cathy described the design principles as:

- Generous civic open space that will endure for the next 100 years
- Welcoming and will provide for the diversity of ages, races, and abilities
- Gathering place for the community
- Safe, inviting place
- Connections to the surrounding community
- Relationship to natural surroundings
- Capture and celebrate the special character of Ballard

[Ballard Civic Center Park \(Three\) Alternatives](#)

At the second public meeting, three alternatives were presented. Alternatives are not considered possible final designs. Rather, these alternatives were presented as diagrams illustrating possible park elements and uses such as:

- Active to passive
- Green to hardscape

- Simple to complex form
- Skate bowl or no skate bowl

Two of the alternatives presented showed a skate area and one did not.

1. Alternative 1 is the most passive and green park.
2. Alternative 2 moved the active skate area of the park closer to the logical active zone in the east.
3. Alternative 3 tested the implications of keeping the bowl. Alternative 3 was rejected because:
 - noise impacts on current and future residential areas
 - Grading would need to be designed around the bowl instead of following the natural flow of the land-- the grade of the current skate bowl would drive the design of the park, rather than the opposite.
 - the active part of the park would be in the west corner in the logical active zone in the east rather than towards the civic center.

Ballard Civic Center Park Staff-Recommended Schematic

Michael discussed schematic plan and stated that in developing the plan, staff looked at the long-term uses and making the park be a good neighbor. A goal of the park is to “feel empty when it’s full, and seem full when it is empty.”

The preferred alternative was presented at the March 9 community meeting. Cathy and Michael pointed to the various areas of the park on the PowerPoint-displayed drawing. These included a plaza, lawn area, pathways, street skate plaza, small ampitheater that can expand to include entire park for large events, buffer of trees, new sidewalks, and street trees. Since this drawing was presented at the March 9 community meeting, some changes have been made to the schematic. Parks staff listed the changes and refinements.

Discussion continued about the skatebowl. If Parks staff had known that it would become a permanent element of the Civic Center Park, the temporary bowl would not have been located at its current site. It is 4’ higher than the sidewalk. Staff and designers began with the Master Plan to find the right elements for this park but modified the plan based on input from community meetings.

On May 13, Cathy and Michael will come back before the Board and request the Board to discuss the plan and make a recommendation to the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation.

Board Questions and Answers

Kate stated that staff gave four alternatives, but the Board has heard mostly about the skatebowl. Was the bowl the focus of the large community meetings? Cathy answered yes, that of 1000 recorded community comments, about 700 comments have been received regarding the bowl. Most of the other comments have focused on the water feature, adherence to the Master Plan, and the lawn. Parks staff and the designers have tested the waters as to whether citizens wanted an active vs. a passive park. Alternative 1 is the most passive and all stakeholders opposed this plan.

Kate referred again to alternatives 2 and 3 and asked Cathy to detail the amount of space required for the skate facility. Cathy answered that the current skate site uses 6,050 sq. ft., which is 10% of the site. In comparison the skate facility at Seattle Center is 9,000 sq. ft. Of this 6,050 sq. ft, 1,800 sq. ft. is the footprint only of the skate bowl. Kate asked if alternatives 2 and 3 both include a skatebowl. Cathy answered that they both include a skate area. Kate asked if the community meetings favored a bowl or street skating. Cathy answered that there are more street skaters than bowl skaters. There were shouts of disagreement from the audience. Cathy clarified that the Ballard skaters want to keep the bowl but more recreational skaters are street skaters.

Kate stated that the Board has read all of the many e-mails and other correspondence it has received on this park and the audience applauded.

Cathy stated that the Parks Superintendent's office has formed a Skate Advisory Committee, a citizen's skate advocacy group. A potential site for a new skate bowl would be at Woodland Park. Skate parks are definitely needed and should be distributed throughout the city.

James asked when would the Woodland Park site be built. Michael answered that staff are working on grants and Neighborhood Matching Funds and the site might be built in 2005. James asked if any other sites in Ballard have been identified as potential skatebowl sites. Michael answered that a site on Holman Road is a possibility. James asked, if Parks went with the preferred alternative, could the bowl be left until other sites come on-line. Michael answered that ground should be broken on the Civic Center project early next year (2005) and, due to the grade of the current skatebowl, it isn't very feasible to leave the bowl and remove it later. James asked more questions on the grade.

Terry asked how long the construction of the park project would last. Michael answered 11-12 months including the site closure, demolition, and construction.

Terry asked for an explanation of the restroom issue. Michael answered that the issue is that restrooms are planned inside the Neighborhood Service Center/Library area, but no outdoor facility is planned.

Park staff will bring the following information to the May 13 Park Board meeting:

1. A review of Ballard green space deficits (based on existing Citywide green space report and future planned acquisitions).
2. A report on what's going on with Ballard Scandinavian elements.
3. A report on adjacent property owners and zoning issues.
4. Bowl costs
 - The cost to move the bowl
 - The cost and construction methods (including scheduling issues) to leave the bowl open during construction
 - The cost of building a new bowl

Bruce reminded the Board that it will hold its full discussion/recommendation on May 13 and requested that the public hearing begin.

Public Hearing

Bruce instructed speakers that they are called to testify in the order signed up and may give up to three minutes of testimony and each speaker will be timed. Speakers were asked to turn in the information card (containing name and contact information) as they were called to speak. He reminded the audience that comments should be concise, contain no personal attacks, and be respectful. 43 people testified. A brief summary of comments is included below:

Beth Miller: Supports the preferred alternative plan presented by Parks staff. She is a Ballard resident, landscape architect, and president of the Ballard Chamber of Commerce. This plan represents 10 years of neighborhood planning and the City's promise that if Ballard would accept urban density, Ballard would receive mitigation in the form of this park. Some say that Ballard is changing and she agrees that it is. She believes this plan is forward looking and forward thinking. This park should be the nucleus of the Ballard Civic Center design. She recommends that the Board vote its approval of the preferred alternative.

Matthew Johnson: Keep the skatebowl. He asked that the Board not only honor the years of work by the Ballard Chamber of Commerce, but that it also honor the efforts of the skaters. He is a skateboarder, member of Puget Sound Skaters Association, and Ballard business owner. He asked the Board to be attentive to who is opposing the skatebowl and believes it is the nearby financial interests. Consider the backlash if the skatebowl is removed. There

has been much involvement, from both young and old. Skateboarding is a deterrent against obesity. It is not a fad and will not go away — it is the future.

Scott Chinn: Keep the skatebowl and build additional ones; he presented an alternative plan, “Parents for Bowls”, for the Board’s consideration and believes this plan will work for all. He is a parent from Ballard Bowl and became involved in the efforts to keep the skatebowl a few months ago. He began using the bowl for exercise. His two- and five-year old kids are also using it to skate. Skateboarding builds skills and inter-relationships. .

Jason Harrison: Keep the skatebowl and build more. He is a member of PSSA and skates at the bowl. He used to be on the streets and skating gave him focus. He doesn’t want other kids on the street like he was.

Sue Allegra: Supports the preferred alternative. She is the president of the Ballard Chamber of Commerce and a Ballard merchant. She rode her first skateboard in 1962 and her kids skateboard. She discussed the history of the master plan for the area, when former Mayor Norm Rice talked about creating an urban village in Ballard. This park was meant to serve the needs of those who live within 1/8 mile of the park, many of whom have or will have no yards. She loves the alternative of keeping the skatebowl, but the park must serve those people living nearby.

Nancy Martin: Keep the skatebowl. Her kids are skaters and she takes them to the park to skate. Being at this skate bowl is a very positive experience. It would be dangerous to disturb the magic at this site. In her experience, the bowl is not noisy.

Kate Martin: Keep the skatebowl. She read testimony that she had e-mailed to the Board earlier in the day. She believes the bowl fits well. She urged that designers look both forward and backwards and design for now and for the future. Support exercise for everyone. Activities are what activate spaces — not sculptures. Don’t push kids into alleyways and places that adults would not want to go in order to skate. Keep this very successful little gem of a skatebowl.

James Arasim: Keep the skatebowl. He has had two mental breakdowns and went through very bad times. He finds solace at the skatebowl. He suggested that the Department could save money by keeping the skatebowl, putting a cover over it, and planting greenery on top.

Micah Shapiro: Keep the skatebowl. He is a member of PSSA and a Seattle resident. The skatebowl only uses 3% of the park. Other people’s vision is being pushed onto the skaters. The skaters’ vision is to keep the bowl. The skatebowl that was built in the 1990s was supposed to be temporary; however, it has turned out to be something different. The main opposition to the bowl is from businesses next door. PSSA has collected 4,000 names on a petition to keep the skatebowl at its current site and he presented a copy of the petition to the Commissioners. Micah stated that he can drive himself to other skatebowls, but younger kids in the Ballard area cannot. He has joined the Park Department’s skatebowl advisory committee and realizes that new skatebowls are years in the future. Many voices have spoken to keeping the skatebowl — please listen.

Marshall Reid: Keep the skatebowl. He began skating 21 years ago in Seattle. In 1999, he was interviewed for a newspaper article on skateboarding. In 2001 skateboarding was banned at Westlake Park in downtown Seattle. A big crime wave (graffiti, drugs) followed this action. Two years later, in 2003, SeaSkate Park near Seattle Center opened. During this two-year interim, lives were ruined when kids didn’t have a skatebowl to use and turned to drugs and graffiti to get high. There is a skatebowl now in Ballard — he is begging the Board don’t take this away from the kids.

Mike Shaunessy: Keep the skatebowl. He has been a skater for 30 years and a business owner for 15. If he were a Parks staff member, he would be embarrassed. The small towns of Milton and Carnation both have better skate facilities than Seattle. It is unbelievable that the City would demolish the skatebowl to allow for a plaza with “features.”

Pat Wickline: Compromise with Scott Chinn’s “Parents for Bowls” plan. He is a Ballard resident and doesn’t believe that a plan has been presented yet that would work for both. However, Scott’s plan would. The benefits would be that all parties would have to compromise.

Branko Kukolja: Keep the skatebowl. He lives in Sunset Hill in Ballard and his family supports keeping the skatebowl. The community has made its wishes clear. Since when does the Ballard Chamber of Commerce speak for him? He looked at the Chamber’s web site and learned that there are 360 members, with one private individual and the remainder representing pro-business owners. He is outraged that the Chamber purports to represent the community of Ballard and asked that the Parks Department not be duped by this claim.

David Holcomb: Keep the skatebowl. He is the CEO of Shephard Association, a skateboarding company, and a Seattle resident. He began skateboarding in the 1970s and, because skateboarders were not welcome, he skated at night.

Keri Clark: Keep the skatebowl. She is a Ballard resident and Ballard business owner. If the Parks Department takes away the skatebowl, it sets a precedent. A number of Olympic ski champions started out as skateboarders. She believes removing the skatebowl is downright un-American.

Elizabeth Douglas: Supports the preferred plan. She has lived in Ballard for 20 years and her home is four blocks from the proposed park. She is delighted to have the Civic Center Park being built. She doesn’t understand the controversy — as a resident, she knew the skatebowl was agreed to be a temporary site. If she had known that there would be this effort to make it permanent, there would have been more resistance to the temporary location. She believes that the supporters of making the skatebowl permanent are a very small, but vocal, group. She walks by the skatebowl at least once a week and on three occasions has seen skaters skating on the sidewalks. She doesn’t believe the skatebowl is a good fit for the proposed park.

Kelly O’Neill: Keep the skatebowl. If the skatebowl is removed, skaters will be skating on the sidewalks and streets. The skatebowl was built by the community, utilizing Neighborhood Matching Funds, and is working well. Just because it was built as a temporary site, don’t tear it down now – that would be fiscally irresponsible. Instead, ask the QFC grocery store to adapt its design to respect what has already been built. A compromise, to cut down on the noise from the bowl, would be to put a roof on top of it. Skaters are good neighbors. If the skatebowl is destroyed, they will become cynical of City government. The kids here tonight made an investment in the bowl. She urged the Board to consider the 4,000 signatures in support and that there is only one other skatebowl park in Seattle.

Mark Servine: Keep the skatebowl. He is a member of PSSA and stated that the bowl has now become a part of Ballard like Golden Gardens, the Nordic Heritage Museum, and other Ballard sites. He thinks the Park Department made a hollow promise to the skaters. Mark referred to a well-known skater, Scott, whose ashes are included in the Ballard skate bowl.

Eric Franklin: Supports Scott Chinn’s alternative plan, “Parents for Bowls.” He is a 20-year Ballard resident who voted for the various levies. He believes that Scott’s alternative offers something to everyone in Ballard. The community has waited a long time for this park. Make it be the most benefit to the largest number of people. Do the greatest good in the decision. The future owners of the condos to be built near this park cannot speak for themselves tonight on whether they would want the skatebowl. He commended the Parks Department for their fine design.

Janet Erickson: Keep the skatebowl. She is a mother of skateboarders and thanked the Board of Park Commissioners for its work. She compared the inclusion of the skatebowl into the park design with a hypothetical request from a homeowner to an interior designer to bring the well-loved “beige recliner” to the new home being designed and being told by the designer that it doesn’t fit with the designer’s plan. Don’t forget that this is a home. The skatebowl is wonderful — build the new park around it.

Stan Larsen: Keep the skatebowl. He is 50 years old and a Seattle resident. When the Interbay park area was being designed in the 1970s, only golf was discussed and not a skatebowl. He hopes that skatebowls become a frequent part of Seattle parks.

Eric Fiscus: Keep the skatebowl. He is a skateboarder and asks the designers of the preferred plan to go back to the drawing board. He commends the builders of the skatebowl and believes it should be preserved as an historical landmark. He compared tearing down the skatebowl as being identical to tearing down the Space Needle in order to put up a parking lot. The skatebowl only uses a small area of the park. He recommended that the bowl remain and that trees be planted around it.

Doug Dixon: Include fishing/maritime/Scandinavian influence in the design. He reminded the Board that he spoke earlier in the evening, during Oral Communications, regarding the lack of this influence in the design of Bergen Place Park. Again, at Ballard Civic Center Park, there is no attention to this element. Don't mess with Ballard! He is also a member of the Ballard Chamber of Commerce. He referred to the Wiwona historic boat and stated that some people object to its preservation, as they do not want to deal with the sand and dust that would be incurred during a restoration.

Duane Esperum: Keep the skatebowl and include Scandinavian influence in the design. He is Vice-president of the Leif Erickson Lodge #1 Sons of Norway, with 1700 alive and active members. The Lodge, which donated funds to help build the skatebowl, is happy with the site. He asked why the skaters aren't better maintaining the bowl (as was agreed when it was built), as reported in the local paper. He voiced concerns/observations on the following: there is no Scandinavian heritage reflected in the design, noise is a problem at night from the skatebowl but not during the day, and parking is an issue. He suggested that a solution would be to install underground parking at the park.

Victoria Sangrey: Include Scandinavian and maritime influence in the design; skaters need their own park. She is a Ballard resident and single mother of two teenagers. She is shocked at the negative comments about the maritime industry at previous meetings regarding this park's design. She requested that the Scandinavian and maritime history be respected at this new park. She referred to the poles and signs posted at nearby Bergen Place Park and the graffiti problem. She believes skaters need a park of their own.

Megan Eymann: Include maritime influence in the design. She is a Ballard resident, works in the maritime industry, and has Scandinavian ties. These are still strong influences in Ballard and should be reflected in the park design.

Rick Dennler: Keep the skatebowl. He is almost 50 years old and has three sons in the audience tonight. He has recently started skating and has taken his kids to numerous skatebowl parks. He has observed that at the Ballard site, unlike some others they have experienced, older and younger kids really get along, with the older kids mentoring and applauding the efforts of the younger kids. He appreciates the hard work that is going into this new park and also appreciates the Board of Park Commissioners decision process. This is more than a skatebowl – it has heart in it and a family has built around it. Expand on this, don't get rid of it.

Jeanne Muir: Supports the Master Plan. She is a Ballard homeowner and a Fremont community activist. She met onsite with Matt (a skatebowl supporter) and looked at the skatebowl. She believes this is a good process and recommends that those involved keep talking.

Bernadette Roberts: Keep the skatebowl. She is a Ballard resident who works part-time, has kids, and writes plans. When citizens have a great idea don't say "this is not part of my plan; instead, say thanks for doing my job." She believes that the areas with the highest density population need the most sources for activities. A reasonable design plan could make this work. Noise is not an issue at the skatebowl. A two-foot wall is not a good plan for the preferred alternative.

Nick Dallett: Keep the skatebowl and include Scandinavian elements in the park. He is a 41-year old skateboarder who lives in Kirkland. Every Saturday and Sunday morning, he drives to Ballard to skate in the bowl. He lives closer to the Carnation skate bowl and it is a good site, but he prefers the Ballard bowl. He has a 2-1/2 year old daughter and hopes she gets to skate someday.

Judith Dern: Include Scandinavian elements in the park. She represents the Norwegian Ladies Chorus of Seattle and presented a petition to the Board. She read a letter from the Nordic Heritage Museum director letter, regarding the lack of Scandinavian influence in Ballard Civic Center and Bergen Place parks. She referred to comments made by the Seattle Design Commission regarding Scandinavian and maritime clichés at these parks. She stated that this is an affront and is disrespectful of this ethnic group. Celebrate the diversity.

Elizabeth Boyle: Keep the skatebowl. She is a retired teacher living on the Eastside (Bellevue.) It is essential that skaters have a place to skate. She is a mom and has five grandchildren. She has found that lots of activity in safe, designated areas helps to keep children out of trouble. The exercise helps ward off childhood diabetes and obesity. Will other skate parks ever be more than a design on paper?

Robert Loe: Include Scandinavian elements in the park. He is a Norwegian from Ballard. The Civic Center design doesn't recognize this community's heritage. It is not too late — Ballard would be more accepting of the park if changes are made to reflect the heritage. Ballard is a tolerant community — other communities would not accept a design that doesn't reflect its heritage.

Michael Wolf: Build a new skatebowl before tearing this one down; include Scandinavian elements in the park. He lives in Ballard and is a skater and bicyclist. He spent lots of time talking with the Ballard Chamber of Commerce. Don't lose sight of the bigger picture.

John Marasco: Supports the preferred alternative. He represents Security Properties which will build the new QFC next to the park. He recognizes the passion for the skate bowl and urges the Parks Department to build a world class facility.

John Foss: Keep the skatebowl. He has lived in Ballard for 4-1/2 years, is Scandinavian, and works in the fishing industry. He stated (tongue-in-cheek) that he represents some Ballard street people who prefer a passive park where they can drink and then sleep it off. Activity from the skatebowl would deter them from these activities, so the street people don't want the skatebowl — they prefer to have trees to give protection for their activities. He also stated that Paul Allen doesn't skate, and he can get anything he wants from the City.

Jenny Hayes: Keep the skatebowl. She has lived in Ballard for five years and believes that most Ballard residents support keeping the bowl. Very measurable support has been shown to keeping the bowl; little support has been shown to demolish it. Shouldn't the City government listen to the community? The Master Plan urges activity and the skatebowl provides activity. The argument seems to be that the skatebowl is not listed in the Master Plan, so it must go.

Mark Early: Keep the skatebowl. He is a Ballard homeowner. He suggested putting a 6" lid on top of the skatebowl as a roof and planting wildflowers on it. Ballard business owners should be surveyed to find out their real preference. The Board should visit the site and assess whether there is a noise impact. He voted for the park levies. He intends to share his beliefs with City Council members, and he believes that senior citizens enjoy watching the skaters.

Chris Hildebrand: Keep the skatebowl. He helped build the Ballard skatebowl and asked the question, why are people so passionate about it? He answered that Seattle is the only major U.S. city with a great skatebowl inside the city limits. Some small towns in the U.S. have great skatebowls, but no other major cities do. He is ashamed that the Parks Department didn't help build the bowl. The volunteers just did it themselves, without permission. There are

currently only two companies in the U.S. that can build skatebowls of this quality. If this bowl goes, skaters will never have it again. It is a gem and a treasure.

Meghan Smith: Keep the skatebowl. She is a long-time Ballard resident and loves the skatebowl. If the bowl isn't to remain, why is a design shown that includes the bowl?

Steve Betten: Keep the skatebowl. He has been skateboarding since 1973 and comes to the Ballard skatebowl every week to skate. It is a gem. Professional skateboarders who visit Seattle always visit the Ballard skatebowl above all the others in the area. He worked with a group of volunteers to build an (unpermitted) skatebowl site in West Seattle and was stopped, at gunpoint, by the police. He is very grieved that the Ballard skatebowl might be demolished. He hopes that he doesn't have to start driving to Oregon to use the skatebowls there. He asked the Board to do what it can to save the bowl and stated that the other community meetings have been a total farce.

Stephen Lundgren: Supports the preferred plan. He is a resident of Ballard and a neighborhood planner for Ballard Civic Center Park since the City of Seattle bought the property for the park. He is the former chair of the Ballard District Council, which is comprised of 24 neighborhood groups. This effort has been a long haul and citizens have been waiting for a long time for the payoff for their hard work. He thinks that red herrings have been tossed out and there are inaccuracies in the park planning. Park land is costly to maintain. This project has been stripped down. He listed fiscal implications from add-ons that were not budgeted for in the design.

Robert Zimmer: Keep the skatebowl and incorporate Scandinavian elements into the design. He stated that skateboarding is a crime in Seattle on streets, bike lanes, or sidewalks. Why destroy a top-notch element that is already paid for? Save the \$50,000 required to tear down the bowl. He is appalled that there is no Scandinavian influence planned for the park and urged that this be expressed in the art and sculpture.

No other speakers requested to testify. The public hearing concluded at 9:00 p.m.

Bruce thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for being passionate about both the skate bowl and the maritime/Scandinavian heritage of Ballard. The Board plans to discuss the Ballard Civic Center Park project at its May 13 meeting and to make a recommendation to the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation.

Park Board Business – Items of Interest to the Board

None

Old/New Business

Board members were unaware of the controversy surrounding the Ballard Civic Center Park and Bergen Place, regarding the maritime, fishing, and Scandinavian aspects, and asked Cathy Tuttle for an update briefing. Cathy will give a 10-minute briefing at the May 13 meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

APPROVED: _____ DATE _____
Bruce Bentley, Chair