

**Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
April 22, 2004**

Present: Bruce Bentley, Chair
Terry Holme
Sarah Neilson

Excused: Joanna Grist
Kate Pflaumer

Absent: James Fearn

Staff: Sarah Welch, Budget Director
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 called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Chair Bruce Bentley. Because a quorum was not present, the April 8 minutes and Acknowledgement of Correspondence will be brought to the May 13 meeting for approval.

Superintendent's Report

Parks Superintendent Ken Bounds was out of town on business. He and several City leaders were in Denver, Colorado, as part of a city exchange. Budget Director Sarah Welch reported that it is snowing in Denver and also reported on the following:

Youth Scholarship Requests for Summer Day Camp: Requests for this summer's youth day camp scholarships are pouring in. Right now we have requests for \$190,000 to be funded as scholarships, and we have \$90,000 available.

Bruce stated that the Advisory Recreation Council (ARC) is discussing how it might be of help to secure additional funds.

Planning for Summer: Mounger Pool opens May 15, followed by Colman Pool on May 29. The summer beaches and wading pools open on June 19. To squeeze the maximum out of our summer beach budget, four beaches will be open for an 11-week season (West Green Lake, Matthews, Madison, and Seward) and three beaches will be open for an eight-week season (Magnuson, Madrona, and Mt. Baker). Both E Green Lake and Pritchard will remain closed because of budget cuts.

Terry asked how the public will know which, and when swim beaches are open. Sarah N requested that signage be posted listing when lifeguards will be at each beach.

Sarah W will check with the Department's public information staff on the strategy for keeping the public posted.

Sandpoint/Magnuson Park: The City Council's Parks, Neighborhoods and Education (PNE) Committee held a hearing on the Master Plan for Sand Point Magnuson Park. Councilmembers Della, Steinbrueck, Godden, and Compton attended. There were about 100 speakers — evenly split between supporters and opponents. Some of the key themes expressed by the opponents were cost of the project, the dominance of the athletic fields over the natural areas in the park, the light and noise impacts on the neighborhood, and the unsubstantiated need for the fields. Some of the key themes expressed by the supporters were the demand for the fields, acceptance of the proposal because of its replacement of existing fields, and not succumbing to the interests of "Not in My Back Yard — NIMBYs". In addition, Parks staff made a presentation to the Parks, Neighborhoods and Education Committee on the proposed Phases 1 and 2 this week. The Council will continue its discussion on this issue at its May 5 PNE Committee meeting.

Terry attended the hearing and is concerned that Council staff gave very low figures, based on Vancouver, B.C. Sarah asked if Terry thinks the Department should respond to this information and Terry answered yes.

Queen Anne Neighborhood Park Acquisition: The Uptown Queen Anne neighborhood's dream has come true. The Pro Parks Levy acquisition of a 12,000 sq. ft. site at the northeast corner of Queen Anne Avenue North and Roy Street (former site of the building locally known as "The Blob") for \$1,700,000 has been completed. The Levy will provide approximately \$269,000 for development. The neighborhood plans to raise money to augment the development funds through the creation of a nonprofit foundation. The concerns about the soil have been answered satisfactorily.

Seacrest Marina/Water Taxi: Metro will continue to run the water taxi from Seattle to the Seacrest docks in West Seattle this summer. Conditions for use and maintenance have been included in the permit being developed for the use of the docks. The use conditions help to insure that the large water taxi boat will not impact the scuba use at the site. Metro has agreed to purchase more surface buoys to help show the separation between diving and boats. The Marker Buoy Dive Club has agreed to assist with the installation as a volunteer project. Maintenance conditions are being established by the Park Engineer and will address concerns about the large vessel using small floats that were not designed for this purpose.

Earth Day/Clean Green Seattle Events: On April 22, over 150 volunteers worked six hours each at Golden Gardens to remove ivy, restore native plants, and remove litter and debris. AT&T was a corporate sponsor of the event and Keep America Beautiful volunteers were on hand. Teens and youth from 15 different schools participated in the Clean and Green Seattle Kick Off event at Garfield Community Center. Garfield Teen Life Center teens led the charge by completing the Garfield Campus Butterfly Garden. The teens and the Mayor officially opened the garden by cutting the butterfly ribbon on the entry arbor. The Garfield campus after-school program children made the sign.

Cascade Land Conservancy/Cheasty Greenspace: Mayor Nickels announced an innovative partnership with the Cascade Land Conservancy to restore public forest and help stop the spread of ivy and other invasive species. Mayor Nickels made the announcement at Cheasty Greenspace this past Saturday. He noted the partnership with Cascade and other Green organizations has led to improved trails system through the Cheasty Greenbelt and natural areas, provided youth training programs and employment opportunities, and increased public stewardship of Seattle's forest and open spaces.

Ron K. Bills Fountain at Miller Community Center Opens: On April 17, 40 people celebrated the 2004 opening day of the fountain. Miller Community Center Teens served cake and handed out special treats to all of the children. The Mayor, Advisory Council President Andrew Taylor, and Rene Soulard (Ron's partner) gave very moving speeches about how the fountain came to exist.

Shooting Incident: Sarah reported a shooting on the playfield near Rainier Community Center earlier today. This occurred at the northeast corner of the children’s play area. The victim, who reportedly was shot in the back, was taken to Harborview Hospital and was pronounced dead. The Seattle Police Department is looking for the shooter.

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. One person signed up to testify.

Victoria Sangrey: President of the Norwegian Ladies Chorus, member of the Board for the Norwegian American Chamber of Commerce, and soon to be an officer of the Norwegian Commercial Club. She has been a Ballard resident for most of her lifetime. She came before the Board to urge that the Scandinavian and maritime heritage of Ballard be honored and respected in both Bergen Park and the new Ballard Civic Center Park. She stated that the imagery proposed by the artist for Bergen Place does not make it Scandinavian. She also sent the Board a copy of her comments.

The Board will hear an update briefing on Bergen Place Park at its May 13 meeting. Victoria stated that Ballard leaders are meeting next week.

Terry stated that there are lots of issues around the funding. It would be helpful for the community leaders’ meeting to determine ways they can assist with the funding and to keep in mind that the new South Lake Union Park will also have a strong maritime theme.

Victoria asked where is the remainder of the project money for Bergen Place Park. The project website lists \$270,000 in funds; only \$170,000 has been used. Don’t forget that there are some wealthy fishermen in Ballard and lots of money in the community.

Oral Communication testimony ended.

Briefing: South Lake Union Armory and Wharf

Victoria Schoenburg, South Lake Union Site Manager, came before the Board to give a briefing on the South Lake Union Armory and Wharf. The Board received both a written and verbal briefing, both of which are included in these minutes.

Written Briefing

Action Requested

Parks staff will provide an update of the current status of the South Lake Union Naval Reserve Building and the South Lake Union Wharf and of the plans underway for their development and programming. No action is requested at this time.

Clarification--Relationship of Building and Wharf to Park Renovation project: While the South Lake Union Naval Reserve Building and Historic Ships Wharf lie within the boundaries of South Lake Union Park, the Pro Parks Levy project to design and renovate South Lake Union Park does not include them in its scope of work. The park design approved by the Board of Park Commissioners in July of 2003 identifies the building and wharf as important elements in the park, but they are considered separate projects. The \$20 million identified as the cost of renovating South Lake Union Park does not include funds for constructing the wharf or for upgrading the building.

Background

In July 2000, a 15-year process to acquire the property for what is now South Lake Union Park was finally completed with the transfer to City ownership of the Naval Reserve site, including the Naval Reserve building and wharf. Also

at that time, the South Lake Union Master Plan Update, created by a City-appointed advisory committee comprised of area property owners, maritime concerns, business interests, neighborhood planning committee members, and other citizens was approved by resolution of the City Council.

The South Lake Union Master Plan Update envisioned a park with open space for non-scheduled recreation activities, a wetland, and access to the lake's edge. It also envisioned within the park a Maritime Heritage Center, "for hands-on preservation of Pacific Northwest traditional boat building and maritime history." The concept of the center included moorage for historic vessels, a Native American canoe center, and an expanded Center for Wooden Boats and Northwest Seaport. The plan considered the Naval Reserve Building (a.k.a. Armory) to be a potential site for expansion of programs, stating that the "City's usage of the Armory Building for community-based and other activities could change over time in relation to the Maritime Heritage Center's increasing use."

The Master Plan Update also identified the Maritime Heritage Foundation (MHF), a nonprofit, as the lead organization to create the center — including fundraising, design, and program development. MHF did play this role for a few years, developing a plan for a major Maritime Heritage facility and, in partnership with the City, raising \$1.5 million to complete the first phase of construction of the Historic Ships Wharf in 2002. However, MHF was not able to raise the additional \$1.4 million needed to complete the wharf project. Finally, struggling against a tough economy, the Maritime Heritage Foundation ceased operations altogether in the spring of 2003.

With the demise of MHF, and with no other organization or individuals stepping forward to pick up the torch, Parks abandoned the centralized mission of a major maritime heritage facility. The individual elements of the Maritime Heritage Center as described in the Master Plan Update have remained, however. The Center for Wooden Boats has continued to work with Parks and is aggressively expanding its programs. The wharf will be operational this spring, funded by the City's General Fund and Shoreline Parks Improvement Funds (see Wharf details below). And a consultant has been hired by Parks to help identify options for future maritime-oriented use of the Naval Reserve Building.

South Lake Union Historic Ships Wharf

Construction

With \$600,000 of (Real Estate and Excise Tax) REET funds identified by the Mayor and additional funding from Parks, we have been able to move ahead with the wharf project, committing to having it functional by this June. The main dock area and the long finger pier will be completed, as will handrails, conduit for utilities, the public seating area, and the large cleat, a whimsical, climbable sculpture.

Without some additional funding, however, it is not certain that all elements of the project can be completed within the existing budget. Elements not yet funded include water, sewer, and electrical hookups for ships, and gangways from the main dock to the floats where ships will be moored. Temporary solutions will be employed to accommodate these missing elements until additional funds allow the full project to be completed. Some of these elements could be paid for or provided by ships desiring moorage at the wharf.

Programming

Development of programming will begin with a Request for Qualifications (RFQ), to be issued in the next few weeks, to seek out historic vessels appropriate for moorage at the wharf. Qualifications would be aimed at large historic boats and would include historic value, programming, funding, seaworthiness, and general appearance.

The wharf contains a total of six moorage slips, though we do not expect to have all six slips occupied with long-term "tenants." One or more slips can be dedicated to short-term moorage for visiting ships, to provide variety and fresh programming. One or more slips can also be programmed by the Center for Wooden Boats with activities like its recent show of classic trawler yachts or with programs on its existing boats such as the historic, 40' racing sloop *Pirate*.

Issues

An RFQ for moorage may disqualify a few boats that have long been moored at South Lake Union. Past planning for the wharf has generally assumed that the boats currently moored there would remain. However, past planning also assumed that the Maritime Heritage Foundation would take on a strong leadership role in developing the funding needed to refurbish and program those boats. While some of the boat-owning organizations have succeeded in maintaining an adequate level of funding to keep their boats active and in good repair, others have not. Lack of funding may mean that some vessels will not be able to meet basic requirements of safety, condition, programming, and seaworthiness.

Clearly the fate of the vessels that do not qualify is a concern. The need for community support of Seattle's "historic fleet" is a serious issue that needs attention and resolution. It is also a multi-million-dollar issue, far beyond the mission of Parks. We do want to help as much as possible, though, and have been supporting a proposal to create an "historic shipyard" at a waterfront parcel owned by King County/Metro in the more industrial area at the north end of Lake Union. This would allow boats not yet ready for display, or boats in need of maintenance, to receive the heavy-industrial kind of work needed for repair and restoration, in an area where such work is appropriate. Vessels would stay at the shipyard until they were ready for public display and programming at the South Lake Union Wharf.

King County/Metro appears to be considering the proposal in a positive light and has said that it will be responding soon, at least with a short-term proposition.

The Naval Reserve Building

The Naval Reserve Building is a central element of South Lake Union Park and its success as a public facility will reflect directly upon the success of the park.

Current Status

The building is now being used for office space for Parks, the Associated Recreation Council, the Seattle Parks Foundation, the Center for Wooden Boats, and several other maritime organizations. The Center for Wooden Boats also maintains a large classroom space in the building. The building is also available for rentals, which, for the most part, take place evenings and weekends. While the building offers an extremely bare-bones facility, with no kitchen and few amenities, it is nevertheless growing in popularity. Revenues from 2003 rentals equaled approximately \$74,000. Revenues in 2004 may slightly exceed \$100,000.

The building needs considerable code corrections if it is to continue as a public facility. On an immediate level these include a new roof, an elevator, an improved HVAC system, seismic reinforcement, and additional bathroom facilities. A complete building analysis is underway.

Future development

A consultant is evaluating a range of possibilities for the future functioning of the building. These options, as they are currently being discussed, are summarized below. A third option, which has been rejected, involved a more commercial level of development. Such an approach would have required significant on-site parking — a loss of park space we are not prepared to accept.

A. Community Hall: Eliminate Parks-related offices and expand upon the current maritime uses of the building. Add a small-craft rental operation and a café. Allow the Center for Wooden Boats to expand its use of the building — for office space, classes, changing interpretive displays, a gift shop, etc. Retain the large central space for events and add the amenity of a commercial kitchen.

The School District has been discussing starting a small science high school similar to the Center School in Seattle Center. In a variation of the above option, such a school could be housed on the second floor.

B. Community Hall and Small Craft Center: Along with a café, gift shops, small-craft rental operation, and some aspects of the Center for Wooden Boats uses mentioned above, bring in additional small-craft organizations and clubs such as Pocock, Kayaks Northwest, and others. Supporting retail could be added as well. Provide boat storage on the exterior of the building, mainly along the east wharf. Retain the central space and some of the meeting space for rentals and events.

Issues

Consideration of changes to the Naval Reserve Building will need to take into account historic preservation covenants placed on it by the Navy. In the transferal of the building to the City, many of the building's features, including the large central space and wood floor, the building's exterior, entrances, and stairways, and certain rooms on both the first and second floor were identified as historic features. Changes to these features require the approval of the State Historic Preservation Officer.

Additional Information

Victoria Schoenburg, South Lake Union Park Site Manager, 684-7031 or victoria.schoenburg@seattle.gov or Colleen Browne, Project Manager, South Lake Union Wharf, 684-4155, or colleenbrowne@seattle.gov

Verbal Briefing

Victoria distributed a color drawing of the boat slips and summarized the written briefing the Board received in its agenda packet.

Board Questions and Answers

Terry asked, at the end of Phase II, will the dock be ready for public use. Victoria answered that the slips would be usable, although the utilities (electricity, water, sewage) may not be connected. Terry asked if the consultants' findings will be brought back before the Board. Victoria answered that she is unsure of this and will get back to the Board with an answer. Terry asked if the Parks Department will run the concessionaire stands. Victoria answered that the concessionaires would be contracted.

Sarah N asked if these plans for the wharf and armory are permanent elements — not just temporary elements until the South Lake Union Park project is completed. Victoria answered they are permanent. Sarah N asked if there is ample parking for those renting the facility. Victoria answered that so far, parking has been adequate. The armory has been a popular rental site and by June, it will have brought in \$90,000 in rental fees in 2004.

Verbal Briefing

Michael Shiosaki, Pro Parks Levy Development Manager, gave a short verbal update briefing on the Pro Parks South Lake Union Park project. The Board held a public hearing at its July 10, 2003, meeting and made a recommendation to the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation. (http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/ParkBoard/minutes/2003/07-10-03_Minutes.htm)

Michael displayed a large drawing of the project and pointed to various elements. The biggest change since the Board made its recommendation is that the Seattle Parks Foundation has agreed to raise \$15 million to go along with the \$5 million in Pro Parks funds. It has been determined that the proposed canal will not be funded. An artificially-constructed wetland was originally planned, however, this proposal has also not proved feasible. The shoreline, instead, will be softened. The proposed location of the Center for Wooden Boats has been moved since the Board saw the last proposal.

Michael next talked about additional parking; a large lot will be located south of Valley Street. The land is owned by Vulcan and, as part of its development mitigation in this area, it is required to provide 200 paid parking sites.

The geo-technical investigation has been completed since the Board made its recommendation last summer. There were no big surprises here, as this is a former landfill site. Michael spoke briefly on sustainability and how to re-use the SLU stormwater. The next phase of the design will be completed in June-July, 2004.

Board Questions and Answers

Sarah N asked a question on the water feature spray shown at last summer’s briefing. Michael said the designers are reviewing this feature. Sarah noted that the pathways have been simplified since the Board’s last review. She asked about the availability of outdoor restrooms and Michael stated that staff and designers are still looking at the options for this.

Terry stated that he visited the site this weekend. There is a conceptual drawing displayed at the site, but it is very fuzzy and not very compelling. Michael agreed and will look into this.

Sarah N asked what are the next steps and will this project come back before the Board. Michael said staff can give an update briefing at the end of the design development. The Board agreed that it would like this update briefing.

Bruce asked Michael to clarify the funding. Michael stated that there will be \$20 million total; \$15 million from the Seattle Parks Foundation and \$5 million from the Pro Parks Levy. Terry asked when the funds would be available and Michael answered that the first of the funds became available in 2001. Bruce asked if the proposed buildings would be included in a future project and are not yet funded. Michael answered yes.

Sarah N recommended that the kitchen facility, when it is added, be located near the loading docks to make it easier for those renting the facility to load/unload items.

The Board thanked Victoria and Michael for the presentation.

Park Board Business – Items of Interest to the Board

Sarah N asked to have a discussion on the food items that are currently sold from vending machines in Parks Department facilities. Sarah W stated that the Department is reviewing its vending machine policy. Some of the machines contain food/snack items and others contain drinks. The machines selling food/snack items are contracted to a local vendor, while the drink machines are contracted to a large supplier. The Parks Department is preparing a Request for Proposal, to be sent out in May, and will require that the vendors give customers healthy eating choices.

Sarah N asked if the machines will have coke and juice and water. Sarah W answered yes. Bruce stated that the Association Recreation Council (ARC) is also focusing on this issue. The profits from the vending machines go to ARC and its objectives are to re-vamp the master vending policy and to ensure healthy eating choices. Sarah N said she has been reading and studying about the link between obesity and soft drink consumption. The Los Angeles school district banned soda pop sales in its schools in January of this year. Studies are showing that vending machine profits there have not decreased after this change. She will send information on this study to Sarah N.

Terry said he is also concerned with the actual placement of vending machines in some parks and believes that poorly placed vending machines can degrade the park experience, if the machines stick out like a big advertisement. He requests that machines be located in unobtrusive area.

Old/New Business

Sarah stated that the Madrona Shelterhouse, after its recent renovations, is very nice — a little gem and a wonderful place to schedule parties/social events. The cost for renting this facility is \$25 per hour.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

APPROVED: _____ DATE _____
Bruce Bentley, Chair