

Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2006

Board of Park Commissioners:

Present: Angela Belbeck
Jack Collins
Kate Pflaumer, Chair
Terry Holme
Debbie Jackson

Excused: Jackie Ramels
Amit Ranade

Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:

Ken Bounds, Superintendent
Susan Golub, Strategic Advisor

Commission Chair Kate Pflaumer called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. **The meeting agenda was unanimously approved.**

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Bounds reported on the following:

Public Information Policy Audit. The Auditor's Office is very close to completing the report, which they will present to the PELL Committee at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 27 in the Council Chambers at City Hall. The report will be made public as early as Sept. 20, and will go up on the web. We will forward the report to you as soon as it's available. *(Note: Meeting time has been changed to 5:30.)*

Picnic Scheduling. As we've done for the past two years, we have extended picnic scheduling in 12 popular parks beyond usual September 30 end date, to October 31. Extending the service allows citizens the benefit of being able to reserve a space and brings in revenues for events that are likely happening in our parks anyway. It also raises expectations for high maintenance standards. We will not make a permanent decision to continue this practice until we conduct more analysis and workforce planning.

Summer Beach Program. The Summer Beach Program celebrated 37 years without a drowning in a lifeguarded area at the end of this season and noted a record 75 water rescues. The hot weather and lack of rain brought huge numbers to all nine beaches. Lifeguards watched over 225,097 people -- 27,000 more than last summer. Guards performed 56 first aid jobs and taught 388 children to swim. The professionalism of supervisors, daily staff training, and coaching have been key in maintaining a quality program and safety. Special thanks go to the Seattle Police Harbor Patrol unit for their ongoing support, includes the season-end relocation of swim floats.

SCUBA Volunteers. Under a Memo of Agreement, Diver's Institute of Technology has agreed to provide volunteer divers and equipment to help with minor underwater cleanup and maintenance along park shorelines. We add divers to our volunteer insurance policy to cover this activity. A first project is scheduled at Matthews Beach for underwater cleanup and piling modification.

Magnuson Park anniversary. This week marks the 10-year anniversary of City ownership of the former Sand Point Naval Air Station and the end of the U.S. Navy's presence at Sand Point. We opened the Office of Sand Point Operations at the site on Sept. 6, 1996, and started developing the property.

Aquarium/Pier 59 piling replacement project. Follow-on exhibit and shell and core completion teams are poised to begin work within the next few weeks. On Sept. 5, City Council authorized funding for this portion of the work by change order. Work on the exhibit portion began in August, although progress was slowed due to the concrete strike. The project team is working on ways to catch up with the original schedule, to ensure an orderly flow of work meeting the established completion date of June, 2007.

Queen Anne Boulevard improvements. Parks has begun the public involvement process for the proposed Pro Parks Levy funded improvements to Queen Anne Boulevard. The Levy provides \$500,000 for design, construction and management. Project signs are posted and staff briefed the Queen Anne Community Council this week. Parks will host the first of three public meetings on Sept. 19. This project includes adding new sidewalks, landscaping, and boulevard identification on W McGraw between 1st and 2nd Aves. W, and on Bigelow Avenue N between Prospect St. and Newton St.

Parks Response to Youth Programs in Southeast Seattle. At the beginning of the Summer Parks launched a series of initiatives in Southeast Seattle to respond to the lack of programs and opportunities for youth in Southeast Seattle. We implemented an expanded late night program at Rainier Beach Community Center that featured food and a free 4 hour swim. Over the 11 weeks of summer this program served more than 1,000 youth. We also implemented a summer play ground program at John C. Little Park adjacent to New Holly. This program also ran Monday through Friday for 13 weeks and served around 3,000 youth. Both programs were a huge success.

Fire at Discovery Park. Over four acres of meadow in the Historic Parade Grounds at Discovery Park was burned on Monday. It is thought that the fire was started by a man and boy who were seen shooting rockets in the area. Seattle Fire Department put out the fire. Parks Department staff is evaluating damage. Staff is working with SFD to strategize fire prevention in the area.

South Park Neighborhood. Staff attended the Mayors press announcement in South Park which was well received by the South Park Community. Three items he announce directly related to Parks 1) \$50,000 in design money for an open space and community park at 12th and Trenton; 2) \$400,000 plus for operating Community Center—late night teen program, new staff position and funds for a job readiness program; and 3) under \$150,000 for improved computer lab and support for Spanish – language information center.

Urban Forest Master Plan. The draft plan has been completed and a briefing before the City Council's Parks Education Libraries and Labor Committee is scheduled for September 13.

Olympic Sculpture Park. Because of delay caused by the concrete workers strike, the Olympic Sculpture Park has a new opening date of January 20, 2007.

Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience

The Chair explained that this portion of the agenda is reserved for topics that have not had, or are not scheduled for, a public hearing. Speakers are limited to three minutes each and will be timed. The Board's usual process is for 15 minutes of testimony to be heard at this time, with additional testimony heard after the regular agenda and just before Board of Park Commissioner's business. Because so many people signed up to testify, the Chair notified those lower on the list that it was likely they would have to testify at the end of the meeting, in order for the Board to keep to the approved agenda.

Peter Blair: Neighbors of Dr. Blanche Lavizzo Park are concerned about illegal activity occurring in the Park, including drug use and sales, violence and assaults. The police have been slow to respond. Changes the neighbors would like to see the removal of park benches and the breezeway and other structures providing refuge for drug dealers. And they would like the hours the park is open to be shortened.

Nancy Malmgren: Ms. Malmgren invited the Board to visit Carkeek Park and see the Coho salmon that are spawning in Pipers Creek. An array of salmon-related activities is planned. She provided each Commissioner with a folder of Carkeek Park information. Ms. Malmgren spoke about the lack of enforceability of ordinances, especially those related to dogs, and called for more animal control. She spoke of the need to add Respect as the 4th "R" in the parks motto of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.

Vonnie Breidenstein: The Lakeside School rummage sale has used a Building 27 at Magnuson Park that is being considered by Parks for sole use by Arena Sports. Ms. Breidenstein wants the building kept available for multi-use. The rummage sale provides benefits to 10-15 charities, as well as the school. The Magnuson building is perfect for the rummage sale because it is cheap and has good, free parking.

Kathleen Miller: Building 27 at Magnuson Park should be kept available for special events, and not dedicated to Arena Sports. Ms. Miller thanked Parks staff for meeting with her organization which uses the building for two weeks each year for juried art fairs. The only alternative site for their event is Qwest Field and it is too expensive.

Bill Fuller: Mr. Fuller is working with a group that is proposing to renovate Building 11 at Magnuson Park. The building is long and skinny and the proposal is to include a variety of uses such as recreation and retail, with Sail Sandpoint one likely tenant. Mr. Fuller expressed thanks to staff for a terrific process, and noted that the proposed renovation would not rely on City funding.

This concluded the initial round of public comment. Additional comments were taken at the conclusion of the meeting.

Briefing: Motorized Aircraft in Seattle Parks

Charles Ng, Parks Manager of Magnuson Park and Business Resources, introduced himself and briefed the Board on the use of motorized aircraft in parks. The Board received both written and verbal briefings.

Motorized Aircraft in Seattle Parks – Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

This briefing paper is in response to the Park Board's request for a public hearing on the issue of motorized model airplanes in Seattle Parks. The Board requested a staff briefing, a review of other public agency concerns, and public testimony about the issue. The Board was asked by supporters of motorized model airplanes to make a recommendation on Parks' decision to terminate its experimental permit that was issued to the Lake Sawyer Hawks R/C Club to launch motorized model airplanes at Ferdinand Dock on Lake Washington Boulevard.

Staff is requesting that the Board support the Superintendent's decision to cancel the experimental permit for motorized aircraft use at Ferdinand Dock.

Project Description and Background

What is the project background? The Lake Sawyer Hawks R/C Club approached Parks in January 2006 to obtain a permit to launch its motorized model airplanes from the Ferdinand Dock along Lake Washington Boulevard. The group stated they had been flying at that location regularly since early 2005 without complaints and without a permit. In September 2005, Parks posted signs stating that it was illegal to fly motorized planes in Seattle Parks pursuant to SMC 18.12.265.

Parks staff met with the club several times in March 2006 and agreed to an on site demonstration. Since this is a unique recreation opportunity, Parks agreed to issue an experimental permit with the condition that it be terminated if there were adverse impacts to the neighborhood or the environment. The permit was issued in April 2006. Parks received complaints in April, May, and June about noise and the potential impact from the planes on the wildlife in and around the area. Parks decided to terminate the permit and sent a letter to the Club on June 16th giving the Club 30 days notice of termination. Subsequently, Club members testified to the Board of Park Commissioners and asked the Board to intercede on its behalf. The Board decided to schedule a briefing and public hearing on this issue.

What is being proposed? Parks staff has concluded that this activity is not suitable for this location and reaffirms its decision to terminate the permit issued to Lake Sawyer R/C Club. The Ferdinand Dock is on the western side of Andrews Bay and is in close proximity to nearby residences on Lake Washington Boulevard, near an environmentally sensitive area, and public swimming beach. Seattle Municipal Code 18.12.265 prohibits this activity unless permitted by the Superintendent on a case by case basis. When this activity was initially permitted, it was an exception to this rule and was conditional on it not being a negative impact to the public, that it was being permitted on a temporary basis, and that the location was suitable for the activity. The decision to issue an experimental permit and terminate it is authorized in the permit and within the authority of the Superintendent.

Other jurisdiction and location for activity: King County enforces an ordinance similar to the City's prohibiting this type of activity at its parks; however, under a very controlled situation and at the ideal site, the County has permitted motorized aircraft to be flown from a grassy field at Marymoor Park. The permitted location is a grass runway, 100 feet by 340 feet, with a usable airspace of 800 feet by 2000 feet. The area is well buffered from nearby homes and is managed and maintained by the Marymoor R/C Club.

Public Involvement Process

There were no formal public meetings leading up to the Park Board public hearing. Public outreach efforts were focused on informing the public about this hearing. Notices were mailed to the Club, to approximately 2,000 nearby neighbors and to local community organizations. Parks standard press release was sent to the media, the agenda and instructions for public testimony have been posted on the Board's web page, and 2 signs have been placed at the Ferdinand site informing the public about the hearing.

Issues

Noise from the planes: As mentioned, Parks has received complaints about the noise, specifically from nearby residents. The geography of the area, with Bailey Peninsula at Seward Park on the eastern side of Andrews Bay, acts like a wall that allows sound to echo and reverberate throughout the bay with significant impact to homes.

Environmental sensitivity: Parks received concerns from our Park Naturalists about this activity potentially endangering habitat areas close by. This is a prime habitat area for the endangered red spotted turtles, as well as river otters, beaver and more.

Harbor Patrol and Aquatic Recreation: City of Seattle Harbor Patrol staff has expressed concerns about this activity at this location, including the potential danger of the planes malfunctioning and hitting people at the swimming beach, which is one half mile to the south. At the on site demonstration the planes flew quite a range. The Seattle Harbor Code also restricts the speed within Andrews Bay to a maximum of 3 knots. The speed required for the takeoff or

landing of a model plane would exceed three knots. When a motorized plane is touching the water they are governed by marine laws and are out of compliance.

Open Water Swimming: Because of the required reduced speed for vessels and the protected nature of the bay, this is the most popular location for open water swimming within the entire City. Swimmers must stay along the western shoreline of Andrews Bay, passing through the staging area at Ferdinand Street. The operation of these planes poses a public safety risk for swimmers.

Small Craft Operation: The protected waters of Andrews Bay also draw the small boats from Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center (MBRSC) in search of waters protected from southern winds. The rowing shells, small kayaks and other boats use the western side of the bay as a practice corridor. In addition, MBRSC, in partnership with Parks Environmental Education unit, runs water based environmental education programs in the bay where people in small boats are able to closely observe activity in the natural habitat.

Recreational Boating: Two-thirds of the bay along the eastern side is the only approved anchorage area for recreational boaters within the City of Seattle. This area is already at maximum capacity for use, so the addition of motorized aircraft is incompatible and pushes the area into an over-use state.

Staff Recommendation

The decision to terminate the experimental use permit should be upheld.

Verbal Briefing/Board Questions & Answers

Mr. Ng reviewed the material in the written briefing paper. He noted that Seattle Municipal Code Section 18.12.265 states that motorized model aircraft are not allowed in Seattle parks, except by special exception. In January 2006 the Lake Sawyer RC Club asked for permission to fly planes from the Ferdinand Street Boat Dock on Lake Washington. In March the organization gave Parks staff an on-site demonstration, and in April the department issued an experimental permit.

Complaints were received regarding the airplane noise and environmental concerns and Parks terminated the permit in June. Mr. Ng asked the Board to support the department's decision to rescind the permit.

Commissioner Jackson asked what studies Parks naturalists did to conclude that there was environmental or wildlife impacts from the airplanes. Christina Gallegos, Park Naturalist at the Seward Park Environmental Learning Center, responded that the concerns she expressed were based on seeing the planes dive bombing groups of ducks on the lake, and the planes flying at the same level as the eagles that nest in Seward Park. She received complaints from citizens concerned about the noise.

Commissioner Holme asked whether the ordinance also prohibited remote control boats, and Mr. Ng responded that it does. Commissioner Collins asked whether Parks had allowed this activity in other locations. Mr. Ng responded that for one weekend a year Parks permits a club to hold an event at Magnuson Park.

Commissioner Pflaumer asked whether wading into the water to launch your plane is permitted. Specifically, where does Parks authority end? Mr. Ng responded that the shoreline extends into the lake. Mr. Eric Friedli, Director of the Enterprise Division, stated that, before the next Park Board meeting, he would get a definitive answer on exactly where Parks property boundary is located.

Ms. Pflaumer asked what issues arose between the time Parks issued the permit in April and rescinded it in June, that Parks was not already aware of when the permit was granted. Mr. Friedli responded that the Club said there were no complaints and there would be no impacts, and Parks had no evidence to the contrary. Staff decided to issue the permit on an experimental basis to see what would happen.

Responding to a question from Ms. Pflaumer, Mr. Friedli clarified the hours the permit allowed the Club to fly: from 10:00 to 3:00 every Thursday and from 10:00 to 3:00 one Saturday per month.

Mr. Holme asked where the three knot speed limit area is on Andrews Bay. A representative from the City's Harbor Patrol responded that there is a designated speed limit "box" in Andrews Bay. The area gets very crowded with anchored boats because it is the only permitted anchorage area in the lake (except for special exceptions at Union Bay for Husky football games).

Public Hearing

Steve Pope: Mr. Pope is a user of Seward Park and is concerned about the impact of the airplanes. The Seattle Municipal Code Section 18.12.025 states that appropriate behavior and the purpose of parks is to ensure no environmental deprivation and peaceful repose. The parks are for the benefit of all and shouldn't be for a specific purpose, such as the motorized airplanes. He urged the Board to support the decision to cancel the permit.

Allan Smith: Mr. Smith volunteers at Seward Park removing invasives such as ivy. However, he can't get rid of invasive noise that comes from the motorized airplanes. It is like being attacked by bees when he hears the airplane noise.

Dick Weaver: Mr. Weaver is the float flight coordinator for the Lake Sawyer Hawks. He asked for a correction to the Park Board minutes of July 27, 2006 which state that Parks staff met with the club. While he did meet with Mr. Friedli and Mr. Ng in March and April, they have not had a meeting since they received the permit termination letter. And, Mr. Weaver noted he has never met with Parks staff person Sandi Bell.

King County permits motorized airplanes at Marymoor Park, at a Hobart flying site, and at a location north of Redmond. It is not illegal to fly planes over the lake because the lake is not Park property. Planes have been flown from Ferdinand St. Boat Dock for 30 years. It was only after the Club asked for a permit that a Parks sign went up stating the use was not allowed.

Ted Moser: Lake Washington is not part of Park property, so Parks has no control and it is not against the law to fly planes over the lake. The permit the Club received was only for launching from the shore; complaints about flying over the lake are not relevant because it is not Park property. The planes do not fly over Seward Park.

Dick Joslin: The Park Code does not state that motorized airplane use will be considered on a case by case basis. The permit the Club received was intended to be for one year with a potential for a one year extension; it never said experimental. It says both parties reserve the right to amend the permit in writing. Motorized airplanes do not have an environmental impact; the area is not a wildlife refuge. The planes do not fly close to swimmers and they land if kayakers are in the area.

Greg Wines: Eagles and blue herons fly with the planes and he has seen geese and ducks in the area when the planes are flying. The Club flew from the dock before the permit was issued and had no problems. The sign was put up not because of complaints from residents of the area but was a Parks grounds staff issue.

Tom Richards: The sign Parks erected is misleading because it does not say anything about the permit requirement. Also, the sign should also say what activities, in addition to motorized aircraft, are illegal and not allowed. Parks has ignored the positive comments that have come in about this use – it is an asset to the park and fund for people to watch.

Dean Brinton: The airplane club has sound monitoring equipment and self-police the noise from the planes. If an airplane is too loud, it cannot fly at this location. Their planes are quieter than other uses. Sound complaints should be accompanied by scientific, specific readings.

Loren Sisley: When the planes fly, each pilot has a spotter who watches for boats and wildlife. They will call out: “Stay high – blue heron flying over;” or “Don’t land – ducks coming through.” There are many other environmental issues in the area, such as the seaplanes that land at the north tip of Seward Park, but there should be no concerns about the motorized aircraft.

Dennis Sivak: Mr. Sivak has a Wildlife Technology Degree and was an Environmental Protection Agency investigator. Previous testimony about impact to wildlife is not correct. A manager of a park in Colorado provided a letter telling about hawks nesting near a flying area; wildlife and planes can co-exist, especially with limited hours and decibel rules that the Lake Sawyer Club has.

Allan Poinsett: Mr. Poinsett read a letter from Tom Atkins that stated he likes watching the planes fly while riding his bike at the park.

Marlow Anderson: Mr. Anderson is the President of the Lake Sawyer Hawks Club. The Club provides a community service in Maple Valley parks and Mr. Anderson read a letter from Maple Valley parks staff which thanked the Club for helping teach children to make model airplanes from kits at the local kids fair.

Randy Weaver: Mr. Weaver is the son of Dick Weaver, the Lake Sawyer Club flight float coordinator. Children benefit from the motorized airplane hobby as he did while growing up. He is now an engineer at Boeing. Flying airplanes should be considered like other sports within the City. It develops skills and abilities as other sports do, and other sports have similar noise issues.

Dan Hansen: The airplanes have fewer environmental impacts than the gas powered mowers and leaf blowers that Parks staff operate close to the shore. Parks does not have jurisdiction over the lake, so the use is legal. There were no complaints before the sign was erected, but there have been a lot of positive comments in the visitor’s book the Club has at the site.

Ms. Marchesie: A daily user of the park, Ms. Marchesie finds the planes loud and not the same as a lawnmower, as previously stated, as it is a high, shrill noise. The question is not one of the safety or diligence of the pilots. The permit allows for flying 25 hours a month, from 10 to 3 on Thursday and from 10 to 3 one Saturday per month. This is a steady length of time. The Parks sign about the use went up because of complaints. This park should be for all users, but the airplane noise does not allow for pleasant, passive, contemplative activity.

Mark Smith: Mr. Smith, an audio engineer, lives two blocks away. Conversational speaking is at 65 decibels. He is fine with the airplanes. Parks mowers and weed whackers are more of a problem. Noise should not be considered an issue here because it is not above the legal limit.

Gerhard Lelzing: Mr. Lelzing lives four blocks away and hears the airplanes; the sound echoes through the neighborhood and is very loud. There is already a lot of noise in the area from commercial airplanes and they shouldn’t have additional noise. There is pressure on the bay from the power boats making it difficult for swimmers and kayakers; we don’t need the additional danger from airplanes.

Phyllis Daniels: Ms. Daniels walks regularly in the park and sees eagles, beaver and heron; however, she sees no waterfowl when the planes are flying. While she was unhappy with the planes, she did not complain until she saw Parks sign because she did not realize the permit/legal issues about the use. She did complain after the sign was posted. She can hear the noise from 52nd and Brandon and from far away up the hill.

Pamela Sacheett: Listening to the quiet is a valuable activity but there is no way to measure this. She lives half mile from the boat ramp but can hear the uneven whine of the planes. It is especially annoying and an environmental risk. She works at home and the noise is very disruptive to her work. She also swims in Andrews Bay and has been swimming when the planes are flying.

Commissioner Questions for Staff

Commissioner Holme asked staff to clarify where the park property stops. Eric Friedli responded that Parks would research this issue and provide the Board with the information.

Debbie Jackson asked for staff to provide more information on the environmental impacts of the use and noted that the environmental impacts would be the same whether the airplane was launched from the ramp or from a boat in the lake. In this regard, Commissioner Pflaumer noted that there was no consistent opinion from naturalists about the impacts of active uses on wildlife, and cited examples of locations where they successfully co-exist.

The Board will discuss this issue further and make a recommendation at the September 28 meeting.

Briefing: Magnuson Park Campus Development

Eric Friedli, Director of the Enterprise Division, introduced himself and provided the Board with an oral briefing on the Magnuson Park Campus Development. The Board received both written and oral briefings.

Magnuson Park Campus Development: Written Briefing



Board Action

Resolution or action is being requested of the Board. The Department is asking the Commissioners for their evolving plans for the buildings in the Sand Point Historic District and the public outreach plan.

Option and Background

In 2004, Parks, in conjunction with the Mayor's office and Department of Finance began a concerted effort to reexamine to what extent the City would go to retain and reuse the historic structures that were transferred from the Navy at Magnuson Park. Since that time several specific actions have been taken to resolve the future of the Sand Point Historic District buildings.

Staff provided a briefing to the Board on February 10, 2005 that outlined a series of steps Parks planned to take regarding the development of the Sand Point Historic District buildings at Magnuson Park. At that time staff presented the Sand Point Historic District Strategic Development Plan 2004-2005. Substantial progress has been made following the direction of that Plan and an updated Strategic Development Plan 2006-2008 has been drafted (Attachment 1).

The Strategic Development Plan 2006-2008 (SDP 06-08) describes the results of three requests for proposal processes used to identify potential partners for development of the buildings. The intent of the RFP processes was to:

1. Identify service providers who could offer parks and recreation programs to the public and achieve the vision for the development of Magnuson Park;
2. Preserve the integrity of the Historic District; and
3. Relieve the city of the financial liability associated with the buildings.

Four proposals were received.

1. Civic Light Opera proposes to develop and manage the theater in the Magnuson Community Center.
2. Arena Sports proposes to develop an indoor recreation facility in Building 27.
3. Building 11 LLC proposes a recreation oriented mixed use development in Building 11.
4. Cascade Bicycle Club proposes to develop the Northwest Center for Cycling in Building 11.

The status of Parks discussion with each proposer is described in the SDP 06-08. The SDP 06-08 also describes the status of the Mountaineers move and unsolicited proposals for development of artist's studios and a tennis center.

Public Involvement Process

Parks is proposing a public outreach process over the next several months to gather public input on the proposals, the potential long-term leases and other aspects of the development. Attachment 2 provides an outline of the public involvement process which calls for a public meeting in early October and a Park Board public hearing in late October. Parks plans to make presentations to the local district and community councils in October as well.

Issues

The public involvement process will potentially identify additional issues but at this point Parks anticipates the following to be the primary issues.

Traffic	Previous Environmental Impact Statements have assessed traffic issues, this information will be updated.
Parking	Previous parking studies have been completed and we will update with info from proposals.
Noise	Minimal, decrease with no events in 27
Lights	Minimal, parking lots, signs?
Cliff swallows on Building 27	Will be incorporated into design
Signage	We have developed a signage plan and will abide by it as much as possible. This will be a point of negotiation with the tenants.
Commercial activity in the park	More fully realizing the vision for Magnuson Park by providing services to the public that wouldn't happen otherwise. Retaining character of historic district with minimal city investment.
Loss of opportunity for other activities	No other activities have been identified that can justify the cost of the building renovations and program management.

Parks has already received a number of e-mails regarding the use of Building 27 for an indoor recreation facility rather than maintaining it as a venue for large special events.

Budget

Budget issues with each proposal are still under discussion and review in the context of the proposals and the details of the lease negotiations.

Schedule

Fall 2006	Engage in public involvement program Complete negotiations with tenants and developers
2007	Council approval of agreements Complete related actions – zoning, shoreline permits Developers/tenants secure funding City begin renovation of building 27
2008/09	Complete building renovations Begin programs

Staff Recommendation

Proceed with implementation of the SDP 06-08. Continue negotiations with potential tenants and developers per the SDP 06-08.

Additional Information

Please feel free to contact Eric Friedli, 684-8369 if you have additional questions or comments.

ATTACHMENT 1

SAND POINT HISTORIC DISTRICT STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN DRAFT UPDATE: 2006-2008

To provide direction on the strategic development and near-term actions for buildings in the Sand Point Historic District at Magnuson Park.

Background

In 2004, Parks, in conjunction with the Mayor's office and Department of Finance began a concerted effort to reexamine to what extent the City would go to retain and reuse the historic structures that were transferred from the Navy. Since that time several specific actions have been taken to resolve the future of the Sand Point Historic District buildings.

To summarize:

- There are 11 major City-owned buildings within the Sand Point Campus (see attachment A).
- The buildings remain under-utilized and require substantial capital investment (estimated at \$42.7 million in 2003 dollars) to bring them up to a basic useable condition where tenants could make further "finished" improvements.
- Re-use of the nine buildings that contribute to the Historic District is constrained by federal historic and recreation covenants:
 - Historic covenant: requires the City "*to make every effort to retain and reuse, to the extent practicable, the historic structures*" consistent with its potential registration as a National Historic District.
 - Recreation covenant: states that the property "*shall be used and maintained for public park and recreation purposes in perpetuity*" as set forth in the Sand Point Reuse Plan.
- Investments in preservation of historic structures are difficult to finance based upon traditional park and recreation uses.

Investment History

Investment in City-owned buildings and property since 1997 has been limited to: life-safety major maintenance (\$14.7 million); capital improvements associated with the 1999 Seattle Center and Community Centers Levy (\$3.1 million); and the 2000 Pro Parks Levy (\$618,000). The University of Washington and Sand Point Community Housing Association have invested \$25 million and \$6 million respectively in capital improvements in the 11 buildings that they own on the campus. See attachment B for a list of specific improvements.

ACTIONS TAKEN SINCE 2004

Facility Developer and Operator RFP's

In 2005, Parks engaged in three separate processes to find developers interested in developing indoor recreation opportunities such as a theater, indoor soccer, hockey, basketball, climbing walls, tennis center, or velodrome. Parks issued Requests for Proposals (RFP) for development of a theater, multi-purpose indoor recreation center, a tennis center, and a health and fitness facility. Buildings 18, 11, 27, 2, and the theater and the un-renovated portion of the Magnuson Community Center (Bldg 47) were listed as available through these RFP processes. Brochures were mailed to businesses and real estate brokers in the northwest and ads were placed in the Puget Sound Business Journal and the National Real Estate Investor. The intent was to identify

developers with the expertise and financial capability to develop the facilities. No proposals were received for Building 2, the undeveloped portion of Building 47, or a tennis center. Subsequent to the RFP process a proposal was submitted for an indoor tennis center.

The intent of the RFP processes was to:

4. Identify service providers who could offer parks and recreation programs to the public and achieve the vision for the development of Magnuson Park
5. Preserve the integrity of the Historic District
6. Relieve the city of the financial liability associated with the buildings.

Four proposals were received

5. Civic Light Opera proposes to develop and manage the theater in the Magnuson Community Center.
6. Arena Sports proposes to develop an indoor recreation facility in Building 27.
7. Building 11 LLC proposes a recreation oriented mixed use development in Building 11.
8. Cascade Bicycle Club proposes to develop the Northwest Center for Cycling in Building 11.

Current Status

Civic Light Opera (CLO) proposes to develop and manage the theater in the Magnuson Community Center. Parks is currently negotiating a long term lease under which CLO would invest \$3.5 – 5 million over a 10 year period to create a state of the art, live performance theater. They intend to fund-raise for the complete amount of capital investment and phase the improvements. They would receive a 30 year agreement to use and manage the theater. No city funds would be used for the capital improvements.

Arena Sports proposes to develop an indoor recreation facility in Building 27. Their proposal includes indoor soccer, basketball, baseball, health and fitness club and minor food service. The cost of renovations is \$6.8 million. The Executive is proposing up to \$6.8 million of city financed debt be used to develop the building and Arena Sports function as a concessionaire operating the programs. In exchange for a long term agreement (20 years), Arena Sports would invest up to \$1 million in the facility and make lease payments to offset the debt service payments on the city funding. Parks has recently started negotiations with Arena Sports.

Building 11 LLC proposes a recreation oriented mixed use development in Building 11. Their proposal includes a mix of tenants including the existing sailing and kayaking programs, a day care center, restaurant(s), and other as yet unidentified recreation oriented tenants. The cost of the renovations is estimated at \$5 million. The proponents would privately finance the entire development. They would not use the building, land, or improvements to secure the private loan. In exchange for long term agreement (they are asking for 40 years), the LLC would renovate and manage the building. The agreement will assess fair market rent which would be offset for 25 years for the value of the capital improvements. No city funds would be used for the capital improvements. Parks is asking the 75% of the leased space be used for publicly accessible programming – negotiations are underway.

Cascade Bicycle Club proposes to develop the Northwest Center for Cycling in Building 11. Their proposal is to develop a facility that would house their offices as well as the offices of other bicycle oriented organizations. It would also house a small coffee shop and areas for classes, bike repair facility, and training center for top-level cyclists. The cost of renovation is estimated at \$3 million. The Executive has agreed to allocate some city capital funds to this project. Cascade Bicycle Club has agreed to engage in a fundraising feasibility study to assess how much capital money they can raise to support the Center. After completion of that study we will reassess the financial plan for the development of this building.

Mountaineers Move to Sand Point. After several months of discussions and negotiations, The Mountaineers and Parks have signed a 30-year lease. They will occupy a portion of the old Navy Motor pool Building 67. The terms include their capital investment (\$1.7 million) and the construction of a rock climbing plaza that will be open to the public to offset rental payments. They have recently hired an architectural firm. Occupancy is expected in late fall 2007.

Art Studios. The non-profit organization Sand Point Arts and Cultural Exchange (SPACE) is in the midst of preparing a proposal for the development of artists studio's in the 21,000 square foot west wing of Building 30. This wing is currently vacant and had been tentatively slated for development into a branch library. Staff from Department of Planning and Development have toured the building and given advice on what minimal improvements would likely be necessary. SPACE is working with a coalition of artists to secure commitment from future tenants and outline a financing and management plan. The inclusion of artist's studios would maintain the balance between arts and recreation envisioned for Magnuson Park.

Tennis Center. No proposals were received for the full development of the tennis center as proposed by the tennis center committee. That project was estimated at over \$11 million. Subsequent to the completion of the RFP process a proposal has been submitted outlining a scaled back approach to developing 6-8 indoor tennis courts in an air-supported structure (bubble) and metal shed. Parks has not moved aggressively on this proposal but anticipates doing so in fall 2006.

CURRENT DIRECTION

This current direction focuses on opportunities presented by each building in the campus. As a result of request for proposal processes since 2005 and other decisions:

- One buildings would be developed by the City with anchor tenants (27).
- Four buildings would be developed by the City for general use (30, 47, 138, 406)
- Three buildings would be mothballed/demolished (2, 12, and 41)
- Three buildings will be developed by a partner (11, 67, 18)
- One new building would be developed by developer for tennis.

Target Public and Private Investment Option Summary

Building	Former Use	Sq. Ft.	Contribute to Historic District	Estimated Cost (millions)	Approach	Developer
18	Fire Station	13,722	yes	3.1	City \$2.1 million, Challenge	RFP successful -- Cascade Bike Club to be anchor tenant – to raise \$2 million for NW Center for

					Cascade Bike Club to raise \$2 million	Cycling.
27	Seaplane Hangar	107,474	yes	6.8	City invest \$6.8 million, partner Arena Sports	RFP successful – Arena Sports to be anchor tenant.
30	Aircraft Hangar	79,972	yes	6.2	City Preserve	City for public assembly/office/art studios
47	Recreation Center	50,606	yes	n/a	City Preserve/ Civic Light Opera to develop theater	City for recreation/ RFP failed to identify financially viable developer for undeveloped part; Theater RFP successful – Civic Light Opera to be anchor tenant.
138	Gatehouse	13,084	yes	1.3	City Preserve	City for office/art studios/food service
406	Brig	29,270	no	0	City Preserve	City for recreation / community center use
2	Repair Hangar	147,966	yes	1.8	Mothball/ Demolish	RFP failed to identify any interest.
12	Steam Plant	6,564	yes	0.1	Demolish	None
41	Gas Station	2,034	No	.03	Demolish	None confirmed: Currently used as parks maintenance headquarters, recent interest expressed by private party to develop restaurant.
11	Public Works	45,957	yes	.8	Demolish, rebuild structure to serve sailing and kayaking programs	RFP Successful -- Building 11 LLC to be master tenant.
New	Tennis Center		no	10	New	RFP failed to identify financially viable developer, recent interest expressed to develop smaller proposal
67	Motor Pool	31,909	yes	3.1	Partner Develop	Mountaineers signed 30 year lease
Total		528,558				
	Contribute to historic district	497,254				

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS 2006 - 2008

Commitment to City Development of Four Buildings: Buildings 30, 47 and 406 would be preserved based on prior City capital investments, as would building 138 (Gatehouse) given its prominence on the campus. The investment needed to bring Buildings 30 and 138 to useable condition for tenant improvements is \$7.5 million with the goal of recouping this investment from rental income. The near-term investment to preserve building 138 is \$96,000 for a roof. Building 406 is in useable condition and no immediate investment is needed. Building 47 has been partially renovated. The cost of bringing the remainder of the building to useable condition has not been estimated.

Next steps for these buildings are:

- *Amendments to Overlay District:* Request amendments to the Sand Point Overlay District to potentially allow administrative office and food establishments as principal land uses in order to pursue recommended re-use options for Buildings 30 and 138. Amendments would also be needed to allow signage exceeding current single-family development standards.
- *Community Center Operations:* Continue to operate Building 47 as a community center.
- *Community Activity Center Operations:* Seek a mix of Parks and non-parks recreation programs in Building 406.
- *Consider Art Studios:* A coalition of artists have come together under the auspices of the non-profit group Sand Point Arts and Cultural Exchange (SPACE) to propose development of the west wing of Building 30 for artist studios.
- *Civic Light Opera:* Complete negotiations with Civic Light Opera (CLO) for development and management of the theater.
- *Safety Improvements in Hangar 30:* To maintain the hangar in building 30 as a venue for special events, certain safety improvements are required by Seattle Fire and Department of Planning and Development. Pedestrian doors are being installed in fall 2006 and a fire sprinkler system is in the Park asset management plan for 2007.

Pursue Long-term Private Partnerships: Parks is pursuing negotiations with developers and tenants for Building 11, 18, 27, and the theater in the Community Center as highlighted above.

Next steps are:

- Zoning amendments are required to the Sand Point Overlay district. These are being prepared by Parks staff in consultation with DPD and the various partners.
- A new entrance is required from Sand Point Way to access the Mountaineers, Building 11 and 27. Parks staff is in discussions with SDOT and the Mountaineers are expected to address this as part of the permit applications.
- Portions of building 11 and 27 are within 200 feet of the shoreline so shoreline zoning restrictions need to be resolved with the State Department of Ecology and DPD.

Buildings Slated for Mothball / Demolition:

Buildings 2 (former hangar), 12 (steam plant) and 41 (gas station) would be demolished.

- Building 2 is 147,000 square feet and was included in the RFP with no interested proposals. It currently houses the Seattle Conservation Corps office and shop space and Arena Sports indoor sports. It is not appropriate to continue those uses without improvements. With no economically viable use, it will be mothballed and eventually mothballed and demolished.

- Building 12 has the highest costs to bring the building to useable condition at \$279.00 per square foot, which translates to a non-economic rental rate of \$22.42 per square foot before tenant improvements. This building is currently vacant – demolition could proceed as soon as funding is available.
- Building 41 does not contribute to the Historic District and the cost of bringing the building to useable condition is \$125.00 per square foot – the second highest per square foot costs – for a high effective rental rate of \$11.35 per square foot. This building is currently used as a park maintenance facility and demolition could be delayed.

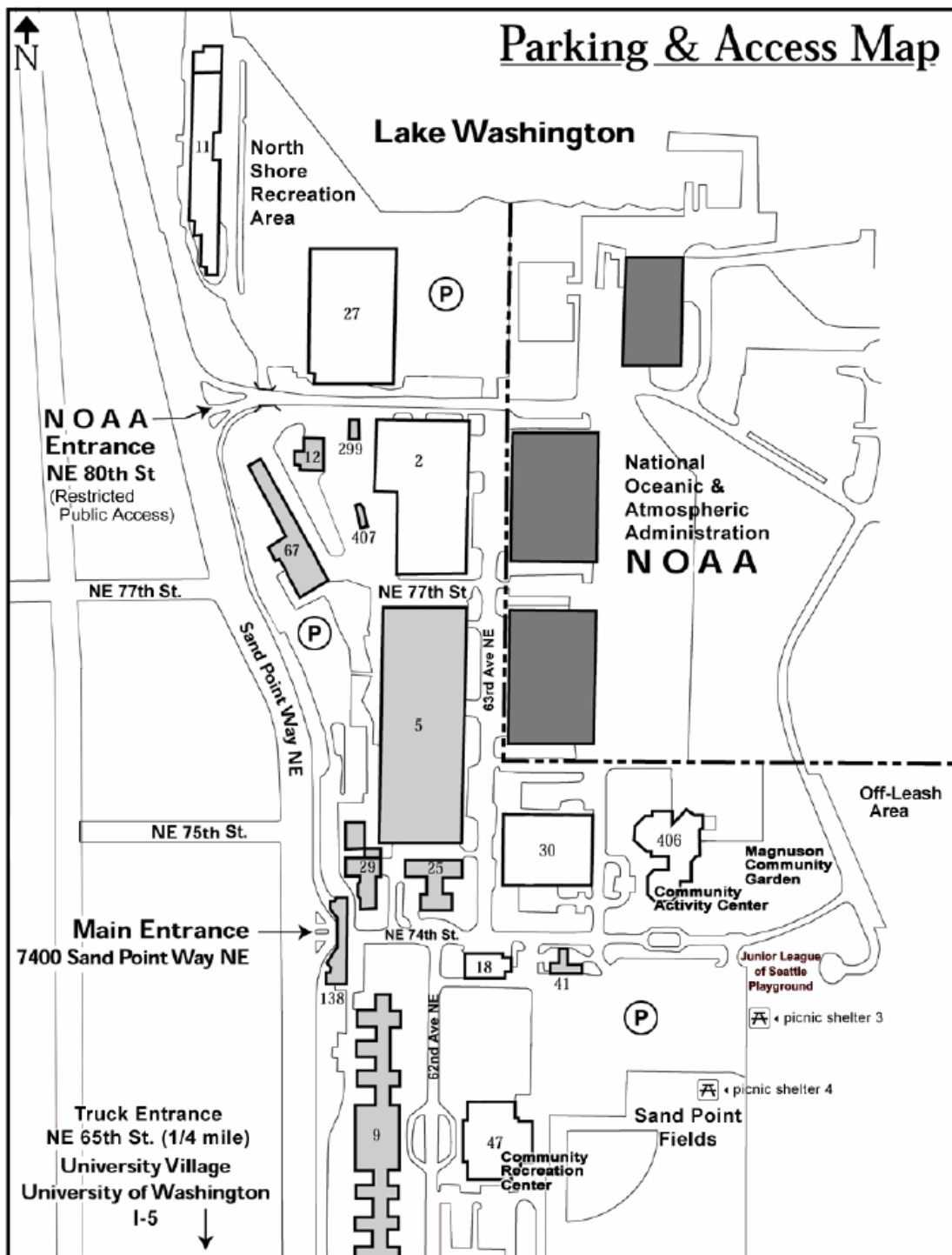
Public Participation Plan

Public meeting in fall 2006

Legislation/Council Action

- Council approval of funding for building 27 will be required – fall 2006
- Council approval of long term leases will be required – Spring 2007
- Amendments to the Sand Point Overlay District will require Council action – spring 2007

Attachment A



Attachment B

Sand Point Campus and Historic District Improvements 1997-present

- Utility Upgrades. In 1997 the City Council approved funding for upgrades to the on-site utility systems. The water and sewer systems were replaced and a conduit was installed for the electrical and telecommunications system. Street lights were installed and other minor improvements were made. The University of Washington and Sand Point Community Housing Association shared in the cost of those improvements. **Total costs = \$11.2 million.**
- The Brig. The Pro Parks Levy allocated \$618,000 for improvements to the former Brig in 2003. Prior to that, approximately \$200,000 in revenues were allocated to upgrade the HVAC system and make other minor improvements. This building can be fully occupied. **Total costs = \$618,000**
- Recreation Center. The 1999 Community Center Levy provided \$3.1 million to make improvements to this building. In addition, \$1 million was allocated from CRF funds to replace the roof. That work was completed in 2003 and this building opened as the Magnuson Community Center in February 2004 making the 500-seat theater, the gymnasium and one meeting room available for public use. Renovations were not undertaken for the pool, locker rooms, and approximately 15,000 square feet of office and activity space in this building and cannot be occupied until improvements are made. **Total Costs = \$4.1 million.**
- Building 30. Major Maintenance CRF funds were allocated to replace the roof on this building and make some seismic upgrades in 2003. The \$1.5 million project was completed in 2003. Prior to 2003 approximately \$100,000 in revenues had been allocated to install a partial heating system and make other minor improvements. The hangar in this building hosts a range of community events and a portion of the office space is occupied. Approximately 21,000 square feet of office space cannot be occupied until improvements are made. **Total Costs = \$1.6 million.**
- Other Miscellaneous Improvements. Since 1997 minor improvements have been made to other buildings and two buildings in the campus have been demolished. Minor improvements have included roof patches, hazardous materials removal, door and window replacement, emergency exit signage, etc. A new heating system was installed in Building 138 (the Gatehouse). Minor improvements have been made in order to attract paying tenants and maintain building safety. **Total Costs = \$870,000.**
- University of Washington. The University has fully renovated two of the five buildings it owns within the campus. It is likely to demolish one building and is researching options for redevelopment of the remaining two buildings as defined in an educational use covenant. **Total Costs = \$25 million.**
- Sand Point Community Housing Association (SPCHA). The SPCHA has fully renovated six buildings it owns. It has plans to build up to 103 new units on its pre-approved locations on-site, both inside and outside the historic district. **Total costs = \$6 million.**

Verbal Briefing/Board Questions and Answers

Mr. Friedli reviewed the highlights of the written briefing paper. He noted that five of the proposals have the highest likelihood of success:

1. Civic Light Opera at the Community Center theater;
2. Arena Sports in Building 27;
3. Building 11 LLC including Sail Sand Point and other recreation and retail uses;

4. Cascade Bicycle Club in Building 18; and
5. Artists' studios in the west wing of Building 30.

Mr. Friedli discussed issues that would be addressed at the upcoming public meetings.

Loss of Opportunity raised by citizens regarding Arena Sports and Building 27: should the building be used for sports or kept available for special events. Mr. Friedli stated that funding for the redevelopment of Building 27 is coming from Arena Sports not from City funding. Lease revenue from the tenant will pay debt service for the cost of the building improvements. No other proposals for use of this building could pay a lease level that would cover the debt service, including a collaboration of separate community organizations, Northwest Crafts Alliance being one of these, that proposed using the building for special events. However, special events do not generate enough revenue to support the needs of the building.

Community Center Improvements are needed for Civic Light Opera. Currently there are no restrooms or changing room for the actors. Renovation to the building to improve the theater may conflict with recreation opportunities.

Traffic and Parking information has been collected and Parks is updating the traffic and parking studies that were done in 1996, 2000 and 2003. Noise and light impacts from the parking lots will also be evaluated.

Cliff Swallows are located in the rafters of Building 27.

Signs are needed for information and access but we do not want a lot of commercial signage.

Commercial activity at a City park is a concern some in the community have raised. Arena Sports is a commercial business providing recreation opportunities.

Mr. Friedli noted that five key issues remain in developing agreements for campus use:

1. **Balance:** Parks is seeking a balance between arts, recreation, protecting and enhancing the environment and community activities. The vision has always been a mix of activities.
2. **Public Access:** We are seeking to create a welcoming environment that offers something for all.
3. **Build on Success:** Civic Light Opera and Arena Sports have been successful tenants and the plan builds on their achievements.
4. **Long Term Solution:** The goal is long term improved and maintainable facilities.
5. **Progress Forward:** The City will have to close buildings and stop existing programs if the situation doesn't change. Investment in the buildings is needed now or we will move backward.

Next steps are community meetings, and the issue will be back before the Park Board for a public hearing on November 7.

Commissioner Questions

Commissioner Collins expressed interest in accommodating special events, at least until organizations can find alternative sites. Mr. Friedli responded that there will be at least one more year before Building 27 changes. Also, some of the events can be accommodated in the smaller Building 30 with perhaps the addition of tents or extending events over more days/week ends.

Commissioner Belbeck asked about the park's recreation covenant. Mr. Friedli responded that it covers all of Magnuson Park, except the University of Washington property and the homeless housing. Uses such as the small restaurant that is proposed for Building 11 are consistent with the covenant, as the National Park Service has said that small, park serving restaurants are permitted.

Mr. Collins asked if there was progress on getting a branch library located in the park. Mr. Friedli noted that a small library was still a possibility. Responding to a question about needed zoning changes, Mr. Friedli stated that a change will need to be made to the Sand Point Overlay. Offices are considered an accessory use, but will need to be permitted as a primary use for the Cascade Bicycle Club office space.

Responding to a revenue question from Ms. Jackson, Mr. Friedli stated that all of the proposals are designed to provide revenue and that the goal is to alleviate the City's financial responsibility for the buildings.

Briefing: SR 520

David Graves, Parks planner, provided an oral and written briefing regarding the SR 520 Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

SR 520 Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

This briefing is being held at the request of the Board of Park Commissioners. No action is requested from the Board at this time by Seattle Parks and Recreation. The Board may decide to make a recommendation to the Superintendent, Mayor and City Council and/or choose to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement at its September 14th meeting; it may decide to take no action at this time and schedule regular update briefings as the project moves forward; or it may make a recommendation and/or comment in two weeks.

Project Description and Background

The project before the Board of Park Commissioners is the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The project proponent is the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). WSDOT is also the co-lead agency under both the State and National Environmental Policy Acts (SEPA & NEPA), with Sound Transit and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The DEIS was issued on August 18th and the public comment period runs through October 2nd. Note that there will be a public hearing on the DEIS on Monday September 18th, at the Museum of History and Industry, from 4 to 7 pm. Note also that the public comment period may be extended based on requests from the University of Washington, the Board of Park Commissioners or others.

The DEIS discusses the potential environmental impacts associated with three alternatives: a new 4-lane structure with a variety of options, a new 6-lane structure with a variety of options, and a no action alternative. For both the 4- lane and 6- lane alternatives, the project limits extend along the SR 520 corridor from I-5 in Seattle to 108th Avenue NE on the Eastside (just west of I-405). The 6-lane alternative also includes minor improvements to eastbound SR 520 between I-405 and 124th Avenue NE.¹ Also, both the 4- lane and the 6- lane alternatives could include a Pacific Street/Arboretum interchange. A tube/tunnel is *not* one of the alternatives in the DEIS.

¹ Information from WSDOT SR 520 Project Website.

Seattle Parks and Recreation is one of the many public departments and agencies which are working with and commenting on WSDOT's proposal. Parks' comments will be part of the coordinated City of Seattle's comments on the DEIS.

Park Board Opportunities to Comment on the DEIS

The Board has several avenues of input on the project and specifically the DEIS. The Board's input directly with staff is invaluable as we review and draft comments on the DEIS. The Board may choose to review the DEIS and comment directly to WSDOT on the DEIS during the public comment period. The Board could send a representative to the public hearing on September 18th and provide oral and/or written comments to WSDOT at the hearing.² The Board could also provide comments to staff to be included in the Department's comments, which would be included in the overall City comments. Finally, individual Board members could provide oral and/or written comments to WSDOT during the public comment period.

DEIS Issues

Overall, the DEIS is a well crafted document that outlines the potential short and long-term environmental impacts associated with the SR520 replacement project. The following is an outline of the issues that staff has identified in our preliminary review. These issues will form the basis for our comments:

- Loss of Bagley Viewpoint;
- Impacts to submerged park lands/loss of aquatic recreation opportunities;
- Structure width - Shading of vegetation, impacts to terrestrial and aquatic habitat and passive recreation areas;
- Structure height (positive and negative)
- Through traffic on Lake Washington Boulevard;
- Noise and traffic impacts on the Japanese Garden;
- Permanent closure of the Lake Washington Boulevard on/off-ramps to SR 520;
- Visual impacts of noise walls on the Arboretum;
- Quiet pavement;
- Pacific Street/Arboretum Interchange – direct impacts to the north end of the Arboretum, particularly Marsh and Foster Islands; spillover traffic impacts throughout the Arboretum;
- Loss of the MOHAI building;
- Loss of McCurdy Park;
- Impacts to East Montlake Park;
- WSDOT peninsula;
- Operate the roadway at non-highway speed; and,
- Mitigation package.

Schedule

Once the comment period ends October 2, 2006, WSDOT and the other the lead agencies (FHWA & Sound Transit) will respond to comments. A Preferred Alternative will be identified later this year or early in 2007. The Final EIS is expected to be issued by the fall of 2007. Following issuance of the Final EIS, a Record of Decision will be issued by the Federal Highway Administration.

Additional Information

² There is also a public hearing on September 21st at the St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Bellevue.

If you any questions regarding the SR520 project, contact David Graves at 684-7048 or e-mail to david.graves@seattle.gov.

WSDOT's SR 520 Project Website is: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/SR520Bridge>

Oral Briefing and Commissioner Questions

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) came out at the end of August and October 2 is the end of the comment period. The University of Washington requested an extension of the comment period but their request was denied by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), but other requests for extensions are being considered. The Seattle City Council chose 3 preferred alternatives.

Commissioner Collins stated that there is a lot of opposition to the Pacific Street Interchange alternative and that neighbors are interested in more exploration of the tube/tunnel option. He stated the Pacific Street Interchange design has devastating impacts on the Arboretum, including construction impacts, noise, shading, and aesthetics. He stated that, while all of the current proposals are bad for the Arboretum, the Pacific Interchange is the worst. Commissioner Collins asked the Board to take a formal position on the project and testify at the WSCOT public hearing.

Commissioner Jackson remarked that the Board usually has a public hearing on a controversial issue before taking formal vote. Commissioner Pflaumer stated that because there had not been a Board public hearing or vote there was no united voice yet from the Board.

Briefing: Orchard Street Ravine

The Board had received a written briefing on the pedestrian connection trail study for Orchard Street Ravine. No oral briefing was provided.

Orchard Street Ravine Pedestrian Connection Trail Feasibility Study Written Briefing

REQUESTED BOARD ACTION – This briefing paper is to provide an update on the Pro Parks Levy Orchard Street Ravine project, as well as the supplemental Pedestrian Connection Trail Feasibility Study. At the request of community members, the Parks Superintendent directed Parks staff to hire a consultant to complete a more detailed technical evaluation of connecting trail options, including environmental and development code requirements, drainage considerations, accessibility, construction methods and project costs. The SvR Design Company was hired to complete the study.

No action is requested of the Park Board at this time.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND

In February 2006, the Orchard Street Ravine Pro Parks Levy project was presented to the Board for a recommendation regarding development of the Orchard Street Ravine site, to include trails access and forest restoration. At the February 23, 2006 Park Board meeting, the Board recommended approval of the staff recommendation of a flat loop trail system at the lower south end of Orchard Street Ravine as well as extensive vegetation management to restore and preserve native habitat. The Board also recommended to the Superintendent that he negotiate with Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) and Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) to control drainage on the 38th Ave. street end. The Park Board asked the Superintendent to consider a safe through trail to be built in the future, along with exploring options for trail funding.

Following the Park Board recommendation, the Superintendent decided to proceed with creation of the Vegetation Management Plan (VMP), implementation of the VMP as soon as possible including the loop trail construction, and hiring a consultant to perform the detailed feasibility study.

Since that time, the site specific VMP, which will guide forest restoration work, has been completed. The first of monthly volunteer work parties was held (with 31 volunteers!) on August 12, some contracted restoration work has begun, and construction of the lower loop trails is nearly complete.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS:

The public involvement process for the Pedestrian Connection Feasibility Study included an announcement at a VMP meeting, posting the report on-line, and a public meeting on August 21, 2006. For the Pro Parks Levy project, there were 2 public meetings last fall and winter, as well as the Park Board hearing and recommendation meetings in February 2006. Three public meetings have been held to develop the VMP and there have been more detailed conversations about forest restoration. There was discussion and input around connecting trails at those meetings as well.

ISSUES:

Study Scope: The scope of work for the Pedestrian Connection Feasibility Study included civil engineering and landscape architectural design services sufficient for preliminary layout and drainage design, including cost estimates, for two connecting pedestrian trail options – one from upper 38th Ave. SW (Route B) and one from SW Orchard St. (Route A). The pedestrian trail would be wide enough to accommodate “single-file” trail usage. The consultant’s recommendation incorporated and considered the following criteria: simplicity; environmental sensitivity, including minimizing disruption to the slope and wildlife habitat; geotechnical considerations; SPU street drainage requirements; SDOT requirements; Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements; and construction and maintenance costs.

Study Recommendation: The study found that both routes are technically feasible, and identified a number of pros and cons between the two routes. Based on their findings, the consultant finds that Route B would cause the least impact to the site and be the most cost effective in terms of construction and maintenance. A copy of the report is available at the website listed below.

Issues: The primary issue is whether or not to construct a connecting trail through the ravine, and if so, which route should be pursued if and when funding becomes available.

Prior Staff Considerations: In the previous analysis and recommendation for the project, Park staff did not recommend pursuing a connecting trail. Reasons included: the clear community consensus priority for restoration; funding constraints; potential visitor and environmental risks associated with site landslide history and erosion on steep slopes; long term maintenance costs; and potential engineering issues related to drainage from adjacent streets.

Summary of Community Input: Community comments continue to be across the board on this issue. A handful of individuals do not want any connecting trails to be considered. These few contend that no trails are needed at this site. Their focus is site preservation to the greatest extent possible; they have expressed concerns that trails will deter wildlife and encourage illicit use of the property. Some have stated there are sufficient neighborhood connections already.

The majority of individuals involved in the public involvement process seem to believe that a connecting trail would be fine as long as it disturbs the site as little as possible. Most recent input

has indicated that for cost and limited site impact reasons, the 38th Ave. SW trail (Route B) is preferred. Individuals in the Friends of Orchard St. Ravine (FOStR) group indicate they would support this option, and have previously stated their support for future fundraising. Individuals in the Morgan Community Association (MoCA) find that either option would meet the stated goals of the Morgan Junction Neighborhood Plan (environmental restoration and providing public access to open space) and would support future fundraising for either option.

There is a third group that desires that both options be kept available. The Orchard Ravine Community Association (ORCA), while appreciative of the work, finds fault with portions of the technical feasibility study including:

- 1).The study does not consider a larger scale of neighborhood connections. *-This policy issue was not a part of the consultant's scope of work, but has been considered by Parks staff.*
- 2).The study did not use sufficient topographic survey data and thus believes that cost estimates may be skewed. *-The consultant used City GIS/LIDAR data in combination with field reconnaissance. This is typical for a feasibility study.*
- 3).The standard of trail development was not "low-key" enough. *-Parks standards were applied where possible; the consultant (and others at the meeting) recognized that as a public access route, a public standard is necessary – this relates in part to the experience as you use it, but primarily relates to ongoing maintenance of that facility. The site geology indicated a more developed elevated trail would best meet ECA guidelines for least site impact, and be more maintainable.*
- 4.) Lastly, ORCA advocates that they have enough volunteer support to maintain a less formal trail, and that Parks is holding a double-standard by allowing vegetation work to proceed with volunteer support. *-At this site Parks is working with contracted restoration support and volunteers. Parks experience in other trail settings has been that while there is a great amount of initiative at the outset, volunteers for this kind of work are not consistently present after several years.*

BUDGET

The budget for the Pedestrian Connection Trail Feasibility Study, meeting, and staff costs is approximately \$20,000. There is currently no established budget for development of either connecting trail option. The study provided project cost ranges for the trail options.

- For Route A (SW Orchard to 38th cul-de-sac), the range is \$244,018 to \$298,566.
- For Route B (38th Ave SW upper to lower 38th), the range is \$107,233 to \$141,703.

SCHEDULE

The Pro Parks Levy project is currently underway, completion of the lower trails is anticipated for October. Phased restoration work is started and expected to continue through 2008 with Levy funding, and beyond that with additional fundraising as necessary.

No schedule will be prepared for a through trail project until the decision is made by the Superintendent that identifies it as a project.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Park staff concur with the consultant's recommendation that, of the two through trail options, Route B from 38th Ave. SW is the preferred connection. While the feasibility study does not address the larger public facility connection issues as directly, Route B provides a viable east-west connection that is most cost efficient from a construction and maintenance perspective. The results of the feasibility study indicate the drainage issues do not appear to be as severe as originally anticipated at 38th Ave. SW. Route B is the shortest connection, therefore provides the

least amount of site disturbance; although some care will need to be exercised in connecting to the lower loop and addressing ravine drainage. It can be constructed without extraordinary measures like an elevated stairway. Should this route be constructed, it may require some trailhead identification to make it more visible, but this could be a part of an overall trail signage system similar to that seen at Longfellow Creek Legacy Trail.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Web page - www.ci.seattle.wa.us/parks/proparks/projects/orchardstravine.htm
- Park Staff contact – karen.galt@seattle.gov 206-684-7104
- Neighborhood interest groups – www.morganjunction.org and www.friendsoforchardstreetravine.org
www.orcaseattle.org

Board Discussion

Commissioner Pflaumer stated that, having read the briefing paper, she thought the best alternative was the one the Board had previously endorsed. She stated the 38th Street access route was and remains the best alternative. The Board voted unanimously in support of the 38th Street trail connection, as recommended by staff.

Board of Park Commissioners' Business

New/Old Business

Commissioner Pflaumer informed the Board of a September 13 press release issued by City Councilmembers Della and Steinbrueck. In it the Councilmembers propose increasing the size of the Board to eight and having four of the members nominated by the Council and four by the Mayor. Ms. Pflaumer commented that the press release came out one day after she met with Councilmember Della regarding Parks Public Involvement Policy and he never mentioned his intention to change the Board structure or how members are nominated. The press release questions the diversity of the current Board; however, Ms. Pflaumer noted the great diversity on the Board in age, ethnicity, neighborhood and interests. She noted that the legislation to make the changes proposed by Councilmembers Della and Steinbrueck is to be introduced to the Council on September 18 and voted upon on September 28. She questioned what public process the Council would undertake regarding this legislation.

Commissioner Jackson asked what relation the new nominating process would have on the three members who are currently up for reconfirmation. She stated she does not want to be part of a political process and expressed concerns about the proposal. Commissioner Collins concurred, stating he did not want to be part of a political battle. The Board agreed to have Commissioner Pflaumer write a letter regarding this issue.

Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience

The Board returned to comments from the audience.

Eliza Davidson: Regarding SR 520, Ms. Davidson requested that the Board take a formal position. She stated a better design needs to be found that has fewer impacts on the Arboretum.
Ted Lane: All of the alternatives in the SR 520 DEIS are terrible. Two promising signs are the fact that the governor will make the final decision, and the support from the League of Women Voters for adding the tube/tunnel alternative to those that are being considered. He asked that the Board support inclusion of the tube/tunnel in the environmental assessment.

Jonathan Dubman: Mr. Dubman, a Montlake resident, favors the Pacific Interchange alternative. All of the alternatives have impacts on the Arboretum; however, the Bay 6 alternative is worse for transit connections and bad for Portage Bay, Montlake and North Capitol Hill. Montlake is an Olmsted Blvd. which should be protected.

Rob Wilkinson: He favors the Pacific Interchange alternative for SR 520, and is against the Bay 6 alternative. He is a long time Montlake resident. The Pacific Interchange has better transit connections and new open space can be created. The Bay 6 alternative has devastating impacts on Montlake.

Jean Amick: Regarding SR 520, she thanked Commissioners Collins and Belbeck for their work on this issue. Transit connections are not good with the Pacific Interchange, as described in the DEIS. This alternative has bad impacts on the Arboretum

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

APPROVED: _____ DATE _____

Terry Holme, Acting Chair
Board of Park Commissioners