



## Department of Parks and Recreation

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
July 24, 2008

Web site: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkboard/>

### ***Board of Park Commissioners:***

#### Present:

Neal Adams  
John Barber  
Donna Kostka  
Christine Larsen  
Jackie Ramels, Acting Chair

#### Excused:

Terry Holme  
Amit Ranade, Chair

### ***Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:***

Tim Gallagher, Superintendent  
Christopher Williams, Deputy Superintendent  
Sandy Brooks, Park Board Coordinator

Commissioner Ramels called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. **Commissioner Barber moved, and Commissioner Kostka seconded, approval of the agenda and the July 10 minutes as corrected. The vote was taken and the motion was approved.**

Commissioner Ramels acknowledged the correspondence forwarded by the Board's Coordinator since the July 10 meeting, including testimony on the park naming proposal and non-tennis use of tennis courts pilot, as well as many parks-related newspaper articles, press releases, and announcements.

## **Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Gallagher reported on several park items. For more information on Seattle Parks and Recreation, visit the web pages at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/>.

Magnuson Park Update: The Superintendent reviewed City Council's recent rejection of a private group's \$8 million plan to renovate the deteriorating Building 11 at Magnuson Park. This contract was the most controversial one for the Magnuson Park buildings. Seattle Parks requested a policy discussion about the contracts with Council, but that did not happen before Council's vote. Council is now putting together a list of options for the contract by the end of September. To read news coverage of the vote, see [http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/371873\\_magnuson23.html](http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/371873_magnuson23.html).

Seattle Parks and Recreation Reorganization: Recently the Department was reorganized to create a Natural Resources Unit (NRU) that includes horticulture, water conservation, the environmental learning centers, handling of toxic wastes, and other environmental staff. Melinda Nichols has accepted the position of manager of NRU. There will no longer be a separate horticultural unit. Rebecca Salinas and Eric Friedli will trade their roles as managers, with Ms. Salinas now heading the Partnerships Unit and Mr. Friedli heading the Policy and Business Analysis Unit in the Superintendent's Office.

Green Lake Spikes Removed: Forty-five stakes found embedded in Green Lake have now been removed. The stakes are three foot long, about the size of a little finger, and have sharp points. City staff members continue to try to determine how the stakes got in the Lake. [Note: after this meeting was held, it was determined that the stakes were installed in the mid-1980s to hold screens down to deter milfoil from growing in Green Lake. The stakes were shaped like an upside down umbrella handle. In the interim years, the stakes deteriorated which allowed them to break at the curved section.]

A community-wide cleanup of the area is planned for July 11, including a scuba diver to remove any debris in the water. The press has been notified of this event.

Park Curfew: Parks' staff members have been reviewing the varying range of times that neighborhood parks close at night. The Superintendent noted that many parks remain open until 10:30 pm in the winter — long after the park is dark. Some cities open and close their parks based on sunrise and sunset times. Staff are studying closure times and will bring a recommendation to the Park Board later this year.

Denny Triangle Acquisition: The Department is moving forward to purchase this piece of property on Westlake; however, there is currently no money in the budget to develop the park site. Cornish Institute owns the property, which currently houses Enterprise Car Rental.

Update on *the Wawona* Relocation: The historical ship, *The Wawona*, was not moved from Lake Union Park last Wednesday as planned, as the bid for moving the ship was higher than anticipated. For more information on the ship, see <http://www.nwseaport.org/wawona.html>.

Healthy Parks Kickoff: Seattle Parks and Recreation will kick off its "Healthy Parks, Healthy You" initiative at Green Lake Park on August 23. For more information on this event, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/healthyparks/default.htm>.

Graffiti Update: Superintendent Gallagher recently spent a morning with the Department's graffiti crew. Removing graffiti requires many steps and is difficult to do – he complimented the four dedicated members of the crew who work hard to remove the graffiti. In many cases, the areas are soon re-tagged. Staff are asked to respond within 48 hours to remove graffiti, but the high volume and numerous locations makes it difficult to meet this goal.

Ft. Lawton Event to Honor Black Soldiers: This event is scheduled on Saturday, July 26, beginning at 9:30 am. Expectations are that 500 or more people will attend. One of the wrongly-charged soldiers will attend. For more on the history of this WWII story, see [http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/371798\\_fortlawton23.html](http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/371798_fortlawton23.html).

Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center (PAC) Task Force: The Task Force met for the third time earlier today and has discussed the vision and mission of Langston Hughes, and heard presentations from Michael Killoren, Director of the City's Arts and Cultural Affairs Office, and Robert Nellams, Director of Seattle Center, regarding their experiences in managing public arts organizations and their ideas about the future of Langston Hughes PAC.

"Snow White", this year's summer musical from the PAC, runs from August 14-17 at the Moore Theater. Staff will send the Park Board additional information on the performance. For more information on the Performing Arts Center, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/centers/langston.htm>.

Handouts Distributed: The Superintendent distributed two handouts to the Commissioners:

- Road closures pilot: information on how the program might be structured in 2009
- Recreation across cultures: Parks' communication staff Malia Langworthy prepared a report on what recreation terms mean in different languages. For instance, the word "camp" has a very different connotation in North Africa than what it might have in the United States. The Department is being more aware word's meanings to other cultures in working with immigrant populations.

New Director Joins Department: Superintendent Gallagher introduced Sue Goodwin as the new Recreation Director. One of her assignments is to lead the Department in its "Healthy Parks, Healthy You" initiative. Ms. Goodwin stated that it is a great opportunity for her to join Seattle's Parks and Recreation Department and she invited the Board to call or e-mail her with any questions.

### **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. One person signed up to testify and made comments for both the Oral Request segment and the Park Naming Amendment Public Hearing:

Gary Gaffner: He commented that the Commissioners must always try to have the appearance of fairness in their positions on the Park Board. He noted that Commissioner Kostka is particularly interested in a wildlife sanctuary in the parks and Commissioner Larsen is supporting more pools. He urged that Commissioners follow the rules when they go out in the community to support their interests. Don't make it look like they have undue influence on Park Department-related issues.

### **Park Board Discussion with Councilmember Tom Rasmussen**

City Councilmember Tom Rasmussen is Chair of the Council's Parks and Seattle Center Committee and attends a Park Board meeting each quarter to discuss topics of interest with the Commissioners. Tonight three topics were discussed: the Parks and Greenspace Levy; Building 11 at Magnuson Park; and the City's surplus property policy.

Parks and Greenspace 2008 Ballot Levy: Councilmember Rasmussen reported that City Council's recent decision to place the \$145 million Parks and Greenspace Levy on the fall 2008 ballot is a huge victory. The new levy is the result of a three-month citizen community process, culminating in a long list of projects and goals. Although the Executive does not yet support the Levy, Councilmember Rasmussen believes it will pass in the election. During the community process, he heard that Parks cannot maintain the parks it now has and the challenge is to come up with ideas to help with that. The new Levy includes up to \$1.4 million to help maintain any new parks that may be acquired through the Levy. He asked the Park Board to clarify their letter of support that was sent to all City Council members prior to the Council voting its approval of the Levy.

Board comments: Commissioner Larsen commented that the new Levy is the most significant park item accomplished by City Council in the last eight years. The Board agreed that it supported a Levy for the 2008 fall ballot per its letter to City Council.

Magnuson Park's Building 11: Councilmember Rasmussen referred to Council's recent rejection of a contract with private investors to renovate Building 11. Council members were not making progress with the Executive in discussing the contract, and found the contract unacceptable from a public stand point. Council's goal is to have a new contract prepared by the end of September that will not drive out public access from Building 11. The Council will continue discussions with the Executive about this. Under the terms of the rejected contract, the facilities for Sail Sand Point could be sold after 10 years – and it is important to keep Sail Sand Point at Magnuson Park. More than 130 people attended the Council's public hearing on the contract.

He referred to the Park Board's December 14, 2006, approval of the contract and asked if the Board reviewed the contract itself or a summary. When City Council was told by Parks staff that the Park Board approved the contract, does that mean that the Board actually reviewed the entire contract?

Board comments: Commissioner Adams commented that since he has been a member of the Park Board he has learned that Magnuson Park is both a blessing and a huge problem for the City. He asked if the Parks Department, City Council, and Mayor have worked together to develop a long-range plan for Magnuson Park. Building 11 is only one of many problems at the park.

Councilmember Rasmussen responded that Magnuson Park has a long-range plan which is now being implemented, that includes saving and renovating several of the buildings. During discussion of the contracts for the buildings, Parks staff indicated they were working under the City Council's guidelines; however, there is no record of the guidelines. He asked why it took the Department two-three years to negotiate this contract for Building 11. Council will continue this discussion with Parks, as the contracts for Buildings 11 and 27 are still to be completed. He believes that the lack of agreement between the Executive and the Council led to the contract for Building 11 not being adopted. Council has a very limited staff and does not have the time to negotiate the contracts.

Commissioner Ramels was the only Commissioner at tonight's meeting who was a member of the Park Board when the Magnuson contracts were discussed in December 2006. Councilmember Rasmussen asked if the Board gave the Parks Department guidelines on the contract and Commissioner Ramels answered that it didn't, that a summary of the contract was presented to the Board. The Board's criteria to the Department was that the buildings had to be accessible to the public and to low-income people. The Board recommended approval of those contract details that were presented to them, with various stipulations, such as guaranteed public access. She believes that when the Board made its December 14, 2006, recommendation it was reviewing policy and not a contract. Commissioner Larsen thanked Councilmember Rasmussen for working to subsidize activities like boating lessons so they are available to everyone.

Commissioner Adams added that his position as a Commissioner is to give advice to the Superintendent, City Council, and Mayor; however, he does not believe that the Park Board can approve a contract.

Councilmember Barber noted that the December 14, 2006, Park Board meeting was filmed by Seattle Channel and is still available on the Board's web site to watch. The Board had several concerns which seemed more focused on the proposal to proceed, rather than on the contract. He asked how the Park Board can be of the most use to the Mayor or City Council. Should Board members follow

up on their vote with a written explanation of why they voted in a particular way, so as to document the Board's vote?

Commissioner Kostka hopes that City Council will consider mothballing Building 11 until public funding is available. Councilmember Rasmussen responded that it is costly to mothball the building and is not Council's preferred alternative. Mothballing adds to a higher cost if the buildings are ever renovated and can be a risk to the safety of the public.

Commissioner Larsen added that reviewing the Parks Department's contracts should not be a role for the Park Board. Councilmember Rasmussen clarified that he would not expect the Board to review every line of a contract; however, he believes the Board should set goals and guidelines of what it wants a contract to achieve – especially a contract for Building 11.

Superintendent Gallagher noted that the City's Department of Finance was the primary negotiator for the contracts for all the buildings at Magnuson Park, rather than the Parks Department.

Surplus City Property: Councilmember Rasmussen stated that the City's current policy is that when a Department such as City Light or Seattle Department of Transportation has excess property that is located next to roads, etc., the City's policy is that the Departments ask if any other Department wants the space. If there are no takers, then the property is sold. This happened two times recently. The Executive recommended selling the two parcels; however, City Council would like to see these spaces kept for parks. There is now a parcel of land in West Seattle, located just above where 5-10 town homes are being built, and he wants the Parks Department to be more willing to accept these small pieces of property. The 5-10 acres located just above this parcel (which currently has trees and other vegetation on it) has a sign posted that 27 town homes are scheduled to be built on the property. When those trees and vegetation are removed, it makes keeping the small parcel below as green space even more important.

Superintendent Gallagher responded that Seattle Parks supports getting these properties as park property, but the other Departments want to sell them and Parks does not have the funds to purchase the spaces. Councilmember Rasmussen stated that the land is owned by the City and he would like to see a policy where one Department could transfer land to another, without an exchange of monies. He is working with the City's Law Department on a policy where surplus City property could be legally transferred to Parks without charge. He asked whether the Park Board discusses the Parks Department's decisions to purchase surplus City property.

Board comments: Commissioners Ramels and Larsen thanked Councilmember Rasmussen for taking the lead on these property transfers. Commissioner Larsen hopes that when the Roosevelt Reservoir is de-commissioned by Seattle Public Utilities that it could become park acreage.

Commissioners thanked Councilmember Rasmussen for attending Park Board meetings and being so accessible to the Board. Commissioner Adams added that he believes the Park Board is getting better at asking the right questions and that it is helpful to the Board to have the Councilmember attend the quarterly Park Board meetings.

## **Public Hearing: Park Naming Proposal to Amend Name of Freeway Park to Jim Ellis Freeway park and Amend name of Queen Anne Pool to Gordon Clinton Queen Anne Pool**

At the Board's July 10 meeting, Paula Hoff, Seattle Parks and Recreation Strategic Analyst, briefed the Board on the Department's proposal to amend the names of Freeway Park and Queen Anne Pool. The briefing was immediately followed by a public hearing. To read the briefing paper and minutes of the July 10 meeting, see <http://cityofseattle.net/parks/ParkBoard/minutes/2008/07-10-08.pdf>. Commissioners also received a written briefing prior to the meeting, which was available to the public on the Board's web site and hard copies were available at the meeting. Tonight the Board held a public hearing on the proposal.

### ***Staff Briefing Update***

Ms. Hoff gave a brief summary of the proposal to modify the name of Queen Anne Pool to Gordon Clinton Queen Anne Pool and Freeway Park to Jim Ellis Freeway Park. The Board will discuss this proposal and make a recommendation to the Superintendent at its August 28 meeting. Ms. Hoff asked Commissioners to e-mail her any questions they have on the proposal between tonight's meeting and the discussion and recommendation.

The public hearing began. Eight people signed in to testify and allowed up to three minutes each to testify.

### ***Public Hearing***

Gary Gaffner: He attended the July 10 meeting and noted an exception to the park naming policy that a person must be dead for three years before a park could be named after him/her. "Red" Dahl was a member of the Board of Park Commissioners for 29 years and served as its chair for nine terms. Dahl Playfield in Northeast Seattle was named after him while he was still living.

Bob Anderson: He is the executive director of Freeway House, located next door to Freeway Park. He distributed a recommendation and read it for the record. Freeway House supports re-naming Freeway Park to James Ellis Park.

He noted that he just came from the park and as part of the efforts to revitalize it, there was an 18-piece big band playing with more than 150 people dancing. Freeway Park is coming alive again!

Don Harper: He is a member of Queen Anne Community Council and addressed the Board two weeks ago opposing re-naming Queen Anne Pool after former Mayor Gordon Clinton. He still opposes the proposal, as Mayor Clinton did not do anything of significance for Queen Anne Pool. Mr. Harper likes the pool's name just as it is. He suggested naming a site at Seattle Center after Mr. Gordon, as he was instrumental in helping develop the Center.

Roger Monson: He also spoke at the July 10 meeting in opposition to re-naming the pool after former Mayor Clinton, who did nothing of significance for the pool. He suggested that if the pool is re-named, the appropriate person would be Terrence Irving, who contributed a great deal to the pool.

Beverly Bell: She agrees with Mr. Harper and Mr. Monson and objects to the pool being re-named after former Mayor Clinton.

Deborah Arms: She is a resident of Queen Anne and read a statement of opposition to changing the name of Queen Anne Pool. She read from the current Park Naming Policy that the Department will consider the wishes of the community, the person must be deceased for at least three years at the time of the naming, and the person should have made significant contribution in relation to the naming. The community has not been consulted about this name change, former Mayor Clinton is still living, and it is unknown to the community if

he did anything to benefit Queen Anne. This does not meet the criteria of the Department's naming policy and she is strongly opposed.

She also suggested that if the pool is to be re-named that it be re-named after Terrance Irvis. He helped build and maintain the pool and designed the aquatic program for kids at risk, as well as other program. He is far more deserving.

Sharon Levine: Ms. Levine stated that Seattle Parks' staff did not present this proposal to the Queen Anne Community Council as to why this re-name is proposed. There were 19 members at the Community Council's most recent meeting and former Mayor Clinton's significance to Queen Anne Pool was unknown to all of them. This proposal by the Mayor is a failure and is viewed as an assault on the Queen Anne community. Her understanding is that former Mayor Clinton was instrumental in the development of Seattle Center and suggested that one of those facilities be named after him. She also suggested that one of the reservoirs that is being lidded and turned into new park land be named for Jim Ellis. She also stated that the Naming Policy requires that the person be deceased for three years before a park facility can be named after them.

She asked that the Board of Park Commissioners remind the Mayor to abide by the Department's naming policy.

Mike Evans: He founded Freeway Park Neighborhood Association ten years ago; however, Jim Ellis has had far more positive impact on the park and continues to contribute to many important civic projects. He believes the name Freeway Park is unattractive and asked that it be re-named to "Jim Ellis Park." Naming it after Mr. Ellis while he is still living is a great way to honor him.

The public hearing concluded.

### ***Board Discussion and Recommendation***

Commissioner Barber commented that Freeway Park Neighborhood Association seems to feel that it was adequately consulted about this proposal. Responding to a question from Commissioner Barber on whether she contacted other community groups, Ms. Hoff answered that she had.

Commissioner Larsen will be absent at the August 28 meeting. The Board is being asked to consider the two name amendments and also being asked to consider changing the naming policy as a recommendation to change the names would be out of policy – if the Policy isn't first changed. She asked if the Board would have an opportunity to discuss the Policy before its discussion and recommendation. Superintendent Gallagher answered that the Naming Policy discussion will be added to the August 14 agenda. Ms. Hoff briefly reviewed the options before the Board, as detailed in the written briefing.

Commissioner Adams suggested that the Board needs a structured way at the August 14 meeting to discuss the policy and how it will hold its discussion and recommendation on August 28. Commissioner Ramels, Vice-chair, will discuss this with Chair Ranade.

Commissioners thanked Ms. Hoff for the information.

## **Update Briefing and Public Hearing: Pilot Program to Allow Non-tennis Use of Tennis Courts**

Dennis Cook, Seattle Parks Citywide Athletics Manager, briefed the Board on this pilot on May 22, 2008. To read the minutes from that meeting, see <http://cityofseattle.net/parks/ParkBoard/minutes/2008/05-22-08.pdf>.

Tonight Mr. Cook presented an update briefing on the pilot, immediately followed by a public hearing. The Board plans to discuss the proposal at its August 28, 2008, meeting and vote on a recommendation to the Superintendent.

Mr. Cook noted that Parks staff are asking for the same recommendation as in the May 22 briefing, as follows: "Parks and Recreation staff discussed the issue of non-tennis use of tennis courts with our Sportsfield Review Committee (SRC). The SRC recommendation, and one that Parks and Recreation supports, is to conduct a pilot project that will allow the dodge ball group the opportunity to use one tennis court at Bobby Morris Playfield twice a week, with following parameters:

1. Signage is placed at the site stating the time and dates the court will be used for dodge ball;
2. Rules and Regulations will be posted at the site if they are different from our current tennis court rules;
3. The use will have to be permitted through the Citywide Athletics Scheduling Office;
4. When courts are permitted for non-tennis use, a set of rules are provided to the users; and
5. The organization will be informed this will be a one year pilot program.

If there is concern about conducting this pilot exclusively at Bobby Morris, another option is to permit the group at Bobby Morris once a week and at either the upper or lower courts at Volunteer Park once a week (operating under the same parameters outlined above). The pilot would last one year, after which Parks and Recreation will evaluate the program and return to the Park Board with a report and recommendation on continuation."

### *Written Briefing*

#### **Requested Board Action**

This is an update briefing on the proposal to allow non-tennis activity on tennis courts. The Board was previously briefed on this proposal on May 22. A public hearing on the proposal will occur on Thursday, July 24; the Board discussion and recommendation will be on August 28.

Staff are asking for a Board recommendation to go forward with permitting a non-tennis court activity (dodge ball) on the tennis courts at Bobby Morris Playfield, per the conditions described below and in the May briefing paper.

#### **New Information since the May Briefing**

Since May, Parks' Recreation staff has more specifically defined the pilot project. The period recommended is for one year, on Tuesday and Friday nights, from 7:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. The permitting fee will be the same as the current tennis court permitting fee of \$10.00 per 1.5 hours.

Since the May briefing, Parks staff have received complaints of alcohol being consumed at the Bobby Morris Tennis Courts during the dodge ball games. Mr. Cook visited the site after a complaint in early June and did not see any drinking by any of the participants on that day and time. Additional complaints about drinking during the dodge ball games came after the July 11-13 weekend.

As a result of adding this activity to the tennis courts, the Seattle Park Rangers have been directed to have a presence at the site during the permitted dodge ball activity. In addition, Parks is requiring that one person of the dodge ball group be identified as the designated contact to the Department. Also, all parks codes and rules must be adhered to by the dodge ball organization.

#### **Additional Information**

Dennis Cook: [dennis.cook@seattle.gov](mailto:dennis.cook@seattle.gov); 684-7094

### *Board Discussion*



Commissioner Adams asked if anything has changed on the proposal since the May 22 briefing to the Board and Mr. Cook answered that the days and time of play have been confirmed. Commissioner Barber stated that the Board has received negative written testimony about the condition of the nets and courts after non-tennis use. Mr. Cook responded that there may be scuff marks on the courts; however, they are still usable for tennis. Parks' staff check and tighten the nets daily at Cal Anderson Park, and check the condition of the courts.

Commissioner Barber added that some written testimony asked why the Department isn't looking to use some of its de-commissioned tennis courts for this pilot. Mr. Cook answered that the Department is looking into this. Many of the dodge ball players live near Cal Anderson Park. That site gives the Department an opportunity to try the dodge ball use.

Commissioner Adams stated that some of the correspondence complained that there aren't enough courts for tennis play. Mr. Cook answered that the City has 191 tennis courts and the drop-in use is growing. Some courts, such as Cal Anderson, are more popular than others. Commissioner Adams suggested that the Department look at using courts that are less well used for the pilot.

Commissioner Adams added that some testimony stated that the courts aren't in good shape already and now a second sport will be scheduled and that Parks already can't maintain the courts.

### *Public Hearing*

The public hearing began. Each speaker had up to three minutes to testify to the Board.

Norman Frey: Mr. Frey stated that this pilot does not align with the Department's goals and there is no guideline for this pilot. He has viewed a number of dodge ball videos and usually it is played on soccer fields or in gymnasiums. The dimensions of a tennis court are too small for dodge ball play. There are four local gyms that provide dodge ball and they are available and can accommodate the group that wants to play at Cal Anderson Park. The fence at the Cal Anderson tennis courts have been dented by the dodge balls hitting it and the net has been damaged from adults running into it. He is not opposed to dodge ball; however, it is incompatible with tennis. He added that when dodge ball players are using one of the courts, it makes the second court unusable for tennis. He will also submit written comments.

Gail Benzler: Ms. Benzler is on the staff of Pacific Northwest Tennis and requests that the dodge ball players find a different location to play. The tennis courts at Bobby Morris are lighted, and many courts in the city are not lighted. She asked that if Seattle Parks Department issues permits for dodge ball play that it not allow the play at Cal Anderson courts. She asked that staff pay attention to four items:

- Tennis players are intimidated by the dodge ball players
- Alcohol and cigarette consumption by the dodge ball players has been observed
- Damage to the court surfacing and fencing has been noted
- Noise concerns have arisen due to the number of dodge ball players and their audience

Brant Lyerla: Mr. Lyerla is a tennis player, lives on Capitol Hill, and is a member of the Amy Yee Tennis Center Advisory Council. He likes the Capitol Hill dodge ball activity – but not on the City's tennis courts. The courts are not designed for dodge ball. He also stated that the dodge ball player's shoes and boots scuff the courts and that the spectators lean on/sit on the tennis nets. These tennis courts were repaired about five years ago and that work is being destroyed. He urged that the Department find the dodge ball players another site to play.

Tyson Paxton: He is at tonight's meeting due to the illegal behaviors he has observed from the dodge ball players. He researched articles on the internet about dodge ball and read bits of several of them and distributed a cop for the Board. The dodge ball players do not police themselves and he asked the Department to find them an alternative place to play. Tennis courts are for tennis.

Joel Robinson: He has been playing dodge ball for one year and it is becoming extremely popular. Players become friends, get exercise – and hit each other in the face with a rubber ball. Most of them live on Capitol Hill. Tennis courts are the perfect size for dodge ball. The dodge ball crowds have grown over the summer with the nicer weather and he agreed that a crowd with 60 or more people is too many. Previously smaller crowds watched the play. He does not believe the 3-4 oz rubber balls used to play dodge ball could dent the fence and it is uncommon for players to run into the fence. He understands that the players should wear proper tennis shoes and that the number of people playing and watching should be kept to a smaller number.

Karen Dunlop: She is the Vice President of the Tennis Association, whose major mission is to help develop more tennis courts. The sport of tennis is growing like crazy with higher and higher demands put on the courts. Damage to the courts from other sports is a real concern. She believes the rowdy and large crowds at the dodge ball games could be a liability to the City. She urged the Board of Park Commissioner to say no to this pilot and to encourage Parks to find another site for dodge ball play.

Steve Held: Mr. Held stated that he agrees with many of the comments made by Mr. Robinson. He believes the dodge ball players would do a better job of policing the play if they had legitimacy and more support from Seattle Parks. They are trying to make this work and the players will wear the correct shoes. The tennis courts are a part of the park and he believes they are intended for all to use.

Last August he walked by one of the games and was invited to join. He did so and has made friends in the group. Dodge ball is inclusive and builds a sense of community in this popular park. Participants come from Capitol Hill and from other areas, too. And younger kids watch the games, too.

Jason Baggett: He stated that dodge ball players have zero legal places to play and the gyms mentioned earlier this evening are all for dodge ball league play. The games at Cal Anderson are spontaneous. He next addressed the testimony that the dodge ball games are damaging to the court. If people come to the games and are drinking, he and others ask them to leave. If they are leaning on the net, they ask them to stop. He doesn't believe the ball could damage the fencing; however, observers may lean on it and cause damage. The dodge ball players clean up after themselves after every game. Cal Anderson is the perfect location for them, but if the Department can find an alternative site, they are happy to go elsewhere. They play every Tuesday and Friday nights and even played on Christmas. The game has grown so popular and the group so large that they need a regular place to play.

Erin Grise: She began playing dodge ball about 18 months ago with 20-30 other young people and the sport has grown in popularity and has become a victim of its own success. Dodge ball players are just young people who want to play dodge ball and have a good time – and anyone is welcome to play.

The tennis courts at nearby Miller Community Center do not work for dodge ball and they have no other location nearby to play. In the winter, few people play tennis and so the courts are available to dodge ball play. She suggested that Parks consider a multi-purpose site for dodge ball, bike polo, BMX bike riding, and skateboarding. These are all non-tennis sports that could be played on one court.

Allison Lizotte: She started playing dodge ball over a year ago and there were few players then. Now sometimes there are as many as 80-90 people at a game. This is a fun sport that is played in rain, snow, and sunshine. She drew the layout of the tennis court and what area is and isn't used by the dodge ball players. The players do not use the nets, so those could be taken down during dodge ball play if they have the tool to do so. Those who attend the games that don't play generally stand around in the alley and parking lot. She noted that Seattle Police Department officers stop by regularly and often watch the dodge ball games.

She lives in the neighborhood, doesn't drive, and urged the Board to recommend keeping dodge ball games in the neighborhood.

Sean Kauffman: He moved to Seattle about a year and a half ago. He began playing dodge ball five months after moving here and found the group to be very welcoming and inclusive. It is a great way to have fun and get exercise. Noise is definitely an issue sometimes, with cars honking horns. However, the tennis courts are located next to the busy streets of Broadway and Pine and there is also basketball and soccer played at the park. It is not just the dodge ball players who make noise there.

He referred to previous comments about alcohol and drug use at the dodge ball games. The players kick out those with drugs/alcohol, but have no authority to make them leave, so they don't. If the dodge ball players call Seattle Police, it is likely the players will be asked to leave the park, too, as they do not have a permit to play there. The interaction of the dodge ball players with the City and Seattle Police officers has been good. He stated that the tennis players have called the police on the dodge ball players.

Jon Girsch: He is on the Seattle Tennis Alliance Board. The Alliance has 200-300 members and believes that tennis courts are for playing tennis. He hopes that Seattle Parks can find an appropriate court for the dodge ball players. There is a constant wait of tennis players for good lighted tennis courts all summer long. He urged the Board to take this into consideration before making a recommendation.

### *Questions & Answers*

Responding to a question from Commissioner Ramels about what type of surface the Cal Anderson tennis courts have, Mr. Cook answered that the courts are an asphalt base compound with color coating.

The Board thanked Mr. Cook for the update briefing and he asked that Commissioners forward any additional questions to him. The Board will discuss the proposal at its August 28 meeting and vote on a recommendation to the Superintendent.

## **Update Briefing: Lake Washington Boulevard Vegetation Management Plan (VMP)**

Mark Mead, Seattle Parks' Senior Urban Forester, briefed the Board on the Department's work on the Vegetation Management Plan at its May 8, 2008, meeting. The minutes from that meeting are available at <http://cityofseattle.net/parks/ParkBoard/minutes/2008/05-08-08.pdf>. Commissioners received a written briefing update prior to tonight's meeting, which was available to the public on the Board's web site, and hard copies were made available one hour prior to tonight's meeting.

### *Written Briefing*

#### **Requested Board Action**

This is an update briefing regarding the publication of the second Draft Lake Washington Boulevard Vegetation Management Plan. The Park Board received the document in May and were briefed by staff at the May 8 Board meeting. There will be an update briefing on July 24 and a Board public hearing August 14, with the Board's discussion and recommendation scheduled for August 28.

#### **Project Description and Background**

In January 2006, Seattle Parks and Recreation began development of a Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) for Lake Washington Boulevard. The purpose of a VMP is to provide guidelines for future restoration projects, as well as maintenance and operations standards.

The VMP process is not a design process and relies heavily on the design intent originally created for a park property. For formal developed park settings the design intent is often straightforward. For a 7-mile linear stretch of property such as Lake Washington Blvd., which includes both developed and undeveloped parkland,

the design intent leaves some room for interpretation. Developed parklands include the formal landscapes along the Blvd. with mowed grass and ornamental shrubs and flower beds. Undeveloped parklands include patches of native and non-native shrub and tree communities that have *naturalized*, i.e. seeded and grown without human intervention. The lakeside is a mix of developed and undeveloped parklands, with the western slopes of the Blvd. largely undeveloped.

The design intent for the Lake Washington Blvd. VMP was derived from several sources, but primarily the Olmsted Brothers "Emerald Necklace" plans for a city-wide park and boulevard system recommended to the City of Seattle in 1903. Other source documents include long range guidelines for the Blvd. commissioned to the EDAW firm by the City in 1986, and a 2006 University of Washington's Landscape Architecture program study. Additional design intent information for undeveloped areas of the park were derived from Seattle's Green Seattle Partnership 20 Year Strategic Plan (2005) and the Urban Forest Management Plan (2007).

Goals for the VMP that reflect the design intent include:

- Create a sense of regional identity in a multi-mile lakefront drive;
- Create an aesthetic and ecological link between the Arboretum and Seward Park;
- Take advantage of the abundance of views of water, wooded hills, and mountains;
- Identify and define Boulevard property lines;
- Promote native character in natural areas;
- Restore natural forest processes;
- Conserve soil and water quality;
- Protect and enhance wildlife habitat;
- Buffer land uses; and
- Insure public safety.

**Public Involvement Process**

A series of eight public meetings were held between June 2006 and January 2007 to review the first draft VMP. In July 2007 a Project Advisory Team (PAT) was formed to discuss several issues that people appeared to be divided over. Through the course of PAT meetings it became clear that there were a few fundamental rifts in constituencies regarding the values and functions Lake Washington Boulevard should provide to citizens and the environment. These divisions in constituent values focused on maintaining more or less vegetation along the parkway. Reasons cited for less vegetation included views and recreation access; reasons cited for more vegetation included climate and wildlife habitat. The PAT focused exclusively on refining the Goals and Objectives of the VMP document to reach a "reasonable agreement" as opposed to a "consensus" regarding the Goals and Objectives for vegetation management along the Boulevard. Parks staff worked from these revised PAT goals and input from the broader community to create a 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft VMP.

Additional public involvement occurred in June 2008 when Seattle Park's Superintendent discussed the 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft VMP with the Mt. Baker Community Club as part of an introductory meeting with the Superintendent. Three central areas of concern elevated at this meeting were: cherry tree replacement plantings, shoreline shrub plantings, and the perception of a "green wall" of tree plantings across the horizontal breadth of the Boulevard. On July 14, 2008 the Superintendent again attended a Mt. Baker Community Club meeting and presented a comparative analysis between existing and VMP prescribed vegetation elements summarized in Tables 1 and 2 below. Clarification of the planned cherry tree retention, planting and removal was also given.

Table 1 – Current Lake WA Blvd Lakeside Trees\* and Additional Trees Needed per VMP

Map Unit	Acres	Current Canopy Cover  (Trees +	Tree Canopy Cover Goal  (Mature Canopy	Current Total Trees  (Canopy	Current Trees/ Acres	Current Canopy Trees/ Acres	Add'l Trees Needed **
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		<b>Shrubs)</b>	<b>Trees/Ac)</b>	<b>Trees)</b>			
4 – Colman & Mt Baker Parks	2.5	29%	30% (9.5)	85 (58)	34.0	23.2	None
5 – Mt Baker, Genesee, Stan Sayres	4.4	17%	20% (6.5)	59 (35)	13.4	8.0	None
6 – Gateway to Seward Park	5.0	13%	30% (9.5)	67 (51)	13.4	10.2	None

\*Separation of tree and shrub canopy cover is limited by technology used for canopy analysis.

Table 2 – Current Lake WA Blvd Shrub Cover and Additional Shrub Cover Needed per VMP

<b>Map Unit</b>	<b>Current Canopy Cover (Trees + Shrubs)</b>	<b>Shrub Cover Goal</b>	<b>Additional Shrub Cover Needed to Reach Goal</b>
4 – Colman & Mt Baker Parks	29%	40%	11%
5 – Mt Baker, Genesee, Stan Sayres	17%	20%	3%
6 – Gateway to Seward Park	13%	50%	37%

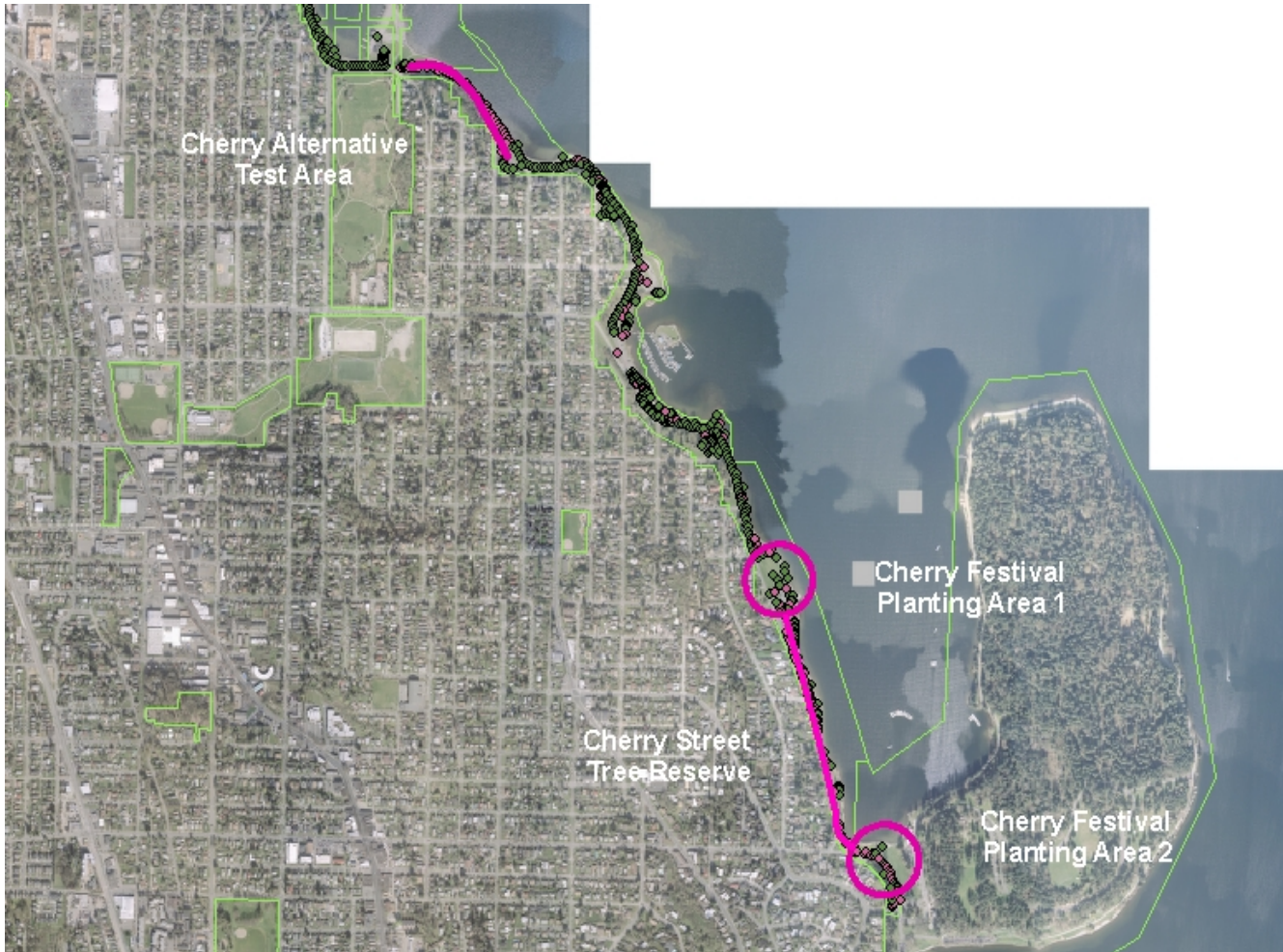
Three key findings of the analysis related to community concerns are:

- Cherry trees will be replaced in-kind in a significant portion of the Boulevard and replaced with more appropriate cultivars in other areas. (see Map 1 below)
- New tree plantings are not needed in the Lakeside Management Unit to reach VMP goals.
- Boulevard (street tree) tree spacing in the Mt. Baker area was increased to 60 feet on center in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft VMP.
- New shrub plantings are targeted for areas with low recreation access and where salmon habitat restoration is an achievable goal.

Map 1 - Cherry Tree VMP Recommendations. Two Cherry Blossom Festival celebration locations bookend a cherry tree reserve street tree planting strip.

## Draft Updates

To



ensure that these and additional clarifications are available to vegetation management practitioners in the Final VMP, staff will update the VMP with the following elements:

- Cherry tree VMP recommendations will be clarified by including Map 1 (above) which incorporates “cherry reserve” and “cherry replace” locations. Text will be updated to clarify these specific locations. Text will be updated to note that Parks Forestry staff will work with University of Washington research staff to find disease resistant cherry cultivars.
- Tables 1 and 2 (above) will be inserted with supporting text to clarify the quantity of tree and shrub plantings prescribed in the VMP by geographic area.
- A map of specific areas for native shrub enhancement plantings will be created and inserted into the document.
- A VMP section clarifying rules for applying for a vegetation management permit will be inserted to include the following stipulations: site by site evaluations will be conducted for all permit applications; application covering more than 150 horizontal feet may be subject to a phased implementation; and groundcover establishment will be a maintenance requirement of any permit.

## Issues

The VMP identifies additional vegetation management issues requiring attention in the near term:

- Hazard tree management;
- Invasive plant infestations including: blackberry, ivy, knotweeds, and reed canary grass;
- Remnants of Pacific madrone patches in serious decline;
- Street tree failures due to vehicular compaction, erosion, and poor drainage;

- Erosion and slope failure along the steep slopes;
- Permitted and illegal topping and removal of trees by adjacent property owners;
- Encroachment of neighboring landscapes; and
- Deterioration of habitat for salmon, migratory birds and other wildlife.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

The intent of this plan is to assure the long term sustainability of the vegetation along Lake Washington Boulevard, focusing on meeting existing use and design parameters as well as current policies.

### **Budget**

The current budget is \$40,000 in 2008 for completion of the Plan. There is no funding for plan implementation; however, when opportunities arise during regular maintenance, the Plan will be followed.

### **Additional Information**

Mark Mead: [mark.mead@seattle.gov](mailto:mark.mead@seattle.gov); 684-4113

### ***Briefing/Board Discussion***

Mr. Mead reviewed the information in the written briefing and gave an update on the public meetings held on the VMP. Both he and Superintendent Gallagher attended all the meetings, answered questions, and developed additions to the Plan based on community input. He believes that the Department received a great deal of good information from the community.

Commissioner Kostka noted that Appendix 4 in the VMP, relating to invasive plants, is incomplete. Mr. Mead agreed that it is and that the Department is still mapping new draft areas and replacing invasive plants.

Commissioner Barber asked if the Department has a good record of trees that have fallen over the past few years and if there are plans to replace them. Mr. Mead answered that the Department hasn't had the technology or ability to track that type of information. However, in the community meetings, there hasn't been many calls to replace the trees that have fallen. The VMP calls for adding some, but not a lot, of new trees.

Commissioner Ramels asked how staff determined which natural areas will be developed. Mr. Mead talked about the vision and objective of the VMP and stated that the objective was not to plant all native species; however, the Olmsted Plan does call for a natural and soft look and that was one of the guiding factors.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Adams on whether the Department believes that the community now supports the VMP, Mr. Mead answered that the Department heard significant comments at the community meetings. Superintendent Gallagher added that no one on either side is completely happy with the plan. At an earlier meeting, there were 80 angry community members present. Mr. Mead and the Superintendent worked with them to address many of their concerns.

Two years ago, the National Olmsted Centennial celebration was held in Seattle, with Olmsted Park experts from around the country in attendance. Seattle Parks sponsored a charette of a number of the attendees to study Lake Washington Boulevard and make suggestions for the VMP. Many of those suggestions are included in the Plan.

Commissioner Kostka asked about calls for a de-emphasis of Lake Washington Boulevard as a main arterial. Mr. Mead commented that the VMP is focused on how to enhance the visual aspect of the Boulevard and is

not focused on traffic-calming measures. However, some traffic calming comes as a result of creating visual interest, the spacing of the trees, and the impression that people are driving on a Boulevard.

Mr. Mead noted that the length of the Boulevard makes the VMP difficult to explain. If any Commissioners want to tour the Boulevard, Mr. Mead will lead the tour. The Board's Coordinator will assist with arrangements.

Commissioner Ramels noted that the Board will hold a public hearing on the VMP at its August 14 meeting and plans to discuss the Plan and make a recommendation to the Superintendent at its August 28 meeting. Mr. Mead has asked the various community groups to have one spokesperson each and give concise testimony at the public hearing. He will advertise the public hearing in the community newspapers to widely advertise the hearing. Commissioners thanked Mr. Mead for the briefing.

### **Old/New Business**

**Pool Feasibility Study:** Several citizens have written the Board to request that it hold a public hearing on a pool feasibility study. Superintendent Gallagher asked what determination would be garnered from a public hearing as he believes that it would be primarily the supporters of the study who would testify to the Board.

Commissioner Larsen stated that Elizabeth Nelson is the current chair of the pool advocacy group. These advocates have gone through every step to try to get at least the study in the budget and the issue has not been taken up yet. Superintendent Gallagher noted that although pools are not called out in the Department's five-year Strategic Action Plan, it is included in the recreation section. Commissioner Larsen added that the study is not in the Parks and Greenspace Levy, recently approved by City Council for the 2008 fall ballot. And if it isn't funded in the 2009-2010 budget, it will be another four-six years before additional pools would be looked at again for budgeting purposes. The proponents need funding for a study to gather data on not only pools but the aquatics system in general so it can be ready to make a proposal for the next budget cycle.

Commissioner Gallagher noted that he and Deputy Superintendent Williams gave the Park Board a list of items earlier this year, including a pool feasibility study, to bring before the Board, but the topic did not have enough interest from the Board to move it forward. Ms. Nelson recently wrote the Superintendent about the feasibility study and he responded to her that the study would not happen in 2008. However, the Board could hear a briefing and make a recommendation on the feasibility study. He added that Seattle Parks Department has submitted its 2009-2010 budget proposal and it did not include the study. If the Board decides to make a recommendation for the study to be funded, it should make the recommendation directly to City Council.

Commissioner Ramels stated that she is interested in more discussion on how issues like this come before the Park Board. Commissioner Barber supports getting a citywide parks use and needs survey to serve as a guide to the Department in making decisions about programs and facilities. The Department currently has little use and needs information available when requests are made by the public for a new park use, such as non-tennis use of tennis courts. The concept of this survey is that it would provide a basis for knowing how many people use the parks in what ways, and what recreational, cultural, environmental, or educational needs are underserved. The Superintendent agreed that a study needs doing but there are currently no resources for a study and he doesn't anticipate any new funding for the pools.

Discussion followed that a pool feasibility study would cost \$50-100,000 and a parks use and needs survey would cost \$250,000. Commissioner Larsen added that the skate park plan cost \$100,000 and that was two years ago.

The Board agreed that, at its August 28 meeting, it will hear a five-minute briefing from Elizabeth Nelson, Chair of the Pool Feasibility group, and a five-minute briefing from Parks Aquatic Manager Kathy Whitman on the "Comprehensive Aquatics Strategic Plan."



Length of Testimony at Park Board Meetings: Commissioners briefly discussed the length of time people may testify verbally before the Board. **Commissioner Adams moved that the Board of Park Commissioners reduce the length of verbal testimony heard during Oral Communications and Public Hearings from three minutes per speaker to two minutes. Commissioner Larsen seconded. The vote was taken and the motion passed.** It was noted that City Council also allows only two minutes per person. The Board's Coordinator will note this change on upcoming agendas and on the Board's web site.

There being no other new business, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

Amit Ranade, Chair  
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE \_\_\_\_\_