

Greenway Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
August 16, 2007

Members Present: Janie Pemble, Steve Walker, Edie Norton, John Blethen, Dan Remsen, Kenni Merritt, Laurel Cook, Jack Weiss, Jack Kimmes

Members Excused: Eric Hirst, Tom Chisholm

Liaisons Present: Stan Snapp, Park Advisory Board

Staff Present: Tim Wahl, Liz Haveman

Guests Attending: Joe Yaver, Responsible Development board member

Review of Previous Meeting Minutes:

Motion made and carried 9-0 to accept the July 19, 2007 minutes. However, the portion of the minutes pertaining to the vote from executive session will be amended to include a location description for each parcel voted upon.

Public Comment Period:

Joe Yaver stated that he was attending on behalf of Responsible Development and distributed copies of an article from Time Magazine entitled, "Why Cities are Uprooting Trees". Joe requested that Committee members plan trail routes to go around trees to avoid removing them, and cited the Interurban Trail near Arroyo Park as an example where large trees were removed in order to build a trail. Kenni Merritt stated that she was equally concerned about tree removal in that area and John Blethen stated that he is not fond of the one wide trail standard used to build all trails. Tim Wahl responded that while it is important to build trails around trees, the example cited is not an example of native trees and vegetation being removed; the area near Arroyo Park was previously a gravel pit. Tim stated that trees were removed in that area to make the trail wide enough to be ADA accessible and to allow maintenance vehicles to travel on the trail. Tim agreed that the standard should be reviewed and varied to allow some narrower trails to preserve native vegetation.

Joe Yaver also asked the Committee if they would be able to give him an idea of where they stand on the issue of acquiring Chuckanut Ridge. Laurel Cook responded that Chuckanut Ridge is always under consideration for acquisition and Tim Wahl stated that it is recognized as a functionally important, priority piece of open space in South Bellingham, as are 8 or 9 other open space parcels that are being reviewed in terms of how they fit into the existing trail network, the availability of the parcels and their cost. Tim stated that currently, there is no offer on the table to acquire Chuckanut Ridge. Joe stated that Responsible Development has spent a considerable amount of time and money gathering biological and ecological data and they have come to the conclusion that acquiring just a corridor through the 85 acres meant for the Fairhaven Highlands Development is not a good solution; the entire parcel should be acquired. Joe suggested that a meeting for dialogue between Greenway members and Responsible

Development members be planned to pass knowledge gained from these scientific studies on to Greenway members. Committee members were amenable to a meeting and suggested that Park & Recreation Advisory Board members, City Council members, and other interested parties be involved as the acquisition of Chuckanut Ridge will encompass considerably more than Greenway funds.

Executive Session:

Executive Session was held from 7:25 p.m. to 9:05 p.m. to discuss the overall plan and process of potential real property acquisition.

September Walk: Committee members will walk the recently acquired property in Cordata on September 5 from 6-8 p.m.

Identification of Topics for Next Meeting:

The September meeting format will be similar to the August meeting to allow time for the Committee to continue to develop a map marking priority corridors for land acquisition. Smaller groups of Committee members will meet for study groups prior to the September meeting to aid in this process.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.