

Greenway Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes November 15, 2007

Members Present: Janie Pemble, Steve Walker, Edie Norton, John Blethen, Jack Weiss, Jack Kimmes, Eric Hirst, Tom Chisholm, Kenni Merritt

Members Excused: Dan Remsen

Staff Present: Tim Wahl, Leslie Bryson, Liz Haveman

Guests Attending: Joe Yaver, Responsible Development board member; Glenn Merrill, GAC candidate; Jim Zander, GAC candidate

Agenda Review: Identification of Topics for Next Meeting and the December Walk discussion were moved ahead of Executive Session.

Review of Previous Meeting Minutes:

Motion made and carried to accept the October 18, 2007 minutes as written.

Public Comment Period:

Joe Yaver distributed copies of a letter to the Puget Sound Partnership from a party made up of engineers, biologists, ecologists and other scientists regarding the effects of stormwater runoff on water quality in Puget Sound. He also distributed a paper by Daniel Warner entitled, "Post Growthism: From Smart Growth to Sustainable Development", as well as a letter from John McLaughlin to Kathy Bell, City of Bellingham Planning Department, in reference to the proposed Fairhaven Highlands development. Joe stated that Responsible Development has employed a group with funds obtained by private donation to do a peer review of the Chuckanut Ridge Environmental Impact Statement when it is completed. Responsible Development hopes that the developer will cooperate in allowing this group to have access to the site in order to complete the study and that the City will pay attention to their findings. Joe repeated a request on behalf of Responsible Development to have a formal dialogue regarding their research on Chuckanut Ridge at a Greenway Committee meeting. Joe suggested that Responsible Development be allocated a 20 or 30 minute time slot during the public comment period of a future meeting.

Jim Zander inquired about the status of the North Bellingham Trail Plan and when it might be presented to City Council for formal adoption. Leslie Bryson responded that there is some narrative that needs to be written. In order for it to be adopted into the City's Comprehensive Plan, it must go to the Planning Commission and City Council and she plans for that to happen with the Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan Update that will be complete in approximately one year. However, Leslie also stated that the Plan is receiving attention and is commonly used by City Staff when applications for development are reviewed. She also said that it may be possible for Council to adopt the Plan by resolution prior to the Comp Plan amendment and without the written narrative.

New Business:

Interviews of Applicants for the GAC:

Interviews of two applicants were conducted to fill two vacancies on the Greenway Advisory Committee. One vacancy is due to Laurel Cook's completion of two consecutive terms and the other vacancy is a result of Jack Weiss's election to City Council. Interviews were conducted in the following order:

- Glenn Merrill – 7:15 to 7:25 p.m.
- Jim Zander – 7:25 to 7:35 p.m.

Recommendations on Greenway Advisory Committee Appointment:

Following the interviews and Committee discussion, it was the decision of the Committee to recommend to the Mayor that Jim Zander be appointed to complete the remainder of Jack Weiss's term beginning in January 2008 and that Glenn Merrill be appointed to fill Laurel Cook's vacancy.

Old Business:

Nominations of Chair and Vice Chair for 2008:

Eric Hirst suggested that the Greenway Advisory Committee consider creating some sub-committees to help alleviate the number of duties required of the Chair. For example, the monthly walks led by Jack Kimmes have been very successful and well organized. Eric suggested a sub-committee to work on the meeting agendas, a sub-committee to invite guest speakers to meetings, a sub-committee to work on Greenway Program education and outreach, etc. Eric also noted that a liaison to the Park & Recreation Advisory Board is needed and that position could be filled by someone other than the Chair.

Jack Weiss moved that the Committee nominate Dan Remsen to be the Vice Chair and John Blethen to be the Committee Chair in 2008. Tom Chisholm seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously. The vote for office will take place at the December meeting. If Dan Remsen does not wish to be Vice Chair, Eric Hirst was nominated to continue in the position.

Transfer Update on 7-Acre tract owned by the County near Cordata Parkway:

Leslie Bryson reported that Paul Leuthold followed up with the Public Works Department to ensure that they are able and willing to take over the maintenance of detention facility's stormwater pond as the County property transfer agreement stipulates. Bellingham Public Works agreed to take this over; Whatcom County Public Works will transfer the maintenance plans to Bellingham. Leslie contacted the County Public Works right of way agent and he is currently working on the transfer agreement. It is expected that the transfer will take place before the end of the year.

Committee members agreed that once the transfer is completed, letters of thanks should be sent to Pete Kremen, Del Lowery and Dan Taylor. Also, local media should be contacted in order to make the public aware of the collaborative effort to create this public open space in North Bellingham.

Identification of Topics for Next Meeting:

Eric Hirst reported that Leslie Bryson lined up Ron Cowan from the Bellingham School District to attend the December meeting. Leslie Bryson reported that following Steve Walker's question about crosswalks at the October meeting, she contacted Kim Brown, City staff for the Mayor's Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and Kim Brown can come to a future meeting to explain the process for creating crosswalks using a certain amount of money specially designated for this purpose each year. This could also be an opportunity to work on greyway connectors to greenway trails with the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

The Committee's annual potluck will take place at 6:30 p.m. before the regular December meeting.

Eddie Norton volunteered to attend the December Park & Recreation Advisory Board meeting as the Greenway Committee liaison.

December Walk:

The December walk will be on Saturday, December 1. Jack Kimmes will email Committee members the time and meeting location.

Executive Session:

Executive Session was held from 8:15 p.m. to 9:10 p.m. to discuss potential real property acquisition.

Vote in Open Meeting Following Executive Session:

In open meeting following the Executive Session, Tom Chisholm moved, and Steve Walker seconded the motion, to recommend to City Council due diligence, including an appraisal and negotiations, on parcel #21 on Marine Drive in Northwest Bellingham. The motion passed unanimously. Steve Walker also moved, and Jack Kimmes seconded the motion, to recommend to City Council due diligence on parcel #212 on 20th Street as an acquisition specifically funded under the Greenways III Expenditure Guidelines as a Southside property acquisition. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.