

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
Wednesday, April 11, 2007

Present: Bill Hadley, Tom Barrett, Ira Hyman, Jane Blume, Jim McCabe, Mike Anderson, Stan Snapp

Absent: Julie Guy, Harry Allison, John Hymas, one vacancy

Staff: Paul Leuthold, Parks & Recreation Director
Marvin Harris, Park Operations Manager
Leslie Bryson, Design Development Manager
Judy Spear, Board Secretary

Presenter: Deputy Chief Dave Doll, Bellingham Police Department

Attending: Laurel Cook, Greenway Committee Chair
Louise Bjornson, City Council Member
Sam Taylor, Bellingham Herald

I. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Closed Session.

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION ACTION:

Following discussion, a motion was made by Stan Snapp and seconded by Mike Anderson to recommend to City Council that staff begin assessment, appraisals work and negotiations on key park and open space opportunities for Greenways III land purchases recommended by staff and the Greenway Advisory Committee. Motion carried with Tom Barrett abstaining.

III. MARCH MEETING MINUTES: Due to time restraints, approval of the March meeting minutes will be postponed to April.

IV. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Share the Trails Campaign: Paul Leuthold reported that BTV10 is ready to make arrangements with Ira regarding the broadcast. Judy will prepare a draft of the Share the Trails Etiquette Guidelines and e-mail to the Advisory Board for final comments.

Board members volunteered to contact different user groups for their input on the Guidelines and perhaps assistance in promoting the Share the Trails Campaign as follows:

Tom Barrett	Running Clubs/Businesses
Laurel Cook	Walking Groups
Ira Hyman	Bicyclists
Ira/Tom	Dog Interest Groups
Stan Snapp	Chuckanut Dog Training
Jim McCabe	MNAC (Mayors Neighborhood Advisory Commission)
Julie Guy	Bellingham Herald
Ira Hyman	Western Washington University
Mike Anderson	Bellingham School District
Ira/Tom/Paul	BTV10
TBA	Equestrian Interest Groups

B. Greenway Committee Update: Due to time restraints the report will be postponed to the May meeting.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Motorized Mobility Devices on Park Trails: Deputy Chief David Doll of the Bellingham Police Department distributed a draft copy of the City Ordinance relating to motorized vehicles and provided the following information: The State allows Motor Driven Cycles on streets. The definition of a motor driven cycle is "...has a top speed that may exceed 30 mph or has an engine size of 50 c.c.s and requires the operator to possess a valid driver's license with a motorcycle endorsement." In responding to a question from the Board about the difference between a Motor Driven Cycle and a Moped: "A moped is defined as a motorized device, having fully operational pedals for propulsion by human power and must be under 50 c.c.s They do not require a motorcycle endorsement.". Municipalities have the authority to develop Ordinances to clarify use of these devices within City limits. To that end, Bellingham is in the process of adding a new chapter to Title 11 of the Bellingham Municipal Code to regulate the operations of motorized foot scooters, motor-driven cycles and Electric Personal Assistant Mobility Devices (EPAMD). Deputy Doll shared the concerns of the Police Department regarding the new Ordinance: 1) Does not restrict the use of Segways (EPAMD) on sidewalks (speed up to 12mph) which can create a major safety hazard particularly in the Central Business District and Fairhaven Business District. 2) Restricts motorized devices to 8mph on sidewalks which is unenforceable by the Police. 3) Mopeds are not addressed in the Ordinance. 4) Age identified to operate motorized vehicles is twelve to fourteen years of age (if accompanied by a person that is fifteen years of age or older). It is the feeling that the age should more appropriately be 16. 5) Ordinance identifies acceptable decibel readings but there is no device which can accurately measure decibels and therefore is unenforceable.

The concern of the Advisory Board is the use of motorized vehicles in City Parks and on City Trails. Municipal Code Subsection 8.04.050 – Motor Vehicle Operation and Parking reads in part as follows:

- A. The general speed limit for all vehicles within city parks is 20 miles per hour unless otherwise posted by the Director of Parks and Recreation.
- B. Motor vehicles may be operated only on paved roadways and may be parked only in designated paved or graveled parking areas. "Paved roadways" as used in this subsection does not include paved ways marked by the Director of Parks and Recreation for the exclusive use of pedestrians, bicycles, or wheelchairs.

It is important to note that regulations that affect motorized vehicles in parks do not apply to Motorized Wheel Chairs. Following discussion, a motion was made by Mike Anderson and seconded by Stan Snapp to reaffirm support of the current code which restricts motorized vehicles on City Trails with the exception of motorized wheelchairs. Motion Carried.

B. Disposition of Youth Hostel at Fairhaven Rose Garden: Marvin Harris reported that the 1,200 square foot building (built in the 1930's or 40's) was originally a Caretaker's house and more recently transitioned into a Youth Hostel. After a few years, it was the decision of the Youth Hostel Managers to expand their service and moved to another site. The building has been empty for a number of years and has now become an attractive nuisance. There are structural problems with the facility including a continually wet basement and the resulting mildew and mold which has destroyed the wiring. The master plan identifies restoring the site to a garden (not roses) and eliminating the parking. The costs to bring the building up to code and make it ADA accessible makes it prohibitive to restore for use as either a storage area or as a rentable facility. Other options include selling the building and having it moved off the site (very expensive) or destroying it. Following discussion, it was the consensus of the Board that moving rather than dismantling the building would be their strong preference. Marvin will keep the Board informed regarding the final disposition of the facility.

VI. PRESENTATION: No presentation scheduled

VII. BOARD REPORTS: Due to time restraints, the Board reports will be postponed to the May meeting.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT: No Public Comment.

IX. DIRECTOR'S REPORT: No Director's Report.

X. ADJOURNMENT: The April 11, 2007 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was adjourned by consent.

Approved: Ira Hyman, Chair
Attest: Judy Spear, Secretary