

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
Wednesday, April 8, 2009

Present: Bill Hadley, Jane Blume, Adrienne Lederer, Jim McCabe, John Hymas, Dominique Zervas, Julie Guy, Tom Barrett

Absent: Mark Peterson, Mike Anderson, Harry Allison

Staff: Paul Leuthold, Parks & Recreation Director
Marvin Harris, Park Operations Manager
Leslie Bryson, Design & Development Manager
Gina Austin, P.E., Project Engineer
Jonathan Schilk, R.L.A., Landscape Architect
Mike Love, Adult and Youth Sports Coordinator

Attending:

- I. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Executive Session was held from 7:00 until 7:30 a.m. After ending the Executive Session it was moved, seconded and unanimously approved that staff recommend to City Council commencement of due diligence and pursuit of acquisition of property in area N-3 as identified in the GAC Strategic Plan.
- II. **MARCH MEETING MINUTES:** Motion made and approved (Tom Barrett abstained since he did not attend that meeting) to accept the March 2009 Parks Advisory Board meeting minutes with these revisions: A. Page 2, line 11, change "Hyman" to Hymas", B. Page 2 line 14, change "electric" to "electricity:", C. Page 4, line 34, add another "0" to "\$200,00", D. Page 4, line16, drop "excited" and add "are cooperating with the Parks Department".
- III. **OLD BUSINESS:**
Greenway Committee Update: Jim Zander reported that the Greenway committee was continuing discussions of due diligence and acquisition of properties and that two new Committee members had been appointed by the Mayor and approved by City Council. Leslie Bryson pointed out that the north and south nodes of the Northridge Park, including restrooms, are on hold but that work on the Northridge Park trails would proceed. Leslie also noted that Parks Board members were invited to the GAC pot luck gathering on April 9 to meet the two new GAC members and to discuss development projects.
- IV. **NEW BUSINESS:**
A. Presentation: Low Impact Park Development (LID): Design and Development Staff members Gina Austin and Jonathan Schilk presented a Power Point presentation and led an active discussion of how low impact development strategies are and could be used throughout the park system. There was extensive discussion of storm water issues related to impervious surfaces. Staff detailed a comparison of all of the processes and inputs involved in the materials used to build crushed limestone and pervious concrete trails. It was noted that although crushed limestone trails requires stormwater mitigation, the crushed limestone approach involves a dramatically smaller carbon footprint than a pervious concrete trail surface would. Pervious concrete surface require an ideal underlying soil composition which generally does not occur in this area. If the underlying soil is not as required per pervious concrete installation specifications, storm water storage and dispersal tanks would be required.

The Environmental Learning Center was noted as a green building in the park system. Recycled materials were used in the construction, native plants are featured and the center includes conservation features. The photovoltaic solar panels were later added as a demonstration project. There is a higher up-front cost for a building built to LEED standards, but those costs should be recovered over time.

Gina then noted how recycled materials were used in the building of the Coast Millennium Trail segment of the Interurban Trail at Lake Samish Road. Tree limbs were chipped to mulch and disburse on site, logs were reused, recycled materials were used for bollards and signage, native plants were used and the retaining wall is a green wall incorporating native planting.

Staff then detailed LID techniques used in the updating of Civic Field Complex. The parking area is an excellent example of LID implementation for storm water management. Top soil and sod removed from Joe Martin Field was recycled in the park system.

Jonathan then noted the LID techniques employed in the Big Rock Trail project, which involved building 1300 feet of crushed limestone trails 6 feet wide. This Lake Whatcom watershed area had been significantly damaged by social trails. Formal trails were built, social trails were blocked, the area was planted with a goal of reforestation and recycled materials were used as appropriate.

The final part of the discussion involved the planned development of Northridge Park. Staff noted that LID techniques would be incorporated as much as possible. Several Parks Board members suggested that Gina and Jonathan make the excellent LID presentation to City Council.

B. Presentation: Youth and Adult Sports: Mike Love spoke about building community through youth and adult sporting activities. He noted that his area of responsibility involved large numbers of participants in large numbers of activities and venues, very scheduling intensive. Mike noted as an example that at least 1200 kids would be involved in the June and July programs. He spoke about multi-use facilities that are maxed out in terms of scheduling and capacity, but that additional school facilities will be coming on line. Julie Guy noted that there were no programs scheduled for the north part of town and asked Mike if he worked with Whatcom Community College. Mike noted that Parks does not work directly with WCC but that he hoped to schedule programs at the proposed public school to be built in the area. Mike noted several sports and activities that might become more popular in the near future. He stated that he believed that Bellingham had grown to a size at which our citizens need a community/event center.

V. Board Reports:

A. Arts Commission: Dominique Zervas distributed the agenda with comments from the March 31, 2009 Arts Commission meeting. Key discussion items included new members and a discussion of funding for maintenance of art.

B. Bay to Baker Trail: Nothing new to report.

- C. **Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee**: It was noted that there was discussion of combining the Bike-Ped Committee into the proposed Transportation Committee.
- D. **Big Rock Garden**: Adrienne Lederer reported that there was discussion of pieces for this year's show and the Mother's Day program on May 10.
- E. **Woodstock Farm**: Adrienne Lederer reported that the Board was seeking Board members and was considering changing the meeting time to make it more convenient for volunteers. She talked about the September Art Show at the farm. Dominique suggested that the Woodstock Board contact the recent applicants for seats on the Arts Commission.
- F. **Cordata Park**: Julie Guy reported that Leslie and Gina were working on Cordata Park permits and that the project was in process. Wetland surveys were complete and the trail center line is marked. She also invited Parks Board members to tour the 15,000 s.f. community garden recently leased to the neighborhood association by Ted Michaikov. Julie noted that an existing road to the community garden site had been improved and that the garden had been fenced. The neighborhood association is conducting a fund raising campaign to help finance the project.
- G. **Lake Padden Golfers Committee**: No report.
- H. **Northridge Park**: This had already been discussed.
- I. **Trails Sub-Committee**: Tom Barrett reported that the April 7 initial public meeting on the Chuckanut Village Marsh Restoration Project was attended by more than 100 citizens. Most of the meeting discussion focused on beach access and reasonable parking accommodation for the wide range of park users. Tom invited Parks Board members to attend the next meeting on the project, to be held on April 23.
- J. **Urban Forestry**: John Hymas reported that there were no City grants for tree planting for 2009, that volunteers have been planting native plants along Connelly Creek, that work on the Heritage Tree Project was continuing and that the docketed Happy Valley Neighborhood Plan Amendment for 2009 addressed tree canopy goals.
- K. **Watershed Advisory Board**: Bill Hadley noted that the WAB had not met recently but that members were working on a plan for the protection of the Lake Whatcom watershed.

VI. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**: There was no report.

VII. **PUBLIC COMMENT**: There was no public comment.

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**: The April 2009 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was adjourned by consent at 9:06 a.m.

Approved: Jim McCabe, Chair
Attest: Tom Barrett, Secretary