

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
Wednesday, August 13, 2008

Present: Bill Hadley, Jane Blume, Tom Barrett, John Hymas, Adrienne Lederer, Julie Guy, Mark Peterson, Mike Anderson, Harry Allison, Jim McCabe

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

Attending: Stan Snapp, City Council
Louise Bjornson, City Council
John Blethen, Greenway Advisory Committee Chair
Bill Zersen, Fir Ridge I Homeowner's Association
Mike Minge, Park Board candidate
Pete Coy, Park Board candidate
Dominique Zervas, Park Board candidate

I. **JULY MEETING MINUTES:** Motion made and unanimously approved to accept the July 2008 Park Advisory Board meeting minutes as submitted.

II. **OLD BUSINESS:**

A. **Greenway Committee Update:** Jim McCabe reported that the July Greenway Advisory Committee meeting was cancelled and that there will be no August walk. Stan Snapp reported that City Council approved purchase of the Muljat property on the south end of Samish Hill and purchase of the 20th Street property.

B. **Cordata Park Master Plan:** Leslie Bryson reported that the proposed Cordata Park Master Plan was presented to the Park & Recreation Advisory Board at the July meeting where the Board scheduled the formal neighborhood meeting to review the proposed plan per the City Policy on adoption of park master plans for the next evening, July 10, 2008. Leslie reported that the neighborhood viewed the plans at that meeting and no changes were recommended. The next step per the policy is for the Park & Recreation Advisory Board to vote on the plan.

Leslie also reported that the City Council approved accepting the 7 acre parcel adjacent to the Cordata Park property from the County at their August 4 meeting. The County Council now also needs to approve the transfer before it is completed, but progress is being made. Adrienne Lederer asked when Horton Road will be extended through to the site. Leslie responded that the road is a Public Works project and she does not know their timeline, but reported that the Parks Department can get started on building the trail through the Cordata Park site prior to the road construction. Tom Barrett recommended that the Cordata Neighborhood lobby for the Horton Road project to be included in the next Transportation Improvement Program.

Mike Anderson moved to approve the Cordata Park Master Plan. Julie Guy seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

- C. Cordata Park name consideration:** Leslie Bryson displayed a list of the 34 possible names submitted for the park and noted that the name Cordata Park was submitted by eight different individuals. At the last neighborhood meeting, attendees voted on their preferred name and Cordata Park received the vast majority of the votes. Board members asked where the name “Cordata” originated. Julie responded that it is a flowering ornamental tree. Leslie asked Julie Guy to explain the significance of the name to the neighborhood.

Julie responded that last year the neighborhood association changed their official name to Guide Meridian/Cordata. Julie also stated that this park has been highly anticipated and supported by the neighbors who feel real pride and ownership in the park. They have referred to the property as Cordata Park since it was acquired. Tom Barrett noted that it is a credit to Julie and all of her efforts on behalf of the neighborhood to acquire more parks in North Bellingham that 3 of the names submitted for the park were in her honor.

Julie Guy moved to approve the name Cordata Park. Adrienne Lederer seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

- D. Fairhaven Park Rose Garden House RFP Result summary:** Paul Leuthold reported that three proposals were submitted in response to the Request For Proposals for removal or adaptive reuse of the Fairhaven Park Rose Garden House. Of the three proposals received, two desire to relocate the structure and one proposes to utilize the structure in its present location. The three proposals were rated by the evaluation team identified in the RFP: Marvin Harris, Park Operations Manager; Brad Cornwell, RMC Architects; Katie Franks, Bellingham Planning & Community Development; Paul Leuthold, Parks & Recreation Director; Jim McCabe, Park & Recreation Advisory Board Chair; and Adrienne Lederer, MNAC neighborhood representative and Park & Recreation Advisory Board member. Paul reported that three individuals from the South neighborhood were asked before Adrienne, all of whom declined to participate.

A summary sheet of the scores for each proposal was distributed to the Board. Paul reported that the evaluation criteria were developed to try to embrace both types of proposals; to relocate or to reuse the house. Scores were tallied both in terms of points (higher score better) and in terms of ranking (out of 3; lower score better). The next step of the evaluation process will be to interview the three proposal candidates. The interviews will be conducted on Thursday, August 28, between 8 a.m. and 12 noon. Each candidate will be assigned a 45 minute interview time. Following interviews, the evaluation panel will make a recommendation that will be forwarded to City Council.

Jim McCabe observed that the recommendation would not go to City Council until September and inquired as to whether or not that would allow enough time for a candidate to relocate the house if one of those proposals is selected. Paul stated that there should be enough time to meet the October 31 deadline, but if necessary for logistic reasons, the deadline could be pushed back slightly.

Mark Peterson asked if Paul could give a short summary of each of the three proposals. Paul reported that John & Lani Fortune turned in a proposal to relocate the house to private property in Fairhaven, not far from Fairhaven Park. Richard Taylor also proposed to

relocate the house to private property, and stated that he would donate \$10,000 to establish a rhododendron garden on the Fairhaven Park rose garden site. The Center for Local Self Reliance proposal will team with ReSources to renovate the house and utilize it in its current location. Initially the plan was to interview the top two candidates, but due to the varied scoring, Paul felt it would be wise to interview all three candidates.

Paul asked if there were any Park & Recreation Advisory Board members who would be available to serve on the interview panel. The panel will be asked to arrive at 8 a.m.; the first interview will take place at 8:30 a.m. Following the last interview scheduled at 10:30 a.m., the panel will discuss the proposals in order to arrive at a recommendation to forward to City Council. Mark Peterson, Bill Hadley, Harry Allison and Mike Anderson all volunteered for the panel as long as the date and time fits into their schedules.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Whatcom Park & Recreation Foundation Trails Meeting Follow-up: Jim McCabe reported that he, along with a number of other Park Board and Greenway Committee members, attended a meeting hosted by the Whatcom Park & Recreation Foundation to discuss a project proposal to complete a new loop trail in the county. It would connect Bellingham, Ferndale, Lynden and Everson. Jim reported that the meeting was well attended by a variety of County park representatives. The Whatcom Park & Recreation Foundation is proposing to play a coordinating role between various agencies to complete the trail. Jim stated that widespread support for the project was voiced at the meeting, but that project funding; or lack of funding, will likely be the biggest issue.

John Blethen suggested that the City of Bellingham might play a role in improving two pieces of the trail connection in City limits; the link between James Street and Hannegan Road and improvements along the recently acquired parcel of property on Eldridge Avenue.

Jim stated that he will ask Dan with the Whatcom Parks & Recreation Foundation to keep the Park & Recreation Advisory Board in the communication loop as things progress.

B. Interviews of Park Advisory Board Candidates: Interviews of candidates for the vacancy on the Park Advisory Board were conducted in the following order:

- 8:15-8:25 am: Michael Minge
- 8:25-8:35 am: Peter Coy
- 8:35-8:45 am: Dominique Zervas

Myron Wlaznak was also considered as a candidate, but was not available to interview at this meeting. Myron interviewed in December 2007. Myron's application was reviewed.

Following the interviews and Board discussion, it was decided to recommend Dominique Zervas to the Mayor for appointment.

IV. BOARD REPORTS:

Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee: Jim McCabe stated that now that Ira Hyman has completed his term on the Parks Advisory Board, a new liaison to the Bicycle Pedestrian

Advisory Committee is needed. Mark Peterson asked when this Committee meets. Tom Barrett said that he would get that information to Mark. Mark will fill this role if the meeting times fit into his schedule.

North Bellingham Trail Plan: Stan Snapp asked if the North Bellingham Trail Plan will be going to City Council for approval. Leslie Bryson responded that it was planned to go to Council as part of the Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan (PRO Plan) to be adopted into the City's Comprehensive Plan. Now that the PRO Plan may not go to City Council for a Comprehensive Plan amendment this year, Leslie has contacted J. Lynne Walker to inquire about a public hearing just for the North Bellingham Trail Plan.

Park, Recreation & Open Space Plan: Jim McCabe noted that the discussions at the Planning Commission meetings on the PRO Plan are focused on level of service and how it is measured rather than the actual plan itself. Jim reported that City Council voiced concerns over not wanting to see a Plan that was not affordable in May, yet if level of service is re-calculated like Planning Commission is suggesting, the plan will be more expensive. How will these conflicting views be reconciled? Stan Snapp stated that the 2002 Plan included a section on goals and options in the financial forecasts, and suggested that this Plan do the same. Louise Bjornson asked if the Plan has to state how everything will be paid for. Leslie Bryson responded that the State does not require this; they want to see some consideration as to how you will pay for things, but the PRO Plan is not a budget document. The Plan is a "road map" of where you want to go; the budget determines how things will be paid for.

Paul Leuthold stated that during the public process, it became clear that citizens are more concerned with the spatial distribution of parks, rather than the size of parks. For example, they are more concerned with having a park within walking distance of their home rather than how large that park is. The Fairhaven Village Green is an example of a small park that serves a large number of people. Paul stated that the Plan developed is affordable; it focuses on providing accessible parks to all neighborhoods, but not necessarily 47 acres per 1000 people in all neighborhoods. Leslie added that the new Critical Areas Ordinance will provide additional buffers that the City will not have to purchase in order to protect.

Tom Barrett stated that the charge of the Planning Commission is to ensure that the PRO Plan is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan. The discussions at the Planning Commission meetings are due to the fact that the maps in the PRO Plan have different UGA boundaries than the maps in the City's Comprehensive Plan and that the level of service in the proposed plan is different. Tom reported that there is another Planning Commission meeting on Thursday, August 14. At this meeting, the Planning commission could either make a recommendation to City Council regarding the Plan, or they could continue the meeting in October.

- V. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Paul Leuthold reported that all City Department Heads have been instructed to hold their 2009 Budgets to existing spending levels. This means that they are trying to make cuts in other areas to absorb annual salary and operating increases. In addition, everyone has been asked to turn back 3% of their 2008 Adopted Budget. At this time, the City is not discussing any staff lay-offs.

VI. ADJOURNMENT: The July 2008 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was adjourned by consent at 9:10 a.m.

Approved: Jim McCabe, Chair
Attest: Liz Haveman, Secretary