

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
Wednesday, December 9, 2009

Present: Adrienne Lederer, Jim McCabe, Bill Hadley, Mike Anderson,
Dominique Zervas, Julie Guy, Mark Peterson, Pam Holladay, Geoff Middaugh

Excused: Jane Blume

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

Attending: Louise Bjornson, Bellingham City Council
Jim Zander, Greenway Advisory Committee
Sharon Bishop, Grateful Dogs Association
Helen Rondestvedt, Grateful Dogs Association
Anara Thomas, Grateful Dogs Association
Mary Mullen, Center for Local Self Reliance
Steve Wilson, Center for Local Self Reliance
Marinus VandenKamp, Center for Local Self Reliance
Larry Mansfield
Bill Black

- I. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Executive Session was held from 7:00 to 7:20 a.m. In open meeting following executive session, Dominique Zervas moved and Mark Peterson seconded the motion to recommend purchase of a parcel of property in the Birchwood neighborhood for \$45,000. The motion passed unanimously. Dominique Zervas also moved, and Mark Peterson seconded the motion, to recommend purchase of a parcel of property in the Birchwood neighborhood for up to \$65,000. The motion passed unanimously.
- II. **NOVEMBER MEETING MINUTES:** Motion made and approved to accept the November 2009 meeting minutes as written.
- III. **OLD BUSINESS:**
 - A. **Greenway Advisory Committee Update:** Jim Zander reported that the Greenway Committee met in November and voted to recommend the same parcels of property that the Park Board voted to recommend for purchase. At the November meeting Tim Wahl gave a report on all Greenway acquisitions since the 2006 levy. Jim also reported that the south side portion of the Greenway Strategic Plan has been tabled by City Council again until February 2010.
 - B. **Little Squalicum Park Master Plan:** Gina Austin reported that the final draft master plan for Little Squalicum Park is the result of a 9 month process that included 3 public meetings and 5 stakeholder meetings. Gina reported that at the final public meeting, the preferred master plan was presented and public comment was heard. The public comment was generally agreeable to the final draft master plan, but some unresolved issues were noted. Unresolved issues include a desire for Little Squalicum Park to be annexed to the City, more police presence in the area, more coordination of regulations between the City, the

Port and the County, and requests for a designated dog off leash area and a disc golf course. Gina reported that the final draft master plan is scheduled to go to City Council for approval on January 11, 2010.

Bob Walsh with Belt Collins, the consultant for the project, gave an overview of the final draft master plan and pointed out possible future features for the park such as a playground, picnic tables, benches and two restrooms; one near the parking area and one closer to the beach. Bob stated that there are natural springs and a proposed tidal estuary on the site that could provide for an interpretive/educational area. Bob also pointed out that the Bellingham Technical College shows four new buildings on their 20 year plan, two on either side of the park. The master plan includes connective trails through the park that could be utilized by students.

Julie Guy asked if there is funding in place for the development of Little Squalicum Park. Leslie Bryson responded that development is not funded at this time; there are outstanding environmental issues with the site that need to be resolved, as well as property ownership issues. Portions of the Little Squalicum site are currently owned by the City, the County, the Port and Burlington Northern Railroad. Leslie also stated that getting the master plan approved is important now so that any earth moving done as part of the clean up process by the Environmental Protection Agency will be done in accordance with the master plan. Dominique Zervas asked about the EPA's timeline for cleaning up the site. Gina responded that the EPA's schedule states that cleanup will be completed by September 30, 2010, with a public input meeting prior to the work. Dominique requested that all of the Little Squalicum Master Plan stakeholders be notified of the EPA's public meeting.

Anara Thomas with the Grateful Dogs Off Leash Association read a letter thanking the Parks Department for the opportunity for public input and requesting that some specific language about a dog off leash area be included in the master plan description and narrative.

Adrienne Lederer moved to approve the final draft Master Plan for Little Squalicum Park. Dominique Zervas seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

- C. Center for Local Self Reliance:** Paul Leuthold introduced Steve Wilson with the Center for Local Self Reliance and stated that the CLSR's first fiscal year closed with approximately 75% of their benchmarks met. Paul stated that the CLSR has shown evidence of strong community support and that he is willing to be flexible with the CLSR's benchmarks in order to help them get a successful start. Paul stated that Steve Wilson and Marinus VandenKamp came to the meeting in response to Park Board members' requests in order to answer questions prior to the CLSR's master plan being presented to City Council for approval.

Jim McCabe inquired about the grant income listed on the CLSR's income and expense report. Steve Wilson responded that they received a Small and Simple Grant from the City of Bellingham in the amount of \$5000. Steve stated that \$1000 of that money was used on the master plan and the remaining \$4000 will go toward materials for construction to stabilize the house and build a fence. Adrienne Lederer asked if the CLSR has consulted the Arts Commission about their fence plan that states that artists will be invited to propose

decorative panels for the fence. Marinus VandenKamp responded that they were mistakenly hasty in their fence plan. Park staff had not reviewed the fence plan when the permit application was filed and after consulting with Park staff, a much simpler fence is being planned and will not be built until the grading and site plan is in place. Paul Leuthold stated that Park staff met with Marinus and Steve and approved fencing materials so that the CLSR can use the Small and Simple Grant to purchase fence supplies that will be stored until a final fence plan is approved and fence construction begins. Julie Guy asked if the remaining \$4000 will be enough to cover the first phase of the project as laid out in the CLSR's Stop Gap Budget. Steve Wilson responded that it will be very close. Julie stated that her concern is that the construction will get partly completed and then will stop due to shortage of funds. Mike Anderson stated that the CLSR's priorities and funding seem a little vague and some clear communication about their priorities and whether or not the funding is in place to achieve their goals is needed. Steve Wilson responded that the CLSR's first priority is to stabilize the house and make it visually attractive. Steve stated that the CLSR has the funding in place to complete this in 2010.

Leslie Bryson stated that while the Park Board approved the overall master plan, which is also going to City Council for approval, the CLSR will continue to work with Park staff on each piece of the project as it comes together. Park staff will review all permit applications prior to any construction taking place.

IV. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. **2010 Park Board Chair, Vice Chair:** Jim McCabe stated that since his second term on the Park Board will be up in July 2010, he does not want to serve as the Board Chair in 2010. Jim also reported that Jane Blume had stated that she is willing to continue as Vice Chair if no one else is nominated. Mark Peterson volunteered to serve as the Board Chair in 2010. Mike Anderson moved to approve Mark Peterson as the Board Chair and Jane Blume as the Board Vice Chair in 2010. Adrienne Lederer seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

V. **BOARD REPORTS:**

- A. **Arts Commission:** Dominique Zervas prepared a written report on the activities of the Arts Commission that was distributed in the meeting packet.
- B. **Big Rock:** Adrienne Lederer reported that the Big Rock Committee is currently planning the 2010 sculpture exhibit that will open in May.
- C. **Woodstock Farm Conservancy:** Adrienne Lederer reported that the Woodstock Farm Conservancy held a craft sale in November to raise funds. Among items sold were a Woodstock Farm calendar and Chuckanut Bay birds notecards. Adrienne reported that these items may also be purchased at the Allied Arts holiday craft fair and at the Chuckanut Bay Gallery.
- D. **Cordata Park:** Julie Guy reported that trail construction at Cordata Park is scheduled to begin in May. Leslie Bryson added that the project will be bid in February or March.

- VI. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Paul Leuthold presented the Parks Department's 2010 budget. The presentation highlighted 2009 accomplishments, 2010 goals, challenges, and significant

expenditure changes. Paul gave the same budget presentation to the Bellingham City Council at a budget worksession in November.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Larry Mansfield introduced himself as a member of the Silver Beach neighborhood and stated that he, along with many of his neighbors, received a notice in the mail about a construction plan to repair the breakwater at Bloedel Donovan Park. Larry stated that he feels that any work done on the boat launch is a waste of money and he does not want to see money put into anything that encourages boating in Bellingham's drinking water.

Bill Black stated that he is concerned about herbicide use at Bloedel Donovan Park. He stated that he believes the problem with the retaining wall at Bloedel is due to herbicide use and if herbicides were not used, nature would heal itself. He also stated that he does not feel that the breakwater should be repaired.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: The December 2009 meeting of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board was adjourned by consent at 9:27 a.m.

Approved: Jim McCabe, Chair

Attest: Liz Haveman, Secretary