

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
Wednesday, May 13, 2009

Present: Mike Anderson, Adrienne Lederer, Tom Barrett, Jim McCabe, Jane Blume, Mark Peterson, John Hymas, Dominique Zervas

Absent: Julie Guy, Bill Hadley, Harry Allison

Staff: Paul Leuthold, Parks & Recreation Director
Marvin Harris, Park Operations Manager
Leslie Bryson, Design & Development Manager
Tim Wahl, Greenways Coordinator
Jonathan Schilk, R.L.A., Landscape Architect
Greg Hatch, Sports/Enrichment Supervisor
Dick Henrie, Recreation Manager
Angelina Wagner, Intern
Heather Higgins-Aanes, Environmental Programs Coordinator

Attending: Jim Zander, Greenways Advisory Committee
Felix Solomon, Sculptor
Paul Johnny
John McGarrity, Cornwall Park Neighborhood Assoc.

- I. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Executive Session was held from 7:04 until 7:30 a.m. After ending the Executive Session it was moved, seconded and unanimously approved that staff begin discussions, negotiations and assessment of two parcels on Chuckanut Bay for potential acquisition.
- II. **APRIL MEETING MINUTES:** Motion made and approved to accept the April 2009 Parks Advisory Board meeting minutes with these revisions: A. Page 1, line 48, change “requires” to “require”, B. Page 2, line 3, change “energy” to “the center includes”.
- III. **OLD BUSINESS:**
Greenway Committee Update: Jim Zander reported that they visited potential acquisition properties in the King Mountain area. The GAC is also struggling with the impasse regarding the approval of the Greenway Strategic Plan for the south area and discussed drafting a letter to City Council. Mark Peterson asked if the GAC would like a joint letter from the Parks Advisory Board and Dominique Zervas concurred that a letter would correspond with the mission of the PRAB. Jim said yes and will report to the GAC that PRAB would like to be included. Tom Barrett asked if the City Council liaison to the GAC could assist with the proposed letter. Leslie replied there is no GAC liaison from Council, but there is a chair of the Council Parks and Recreation Committee. Tom responded that the PRAB representative should assist.

Salmon Art Trail Update: Heather Higgins-Aanes updated the board on two items that came up from last meeting: 1) What if the Parks Advisory Board and The Arts Commission don't agree on a proposed art piece? Answer: The final decision will go to the Mayor; 2) In Wendy Scherrer's guidelines for the Salmon Art Trail, she proposed that any new piece of art for the trail come with its own budget that includes projected costs and maintenance. The Arts Commission wants to see this as policy for all new pieces. Heather was also asking for

approval of the Salmon Art Trail Guidelines from the Parks Advisory Board. Since the Guidelines did not make it in the Park Board Mailing this month, Jim McCabe asked to defer the approval to next month's meeting. The guidelines will be sent to all board members and Heather need not attend. Tom Barrett asked if one of the issues is maintenance, can the budget include endowment funds for maintenance. Jane Blume requested that language be included requiring appropriate maintenance. Paul responded that persons hired for maintenance of the art would be familiar with what is needed.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Franklin Park Picnic Shelter: Leslie Bryson introduced this agenda item by indicating that under recently amended code and policies, approval of new structures on public land is required by either the Arts Commission, or another Board, such as PRAB. Jonathan Schilk, the project coordinator for the picnic shelter, presented drawings of the park, picnic shelter, and proposed location for the shelter. He discussed the footprint, dimensions and features of the shelter and compared it as approx. the size of the shelter in Birchwood Park. A motion was made and approved to accept the proposed shelter.

B. Presentation: Felix Solomon Sculpture Proposal for Maritime Heritage Park: Marvin Harris introduced Felix and explained that thru Wendy Scherrer's Salmon Art Trail project, she met Felix Solomon as a potential sculptor. A variety of possible locations for the proposed piece were looked at in Maritime Heritage Park (MHP) with one promising location near the amphitheater. The proposal for Felix's piece has gone to the Arts Commission who gave conceptual approval. After Parks Board approval, the proposal will go back to Arts Commission for final approval of the art and location. Felix is currently in the process of raising funds for the project.

Felix displayed a model of his sculpture entitled "It's Mine." The wooden, hand-carved sculpture will be 10 ft. long, mounted on four wooden panels. Felix described the sculpture as created in the Lummi Coast Salish Style. Dominique Zervas noted that maintenance will be an issue for the Arts Commission and they would like to see an endowment set up for that. Mike Anderson asked how does seed money get started for an endowment. Is there an endowment per piece of art. Jim McCabe asked that if the PRAB approved to proceed, what happens from here. Leslie answered that the Arts Commission wants to know that PRAB recommends the piece and the location. Jim also asked if the Arts Commission would reject the piece if there was no money for maintenance. Dominique responded that money is a contingent for approval. PRAB advisory board agreed that this is a great piece of art. Motion was made and approved to accept the proposed sculpture for Maritime Heritage park subject to its' meeting the Arts Commission requirements for endowment and maintenance.

C. Presentation: Sport/Enrichment : Greg Hatch, Recreation Supervisor, spoke about the past, present and future for Bellingham Parks and Recreation. In the early years when Bellingham Parks and Recreation was just starting out, programs offered included a free playground program stationed at the neighborhood playgrounds, youth baseball and youth basketball. Currently Greg oversees 9 full time and part time staff, along with seasonal and extra labor staff, who offer all the sports and enrichment programs. He shared copies of the Leisure Guide which goes to everyone in the community and the Activity Guide which is distributed to the schools. Bellingham Parks mission is not to necessarily do everything but to ensure recreational opportunities are available to everyone by partnering with groups from the community, for example, Bellingham School District and the soccer association. The future of

Bellingham Parks is the necessity of funding to maintain our current offerings and not cut back to be a 2-3 program department, as well as any future facilities need to be year-round and multi-purpose to accommodate the increasing amount of facility use requests. Dick Henrie, Recreation Manager, commented that we schedule approx. 3500 events in one year at Bellingham Parks facilities. Jim McCabe asked about current attendance numbers. Greg responded that they have not seen a downturn yet. Adrienne Lederer requested that when the park in Cordata is completed, can he please consider programs for kids there. Dick Henrie responded that programming in Cordata has been discussed currently.

V. Board Reports:

- A. Arts Commission:** Dominique Zervas reported that cataloguing and accessing the art pieces was the main focus of the May meeting. Other key discussion items included the deaccession (removal) of art, the repair/re-painting of a piece of art, and a study that presented statistics on the arts and economic benefit of art. Dominique recommended a visit to the Arts Commission's website to view the study.
- B. Bay to Baker Trail(Nooksack Loop Trail):** John Hymas reported that he received an email from Daniel Tepper who is advertising on his website an enhanced GIS program. John has not looked at it yet. Paul Leuthold commented that it was also on the Whatcom Parks and Recreation website.
- 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 510 people visited Big Rock Park during the Mother's Day celebration. The participants were happy to be there and even offered up some donations. The new art pieces will be in the park May through September.
- E. Woodstock Farm:** Adrienne Lederer reported that the Board was looking to schedule another meeting. They want to hire a person as a fundraiser to run a benefit in conjunction with the art show. The Board also has a new member who will be the treasurer of the committee.
- F. Cordata Park:** Julie Guy sent in an update that was included in the park board packet.
- G. Boulevard Over Water Walkway:** Leslie reported that the Parks Dept went thru the interview process and selected Berger Abam as the for the remaining permitting and design process. Construction is tentatively scheduled for 2011 which is based on the clean up at the foot of Cornwall Ave. Jim Zander asked if the 6 year TIP had been approved by council yet and Leslie replied it has not yet been approved.
- H. Lake Padden Golfers Committee:** No report.
- I. Northridge Park:** Leslie reported that it is at the final design for the next phase which will include some parking on McGrath. It will go out to bid in approx. a month.

J. **Greenstreets:** No report

K. **Trails Sub-Committee:** Tom Barrett reported that the Chuckanut Bay Marsh Restoration Project was addressed during a recent meeting.

L. **Urban Forestry:** John Hymas reported that there will be an Arbor Day Celebration at Elizabeth Park on September 26. There was a meeting with Public Works to work on creating guidelines for having utility lines in parking strips. There is no definite policy regarding tree and utility conflicts. There is a plan to have Brown Bag speakers for Urban Forestry Month. Lastly John shared a “tree obituary” of a tree that was removed on Samish Way.

M. **Watershed Advisory Board:** There was no report.

VI. **DIRECTOR’S REPORT:** Paul stated that the budget task force will be submitting recommendations to the Mayor by the end of the week. Any big ticket items will require Union cooperation. Jim Zander asked if one of the recommendations was to combine the Greenways Committee and Parks Advisory Board and Paul acknowledged yes that was included.

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

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT:** The May 2009 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was adjourned by consent at 9:02 a.m.

Approved: Jim McCabe, Chair

Attest: Carleen Strasser, Secretary