

**PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, May 12, 2010**

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

**Staff:** Paul Leuthold, Parks & Recreation Director  
Marvin Harris, Park Operations Manager  
Leslie Bryson, Design & Development Manager  
Tim Wahl, Greenway Program Coordinator  
Liz Haveman, Board Secretary

**Attending:** Stan Snapp, Bellingham City Council  
Eric Hirst, Greenway Advisory Committee

**I. EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Executive session was held from 7 a.m. to 7:35 a.m.

**II. APRIL MEETING MINUTES:** Motion made and approved to accept the April 2010 meeting minutes as written.

**III. OLD BUSINESS:**

**A. Greenway Advisory Committee Update:** Eric Hirst reported that he and John Blethen gave the Greenway Advisory Committee's annual report to City Council in April. Eric stated that they asked Council to make a decision about the South portion of the Greenway Strategic Plan. Eric stated that he understands that negotiations to acquire Fairhaven Highlands are under way, but that no one on the Greenway Advisory Committee is involved in the process or knows what the process is. Julie Guy expressed concern that the standard process for acquiring property is not being followed and all negotiations are being done outside of the Greenway Committee, Park Board and Park Staff. Stan Snapp commented that he understands that the bank who owns the property is trying to value the parcels and sort out multiple ownership issues. Stan stated that if the Park Board and Greenway Advisory Committee have anxieties about the delay in approval of the South portion of the Greenway Strategic Plan, they should make those known to City Council. Dominique Zervas expressed concern that opportunities in South Bellingham are being missed while the South portion of the Plan is being held up. Dominique stated that she believes that Fairhaven Highlands ought to be separated from the rest of the South portion of the Plan.

Dominique Zervas excused herself at 7:50 a.m.

Geoff Middaugh asked if a letter to Council will be drafted for Park Board review by the June meeting. Paul Leuthold responded that he will draft a letter based on input from the Park Board and the Greenway Committee.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Parks Department Priorities and Guiding Principles:** Stan Snapp briefly explained that Council used to have a set of annual goals that they tweaked each year that didn't address long term policy issues. To that end, they drafted a set of 20-50 year legacy statements to define the goals for the City. Paul Leuthold stated that City staff formulate their annual

work plans around reaching the legacies with measurable steps along the way. Paul stated that the management team of the Parks Department drafted the Parks priorities and guiding principles in 2002, before the Council's legacies. Paul stated that Park staff make financial decisions based on these priorities and principles, and therefore, would like to revisit them to make sure that they are up to date and cohesive with Council's legacies.

Eric Hirst pointed out that the guiding principles could be true of any City department; there is nothing unique about them for the Parks Department specifically. Geoff Middaugh agreed and stated that in his work history, he has had experience drafting mission statements and priorities and principles and volunteered to review the Parks Department's. Paul Leuthold requested that those who have the time and interest, spend some time reviewing them and provide feedback on how they can be updated and amended.

#### IV. BOARD REPORTS:

- A. **Arts Commission**: Dominique Zervas stated that she will email Board members a report on the Arts Commission, or save it for next month as she had to leave the meeting early for another engagement.
- B. **Big Rock**: Adrienne Lederer reported that there were approximately 600 visitors to Big Rock on Mother's Day for the opening of the annual sculpture exhibit. Adrienne reported that in the absence of a budget for this year's event, the Big Rock Committee stepped up and made cookies and put on a wonderful event with a string band who volunteered their time.
- C. **Cordata Park**: Leslie Bryson reported that Razz Construction is the contractor for the trail construction and she expects work to begin very soon; Razz was hiring a foreman for the project.
- D. **Lake Padden Golfers**: Mike Anderson reported that the Golf Committee had a meeting scheduled for the following day. Mike reported that while the clubhouse renovation loan will be paid off in December 2010, it is very important that the money that was going toward that loan stay in the golf course budget as many maintenance projects were deferred during the life of the loan.
- E. **Northridge Park**: Pam Holladay reported that the new trails at Northridge Park are being enjoyed and well used by the community.
- F. **Treekeepers**: Geoff Middaugh reported that he will start providing Treekeeper meeting minutes for the Park Board meeting packet.
- G. **Watershed Advisory Board**: Stan Snapp reported that currently there is a committee made up of members from the City, County and Water District that is reviewing the 5 year watershed management plan. Stan stated that the current management plan reads like a daily work plan and he would like to see it become a goal plan with measurable steps that might be used in applying for grants.

Jane Blume excused herself at 8:40 a.m.

**H. Woodstock Farm Conservancy:** Adrienne Lederer reported that the Woodstock Farm Conservancy's projects are on hold due to the driveway realignment and Inspiration Point reconstruction project. Leslie Bryson stated that this project is currently out to bid.

**V. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Paul Leuthold reported that the Summer Leisure Guide was published on May 2 and approximately \$40,000 in registration fees were collected on the first day of program registration. Paul stated that approximately 50% of the program registrations were conducted online.

**VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Jim McCabe reported that he attended a meeting where a draft of the Transportation Improvement Program was reviewed. Jim stated that the portion of the Whatcom Creek Trail from Racine to Meador is funded in 2011. Jim also stated that the multi-modal Birchwood Ave/James Street connector is in the TIP, but is not funded. Adrienne Lederer asked if everything in the TIP not completed automatically gets rolled over the next year. Jim McCabe responded no, not necessarily and gave the example of the San Juan Boulevard connector that was removed from the TIP.

**VII. PUBLIC COMMENT:** Bill Hadley reported that there was a 70 foot alder behind his house on the edge of Cornwall Park that came down and James Luce and his crew did an excellent job of removing it within a couple of hours.

Mike Anderson asked Mark Peterson about the status of Galbraith Mountain. Mark responded that the WHIMPS have signed a new stewardship agreement with the new owner, who is an active and willing seller, but for the time being he expects that the use will remain status quo. Mark stated that there are 42 miles of trails maintained by WHIMPS, a volunteer organization, that are primarily thought of as mountain bike trails, but other uses such as hiking, dog off leash and orienteering are increasing. Mark stated that the increasing popularity has caused a parking problem. Mark also stated that the WHIMPS is looking for a way to quantify the economic impact that the trails on Galbraith have on the community. They are finding that people are traveling from around the world to access the trail system who want to spend their tourism dollars in local venues that support mountain biking.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT:** The May 2010 meeting of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board was adjourned by consent at 9 a.m.

Approved: Mark Peterson, Chair  
Attest: Liz Haveman, Secretary