

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
Wednesday, November 12, 2008

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

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

Attending: Louise Bjornson, City Council
Jack Weiss, City Council
Stan Snapp, City Council
John Blethen, Greenway Advisory Committee
Edie Norton, Greenway Advisory Committee
Greg Robinson, Cascade Joinery
Tom Wood, artist

- I. CIVIC STADIUM:** Paul Leuthold explained that the locker room facility in which the Park Board is meeting was one component of the Civic Athletic Complex remodel which was completed earlier this year. Civic Stadium was constructed in the 1960's. In 1995 a Civic Field Complex Task Force was organized to analyze the Complex for potential remodel. A citizen driven "Civic Pride Initiative" for the renovation of the stadium failed in 2000. The City's Capital Improvement Advisory Committee identified stadium improvements in their 2001 Final Report. Following increased citizen demand, Mayor Mark Asmundson put the Civic renovations in the budget under a Real Estate Excise Tax bond. The Public Works Department also contributed money for the parking lot and restroom renovations, and some money for the Joe Martin Stadium roof came out of the Greenway Levy.

The Civic Athletic Complex renovation project consisted primarily of construction of a new locker room, parking lot reconstruction, improvements to the game management area, ADA compliance including installation of an elevator, remodel of the existing locker rooms, concession area and restrooms, new seats, construction of a storage facility, improvements to Joe Martin Stadium and playing surface, construction of a Skate Park restroom, and expansion of the Skate Park.

The project went to bid in 2005, but the bids came in about \$2 million over budget, largely due to the fact that the original renovation plans had the new locker room located underneath the existing South grandstand. The project was re-scoped to have the new locker room built as a separate facility. The installation of artificial field turf in 2001 exponentially expanded the use of the Civic Athletic Complex. Before the new turf, approximately 60 games were played at Civic per year. The grass needed a couple of days between games to heal. Now there are approximately 600 games played at Civic annually. Games are scheduled back to back because the artificial turf can withstand more play, thus additional locker rooms are needed for teams preparing to play during completion of the previously scheduled game. The new locker room facility has a divider down the center so that it can be split up into two separate locker rooms, or be left open to house the 100 players that Western Washington University suits up at each game. Western Washington University contributed financially to the Civic Athletic

Complex renovation cost, and they continue to contribute \$40,000 annually to a fund that will go toward replacement of the artificial turf when necessary.

- II. **OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES:** Motion made and unanimously approved to accept the October 2008 Park Advisory Board meeting minutes as submitted.

III. **OLD BUSINESS:**

- A. **Greenway Committee Update:** Leslie Bryson reported that the Greenway Advisory Committee approved the Greenway Strategic Plan at their October meeting. At Council's request, a draft version was presented to City Council last month before the Committee finalized the Plan. Following the Council meeting, the Greenway Committee made some minor revisions and formally adopted the Plan. The final Plan is now being presented to Park Board for adoption, and will be presented to City Council for adoption.

The Greenway Committee wrote the plan to be a public document that clearly outlines the strategic plan for Greenway acquisitions. The dollar allocations for acquisition in different parts of the City came from the City Council Greenway Levy ballot ordinance. The priority property areas in the Plan came from all of the public input received after the Greenway Levy passed. The Greenway Committee took all of the input received at public meetings and via email, letters and phone calls and put them on a list that they then prioritized to create anchors and establish greenway corridors. Leslie stated that it is important to note that the Plan will change over time as opportunities for acquisition change. Leslie also noted that this Plan is just for acquisition; the development plan is not included.

Tom Barrett asked John Blethen how the Greenway Advisory Committee arrived at some of the dollar allocation amounts in the Plan. Dominique Zervas made a motion that the Park Board move into executive session to discuss specific properties. Julie Guy seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Dominique Zervas recused herself from the executive discussion. The executive discussion was held from 7:35 to 7:55 a.m.

Following the executive discussion, Tom Barrett asked if the Park Board ought to consider making a statement supporting a focus on property acquisitions in North Bellingham for the next four or five years. Park Board members generally agreed that there is good momentum in that direction and that they, as well as other members of the community, will continue their commitment to acquiring parks and open spaces in North Bellingham, but a specific statement to accompany the Greenway Strategic Plan is not necessary. Tom Barrett also pointed out that the tables on page 3 and page 19 of the Plan do not include labels (i.e. acres, millions), and suggested that the labels be added for clarity. Leslie Bryson responded that the Greenway Committee had also pointed that out and that the labels will be added.

John Hymas moved that the Park Advisory Board approve the Greenway Strategic Plan as amended with the table labels. Dominique Zervas seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

Edie Norton reported that the Greenway Advisory Committee will hold their monthly walks on the first Saturday morning of each month during the winter due to shorter daylight hours. Edie also reported that the Greenway Committee will be volunteering at the Red Tail Reach

Planting Party on December 6 in place of their monthly walk and encouraged Park Board members to participate as well. Finally, Edie reported that in December, Jim Zander will take over as the Greenway Committee liaison to the Park Board. Park Board members thanked Edie for her year of service as the liaison.

- B. PRO Plan Update:** Paul Leuthold reported that City Council held a public hearing on the PRO Plan on November 3. During the hearing, Council directed staff to include a more detailed explanation of the changes to level of service between this Plan and the previous version. Barbara Ryan also asked staff if they would include some additional budget information and inflationary numbers. Paul stated that Leslie Bryson is working on clarifying these requests to ensure that the items that Council wants to see in the Plan are included. There is some question as to what kind of budget information to include; the PRO Plan is intended to show what could be done given historic funding levels. It is not a budget document. Leslie Bryson reported that the City Finance Director, John Carter, is working on preparing some inflationary numbers and an explanation of them for the PRO Plan. It is very difficult in the current economy to predict inflation. No previous version of the PRO Plan has included inflationary numbers so there is no model to follow in terms of incorporating them as either a supplement to the Plan or in the body of the Plan.

City Council voted 7 to 0 to direct staff to bring forward a Comprehensive Plan amendment. The PRO Plan is going forward as one of several Comprehensive Plan amendments on November 24.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Boulevard Park Porch Artwork:** Leslie Bryson introduced Greg Robinson, the architect for the Boulevard Park Porch, from The Cascade Joinery. Greg introduced Tom Wood, a local artist, who is painting two murals that they are proposing to be mounted on each side of the Porch's back stage wall. Greg stated that Tom Wood was a good friend of Mark Witter's, who the Porch was built in memory of, and Tom has done a number of paintings for Jazz Alliance posters.

Greg distributed color pictures of the two murals. One is an image of the musicians in a boat, the other is of characters in a park. The boat image would face north and would fill the center portion of the wall, the park image would face south and would fill the entire wall. The images are being painted in oil on marine plywood. The murals would be framed with carved cedar when they are mounted to the wall. If the Park Board approves, the murals would be presented to the Arts Commission for their approval as well before they are installed.

John Blethen asked if there is going to be any lighting on the Porch to help prevent vandalism. Greg responded that there will be four lights mounted on the Porch with a security sensor on the restroom building. Greg reported that they have done quite a bit of research on how to best protect the paintings. They considered covering them with glass, but glass could trap condensation, create a glare, and could be just as easily vandalized as the paintings themselves. They have found a silicon-based anti-graffiti coating that they believe is the best option. Tom Wood shared that he has spoken with another local artist, Lanny Little, who has found that the anti-graffiti coating works well.

The graffiti is able to be scrubbed off, and more of the coating added to protect the artwork.

Dominique Zervas inquired about the life expectancy of oil on marine plywood. Tom Wood responded that he is not sure; marine plywood is not very susceptible to moisture. Greg stated that the anti-graffiti coating would fail before the paintings would; the product is said to have a 10-year life expectancy. However, the coating is easy to re-apply; it does not need to be scraped off or somehow removed before more coating is added. Greg also noted that the paintings will be mounted underneath a roof overhang, which will help protect them from moisture.

Mike Anderson moved that the Park Advisory Board approve the artwork proposal. Tom Barrett seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

V. BOARD REPORTS:

A. Arts Commission: Dominique Zervas reported that she has been attending the Arts Commission meetings and has notes from the meetings. She will distribute those to Park Board members via email.

B. Greenstreet Routes: Jim McCabe reported that he circulated a draft map and accompanying narrative of the Greenstreet bicycle routes from Kim Brown to the Park Board via email prior to the meeting. Due to time constraints, these will be discussed at the next Park Board meeting.

VI. ADJOURNMENT: The November 2008 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was adjourned by consent at 8:30 a.m. Paul Leuthold conducted a tour of the Civic Athletic Complex from 8:30 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Approved: Jim McCabe, Chair

Attest: Liz Haveman, Secretary