

**Little Squalicum Park Master Plan
Stakeholder Workshop #1
7/15/09**

Summary

Attendees:

Gina Gobo Austin - City of Bellingham	Ellen Southard - Belt Collins
Tim Wahl - City of Bellingham	Bob Walsh - Belt Collins
Leslie Bryson - City of Bellingham	Chris Webb - Belt Collins
Renee LaCroix - City of Bellingham	John Monahan - GeoEngineers
Jane Blume - Park Board	Analiene Burns - NW Ecological
Carol Williams - Port of Bellingham	Robin duPre - RE Sources
Eve Magyar - Bellingham Tech. College	Mary Jane Nearman - USEPA
Justin Thomas - WCC	Jeanne O'Dell - USEPA
Chris Secrist - Oeser	Mark Herrenkohl - Herrenkohl Consulting
Frances Badgett - Columbia Neigh. Assoc.	
Dan Welch - Birchwood Neighborhood	

Notes from Flip Charts

Qualities

- Back glade - quiet below the level of surrounding activity around, enclosed
- One of our few public beaches, only access to the delta, biologically rich, connects upland to the sea
- Feeling is very different than surrounding area
- Wonderful exercise route, running, commuter route, great connectivity to the neighborhoods
- Open views from Marine Drive
- Dynamic high energy beach, winds
- Views in the park to Lummi
- Abundance of wetlands - although low grade
- Proximity to Squalicum Creek Park – linkages
- Park provides only hand-carry boat put in for the north part of bay- (kayaks)
- Feels like a corridor, not just a place
- Greenbelt in industrial area
- Excellent vehicular access
- Attracts many families

Issues

- Feels like a corridor
- Attracts undesirables
- Environmental issues – contamination/cleanup
- Need to attract more families
- Site is so underutilized - results in bad behavior

- Garbage problems
- Beach is not in a natural state - lots of concrete rubble
- Campfires on the beach- concern from adjacent bluff homes
- Lots of invasive species
- Off trail use (social trails)
- Site is altered, grades, hydrology - surface and ground
- Mining previous activities
- Storm water capture and treatment
- Drug dealing
- Large uncontrolled run-off (drainage) events
- Compromised ability for storm water to clean itself naturally
- Lack of trees in the upper park site, needs buffering from industrial uses, possibly a topographic buffer
- Nutrient issues for trees, many are not growing a natural patterns
- Off-leash dogs

Desires

- Spruce, cedar, madrone on south slopes
- Vegetation management
- Indigenous plants
- Utilize every inch of the park for active and passive use
- Enhanced access to the beach, utilize dock (pier)
- Enhanced BTC linkages
- Interpretive signs, will require maintenance
- Restrooms - must have at the parking lot and in the ravine near the beach
- Long trail is multi-use - good place for a restroom
- Environmental/interpretive signage, plan of park site and surrounding features
- Cultural interpretation
- Creek should feel natural not just channelized
- Create a natural feel
- Have to link the estuary with the beach (shield it from human and dog use)
- Barrier free as possible- no physical structures (fences), natural barriers
- ADA access

Vision and Goals

- Master Plan should fit into surrounding neighborhood Master Plans
- Partnership opportunities – county, neighborhood, Oeser, Port, industries, BTC- connectivity (surveying, civil engineering)
- Recreational uses - zip line, hiking, biking, running, picnicking
- Contiguous habitat areas, high value
- Provide use areas, direct people
- Restrooms, clean of contamination
- Area to enjoy waterfront
- Ensure the backshore is part of the habitat
- Moving trail back from the beach
- Playground in upper park area
- Frisbee golf – one at Cornwall Park- damage to trees, added element of safety with more activity

- Back glade- opened up for field use Frisbee, informal play fields
- BTC parking gets full during fall quarter, no permitting
- Marine parking is all of the parking for the park, informal parking at Mt. Baker plywood
- Have environmental signage like Tenant Lake - explain processes, clarify uses, activities and recovery
- Transitional zones, mini-watersheds
- Interpretative signs, kiosks
- Partnerships outside the park- Whatcom Museum
- Unknown ravine, need a symbolic gateway to draw people in
- Park entry sign
- Wayfinding signage
- Trees nearing lifecycle, 45-years alder, cottonwood
- Pipe the water from the Oeser/BW culvert to the top of slope. Wouldn't need fill material, not an uncontrolled flow, you could armour channel.
- Run Oeser to south detention (Birchwood).

Working Vision Statement:

The Little Squalicum Park Master Plan sets a course for the restoration and revitalization of an active, vibrant shoreline park in Bellingham.

While capturing the quintessential Northwest park experience; it establishes seamless connectivity between the community and the waterfront, stimulates ecological recovery of the forest and streams while providing a clean, safe and healthy environment for a range of passive and active recreational opportunities.

Participant Suggested Changes to the Vision Statement:

<p>Vision/Mission</p> <p>“Provide for an enhanced recreational space for people, both active and passive places” Or “Little Squalicum Park is a place for passive and active uses, which should be enhanced to provide...”</p> <p>Change “Northwest” to Bellingham</p> <p>Accessible</p>
<p>Vision Statement</p> <p><u>People</u> The Bellingham and Whatcom county citizens have established a vision for the Little Squalicum Park, established in the Master Plan.</p> <p><u>Place</u></p>

We envision a park that serves both as an attractive destination and as a corridor connecting our communities with the bay, educational facilities, residences, and businesses.
...seamless connectivity for people between community and waterfront and provides a wildlife corridor connecting upland habitats and the sea.
Providing a bridge between natural and human landscapes
Instead of "range" of active and passive recreational opportunities I'd like as many passive and active recreational uses as possible
Add: wildlife habitat somewhere
Add concept of neighborhoods and college in addition to "the community" and "ecological recovery"
Does "restoration" and "ecological recovery" include the concept of "clean up" enough?
Add the concept of "cultural/historical"
Change the name now. The definition of "Park" in Bellingham does not reflect the goals for this area. Examples: Little Squalicum Natural Area, Little Squalicum Nature Reserve, Little Squalicum Reserve and Beach
LSPMP provides a SAFE, HEALTHY respite for REJUVENATION, FUN, WONDER and RECREATION in a NATURAL, UNIQUE place with a DIVERSITY of EXPERIENCES.
Don't like "quintessential NW park experience" "seamless" – over done "forest" opening that may be preferred/desired (there are records of prairie/meadow lands in the pre-contact vicinity, albeit at the "upper park" elevation)
The lower park should provide a series of linked but distinctive places along the streams and trail following the old ravine alignment. (The "places" are not large, but they are important.)
Groundwater and springs and their relationship to surface water could be a theme explored via the pre-white name as the "place of many springs"
Comment Cards: City naming policy: clarify expectations: Potential to discuss in public meetings Could name change affect attitude of what a park is "Beach" not in name Is off leash still on the table? "corridor" Define active and passive uses Unforested areas Historical meadow opening Mosaic that adds light and wind
Public meeting thoughts? Vision Maps for orientation Team leaders
Mark's survey of culvert area; compare elevations Calculate evapotranspiration

13 C water temperature

Mini watershed

Proposed hood sign at parking lot

Not having to fill area between habitat and active area

Add BC and City logo

“Brainstorming sessions”

Pipe from culvert

Community driven vision

Accessibility; ADA

No parking planned for the arterial

After 3:00 no permitted parking at BTC

Port lot closed at dusk

Capitalize open spaces to push out undesirable behavior

Linked but distinct areas

Cultural and historic

Add features

THE END