

**Little Squalicum Park Master Plan
Stakeholder Workshop #3
10/07/09**

Meeting Summary

Attendees:

Gina Austin - City of Bellingham
Tom Slack - City of Bellingham
Marvin Harris - City of Bellingham
Leslie Bryson - City of Bellingham
Dan Welch, Birchwood Neighborhood
Barb Campbell - Birchwood Neighborhood
Louise Bjornson - City Council Member
Brian Gouran - Port of Bellingham
Anara Thomas - Grateful Dogs Off-Leash Assoc.
Jeff Parks - Whatcom Co. Sheriff's Office

Michele Bodtke - NW Ecological Services
Analiese Burns - NW Ecological Services
John Monahan - GeoEngineers
Mark Herrenkohl - Herrenkohl Consulting
Chris Secrist - Oeser Cedar
Ellen Southard - Belt Collins
Bob Walsh - Belt Collins
Eve Magyar - Bellingham Tech. College
Jane Blume - P & R Advisory Board
Vanessa Rayner - Ecology & Environment` (EPA)

The purpose of the meeting was to:

- discuss the public's comments from the September 16th Alternatives Meeting
- discuss park management, safety and law enforcement recommendations
- develop a draft plan that:
 - reflects the public's opinions and desires
 - is feasible and can be implemented
 - will be supported by the Stakeholder Team, Parks and Recreation Board and the City Council

Notes from Flip Charts

- Can the estuary count as mitigation?
 - 0.8 stream + 1 acre estuary = 2.8 acres wetlands
 - Saltwater estuary may be considered "out-of-kind" mitigation. Need further discussion with regulatory agencies

Management Discussion

- Park hours: 6am-10pm as per BMC, no closure gates at park entrances
- Whatcom County Sheriff can enforce state law or county regulations
- Generally parks are not where crime is occurring, however it is a bigger deal when it does
- City has to intervene regarding trespassing
- An Inter-local agreement could be developed for the park between County and City but may not supersede state laws
- County is not the primary responder
- 911 calls are routed according to where the call came from, County residence = County Sheriff
- City & County calls arrive together then dispatched by location
- When sheriff responds, usually two officers respond to calls at the park
- The beach is the primary concern and most problematic area of the park

- Better site access makes it easier to police without a lot of hiking
- Party activity and fires typically occur along the entire stretch of beach between Mt. Baker Plywood and the pier
- No emergency phones in Bellingham Parks – most people have cell phones
- Lindbergh Avenue has locking bollards, this is the primary emergency access location
- Bridges in the lower park would need to accommodate emergency vehicles and maintenance vehicles
- Broad access should be accommodated at the beach
- Visible escape routes provide an added element of safety
- Biker & buggy visibility from the beach
- The plan should not accommodate or encourage a main corridor/path from Mt. Baker Plywood along the beach
- Develop parking in the upper area of the park
- Proposed parking might not be adequate if public access to the pier is provided
- Utilize Mt. Baker plywood parking for shorter walks
- BTC parking permits are coming soon, might limit or negate parking for park on weekdays.
- Not many transient camps in park except along the RR right-of-way and sometimes below BTC campus on the east side of the park
- Opening up the back glades should provide a greater sense of safety
- Louise has generally felt safe at the park
- Consider lighting for navigation, parking, dock, restrooms
- Lighting is generally not provided along park trails in Bellingham.

Preferred Master Plan Discussion

- Provide irrigation/potable water close to the restroom facilities, trash, etc.
- Back glade picnic shelter should come out, vandalism is a certainty
- Provide convenient and easy to access trash receptacles
- Pack-in-pack-out of garbage not a widely accepted practice at City parks
- Move the shelter in upper park closer to the active play area
- No manicured turf areas, just meadows
- Simple gathering areas are ok in the back glade
- Include a maintenance closet within proposed restroom facilities
- Lot near the proposed BTC diesel building could likely remain public parking
- Easement from BTC into the parking lot should be included on the Master Plan wish list
- DOE to respond to new AO agreement for landfill, DOE to sign termination agreement of AO for rest of park
- Why change wetlands?
 - Expand, improve upon existing wetlands
 - The site needs to optimize hydrology to enhance wetlands
 - Consolidating water helps filter and clean
 - Greater habitat value, less encroachment into useable park space
- Buffers would have to go off stream channel
- Generally Class 3 wetlands must be replaced at a ratio of 3x
- Secondary trails are an option, their exact location can be determined during final design
- Picnic tables near the beach? This is a very popular spot, provide at least a few overlooking the beach
- The existing beach experience is of utmost importance, we must maintain this setting
- Show the park boundary at the RR right-of-way. Clearly show beach management by Port

- Currently the park is off-leash for dogs, Could the dog issue be vague? This is a policy issue and should not be changed in the master plan.
- What is the timeline/process for the Environmental Clean-up?
 - Goal is to have the clean-up completed by September 2010.