CITY OF BELLEVUE
PARKS & COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday
October 8, 2013
6:00 p.m.

Conference Room 1E-113
Bellevue City Hall
Bellevue, Washington

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Grindeland, Vice-Chair Evans, Boardmembers George[1], Heath, Van Hollebeke[2]

BOARDMEMBERS ABSENT: Boardmembers Powell, Robinson

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Patrick Foran, Nancy Harvey, Paul Inghram (PCD), Glenn Kost, Shelley McVein, Camron Parker, Terry Smith, Scott Vander Hyden

OTHERS PRESENT: Lyn Balint, Carole McKinstry, Beth Muller, Susan Nelson, Dwight Schrag

MINUTES TAKER: Michelle Cash

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Grindeland at 6:02 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion by Vice-Chair Evans and second by Boardmember George to approve the meeting agenda. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Boardmember Van Hollebeke and second by Vice-Chair Evans to approve the September 10, 2013 Parks & Community Services Board meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

[1] Departed at 8:04 p.m.
[2] Arrived at 6:03 p.m.

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Susan Nelson
919 – 109th Ave. NE, #1602, Bellevue, WA 98004

Ms. Nelson distributed a handout regarding her presentation. She is a member of the Keep Ashwood Park Green Neighborhood Group and became involved with preserving Ashwood Park when she heard that a new fire station was being considered for the property. She feels that one of the most important things the population needs in order to sustain its physical and mental well-being is green space. Ms. Nelson urged Boardmembers to give thoughtful consideration to the Keep Ashwood Park Green Neighborhood Group's efforts.

Dwight Schrag
1106 – 108th Ave. NE, #302, Bellevue, WA 98004

Mr. Schrag is also a member of the Keep Ashwood Park Green Neighborhood Group and distributed a booklet of photos pertaining to Ashwood Park. He distributed a copy of a PowerPoint presentation and requested 15 minutes on a future Park Board meeting agenda to present the information.

Chair Grindeland explained that the Board has been approached by other groups for similar requests. She added that Ashwood Park is most likely due for a master plan update; however, the Board cannot initiate the master planning process. This process is directed by City Council. When the Board is directed to work on the Ashwood Park Master Plan, there will be opportunities for community members to voice their opinions.

5. CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION:

None.

6. CHAIR COMMUNICATION:

Chair Grindeland distributed a sign-up sheet for Boardmembers to volunteer for upcoming events.

7. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:

Chair Grindeland made the following report:

- Attended the Surrey Downs public meeting.
- Visited Ashwood Park.
- Enjoyed various other parks throughout the city.

Boardmember George made the following report:

- Visited Downtown Park.
- Visited Lake Hills Greenbelt.
- Visited Airfield Park.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke made the following report:

- Attended the Neighborhood Leadership Gathering.
- Visited Ashwood Park.
- Enjoyed Downtown Park.

Boardmember Heath made the following report:

- Attended the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition breakfast.
- Made a donation to the Bellevue Botanical Garden Society and was amazed at their responsiveness in acknowledging donors.

Vice-Chair Evans made the following report:

- Attended the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition breakfast.
- Attended the Neighborhood Leadership Gathering.
- Attended the Surrey Downs public meeting.
- Signed-up for various volunteer opportunities at North Bellevue Community Center.

8. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Mr. Foran attended the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition breakfast. He noted that the city supports this organization because Bellevue has received substantial funding from the organization to fund the parks system.

Mr. Foran discussed the Bellevue Essentials Program that the city recently provided, which included tours of Downtown Park and the waterfront park area.

Mr. Foran reported that the City of Bellevue is partnering with America's Promise as the primary convener for a Seattle/Tacoma Regional Community GradNation Summit on November 8, 2013. Bellevue, in partnership with SOAR (a King County Collaborative building effective partnerships for youth and families), will facilitate and manage the logistics. The event will be held at the Bellevue Westin. America's Promise will sponsor 100 summits across the country in the next three years starting with 15 summits in 2013, including Bellevue. These summits will accelerate a powerful and sustained locally-driven national movement to meet the GradNation goal of a 90% high school graduation rate by 2020.

Boardmember George asked if the Keep Ashwood Park Green Neighborhood Group presentation could be added to a future meeting agenda. She also expressed her concern with addressing the public during Oral Communications, since this is typically not allowed. Mr. Foran explained that staff does not recommend placing the Keep Ashwood Park Green Neighborhood Group presentation on a meeting agenda because the presentation would be premature. Any presentations regarding Ashwood Park should be conducted through the master planning process

so that all groups are allowed to participate and be heard. Boardmember Van Hollebeke reminded the Keep Ashwood Park Green Neighborhood Group that they can also advocate their issue to City Council, which might expedite the Ashwood Park Master Plan Update.

9. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. Surrey Downs Park Master Plan Update

Mr. Vander Hyden explained that Surrey Downs Park was acquired from King County in 2005. The master plan public process for Surrey Downs Park began in 2007 and included significant public outreach and community involvement. Over 200 people participated in three public meetings. The Boys and Girls Club participated in those meetings and advocated the development of a large, multi-use community center and gymnasium at the park, though the Surrey Downs community generally opposed the idea. The Park Board reviewed the plan on two occasions and recommended the plan to the City Council, who also reviewed the plan and adopted it in March of 2009. Mr. Vander Hyden further clarified that in November of 2008, the voters approved the Park and Natural Areas Levy, which provided funds to develop Surrey Downs Park. However, because of the delays in the light rail alignment decision and courthouse relocation, funding for Surrey Downs Park was deferred from the 2013-2019 CIP budget.

Mr. Vander Hyden noted that the goals of the Surrey Downs Master Plan have not significantly changed. The 2009 Master Plan had a placeholder for a community center and three park zones, which included:

- 112th Parkscape—included garden terraces, hillside trails, building zone, hazelnut grove, neighborhood portal.
- Great Lawn—included neighborhood portal, great lawn, skate spot, hoop court, community gardens, picnic shelter, playground, entry plaza, restrooms, kiosk, discovery trail, vista, climbing wall.
- The Meadow—included neighborhood portal, promontory, labyrinth, sports meadow, loop trail.

Due to Sound Transit's impacts, Mr. Vander Hyden noted that various park elements and uses need to change. Some of the changes include:

- Access from 112th Avenue.
- Park Elements & Uses.
- Park Access & Parking.
- The 112th Park Edge.

Because access from 112th Avenue is restricted, Mr. Vander Hyden discussed various options for park access and parking, which include:

- North Access—street end access, which creates topography challenges and impacts to the great lawn.
- West Access—centralized access, but would require acquisition of one to two parcels and impacts The Meadow.

- South Access—street end access but involves a sharp corner and impacts The Meadow.

Mr. Vander Hyden explained that the Surrey Downs community created a Surrey Downs Park Advisory Committee with nine members to work with the City to update the Surrey Downs Park Master Plan to reflect the needs of the Surrey Downs community.

Ms. Muller, Surrey Downs Park Advisory Committee Member, expressed her gratitude for the transparent and collaborative planning process for Surrey Downs. She explained that the Committee does not view the changes to 112th Avenue as an impediment. However, the most important feature to emphasize is access to the park because the Surrey Downs community does not want traffic sent into the surrounding neighborhoods. Based upon feedback received from various public input opportunities, the Surrey Downs community has the following concerns:

- Reduced parking and concerns:
  - Additional neighborhood traffic.
  - Parking on neighborhood streets.
  - Pedestrian safety (no sidewalks).
  - Access points into the park.
- Reduced or elimination of some park elements.
- Reduced programmed sports.
- Sound mitigation along 112th Avenue SE.

Ms. Muller thanked Berger Partnership, along with Mr. Kost, Mr. Vander Hyden, and the Parks Department for their support with the project.

Mr. Vander Hyden pointed out that the City is currently negotiating for space to relocate the courthouse, which is important because the City is committed to removing the existing courthouse by 2015, and Sound Transit is obligated to replace the parking. Sound Transit requested preliminary plans for the parking area by the end of the year.

Vice-Chair Evans suggested that Surrey Downs be designed as a destination park for downtown Bellevue residents. He cautioned that additional park programming would bring more cars and traffic, which would be problematic for the park. If the park was created as a destination park, walking trails and amenities to bring families to the park could be added. Vice-Chair Evans questioned how much the city would be willing to spend on a facility that generates little revenue. Mr. Foran responded that the type and size of a building isn't driven by revenue, it's driven by community interest. Mr. Vander Hyden added that it will be a challenge to identify a building that the community desires but does not overwhelm the neighborhood.

Boardmember Heath concurred with the concerns identified by the community members. He suggested that Sound Transit be asked to set aside funding to acquire properties as they become available to gain access to the park. This vision and planning could be 25 years in the future but would ultimately achieve everyone's goals of providing park access.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke suggested that the funding Sound Transit is obligated to allocate for parking be utilized for other park improvements if off-site parking is accomodated. Mr. Kost

clarified that Sound Transit is obligated to replace the parking. It is the city's obligation to inform Sound Transit of the parking requirements. He added that changing this agreement is not likely. Boardmember Van Hollebeke is pleased to see the neighborhood involvement for the planning process. He would like the park designed for the immediate neighborhood and those with easy access from the downtown corridor. Boardmember Van Hollebeke stated that the park's mission has changed from a city park to a neighborhood park.

Boardmember George expressed her support for the collaborative planning efforts with the Surrey Downs community. She sees two primary planning issues: parking and the park edge. She questioned if there was an analysis of the parking alternatives and the impacts on the neighborhood during the environmental review process conducted by Sound Transit or if a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would be conducted. Mr. Parker clarified that the environmental review did not contain specific information about parking because of the range of options considered. Originally, most of the options had access to the park from 112th Avenue. There are no plans for a supplemental EIS.

Chair Grindeland encouraged staff and the community to collaborate and try to make the 112th Avenue barrier as aesthetically pleasing as possible.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke suggested that the nearest light rail station be linked to Surrey Downs Park with walking trails, etc. to encourage park users to park at the light rail station and walk to the park. Mr. Vander Hyden pointed out that a walking path would require pedestrians to cross the train tracks. In addition, if ample parking is not available at Surrey Downs Park, park users will park throughout the neighborhood to gain park access, which is discouraged. Boardmember Van Hollebeke concurred with Boardmember Heath that the visions should be long-term and that all access avenues be considered.

Boardmember Heath suggested that off-site parking be considered as an option.

Ms. Muller explained that the Surrey Downs neighborhood streets are a magnet for parking with the train station and park. The community is looking for support to make the park and neighborhood as green, natural, and untouched as possible.

B. Comprehensive Plan Update

Mr. Inghram explained that the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan captures the community's vision for the future of Bellevue, sets policy that directs city actions and decisions, and guides capital investments. The 2014 Comprehensive Plan scope includes:

- Bring plan up to date, extend horizon to 2035.
- Keep plan relevant.
- Issues identified by the community.
- State requirements, other laws.
- Individual requests, per Council direction.

Mr. Inghram noted that there are valuable historical roots to the current plan. However, an update needs to be conducted to extend the planning year to 2035; update data, figures, and targets; and address state and regional goals, including for climate change and public health.

Mr. Inghram showed a map that demonstrated city development from 1903 to present. With the community growth and future needs, the goal will be to determine how to get the most out of the green spaces in the current dense areas.

There have been various community outreach events conducted to collect ideas and input for the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Inghram noted that the Bellevue's Best Ideas campaign was a successful pilot of a new outreach technique. Bellevue's Best Ideas resulted in 126 ideas, 164 comments on ideas, and 1,770 votes, from 346 different individuals. The Quality Neighborhoods, Improved Mobility and Economic Development categories received the most activity. A summary of this information was included in the Board packet.

Mr. Parker reviewed the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. He also distributed an Element Link diagram that described the Comprehensive Plan element links and showed how the Parks, Open Space and Recreation are one piece of the overall plan.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke inquired how the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Element relate to housing. Mr. Parker discussed some of the relationships between the two elements and clarified that most new housing within Bellevue will be multi-family growth/construction.

Vice-Chair Evans stressed that the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Element of the Comprehensive Plan needs to focus on accommodating Bellevue's growth. The Plan should be broadened to reach the most amounts of people possible and include visions for the long-term (i.e., 20+ years).

Boardmember George suggested revising the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Element, Policy PA-23, to promote the use of signs directing people from arterials to existing parks as a way of maximizing public enjoyment of shorelines (i.e., Robinsglen Park, which is on Phantom Lake and is hard to find) and other parks.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke added that the period of large acquisitions is over and the next park phase is linkages and creating connectivity systems. He added that it would be nice to add policies or connectivity verbiage to make linkage more explicit within the policies (i.e., way finding, trail ways, etc.).

Vice-Chair Evans agreed with Boardmembers George and Van Hollebeke and pointed out that Policy PA-7 states, "Provide additional public access to Lakes Washington and Sammamish." However, there isn't anything included about the city's property on Lake Sammamish. Boardmember Van Hollebeke suggested that many of the policies be reworded to include connectivity throughout parcels and enhance existing access, particularly in Policy PA-3. Mr. Foran reminded Boardmembers that the policies are for a long horizon.

Vice-Chair Evans stated that until the Planning Department encourages developers to set aside open space areas in their development, there will not be additional parks within Bellevue. Mr. Inghram clarified that the Planning Department already has incentives for builders to include open space areas.

Mr. Parker noted that the concept of "urban park" is a relatively new concept to Bellevue and policies should encourage proper placement and design to serve residents.

In regards to Surrey Downs Park, Vice-Chair Evans cautioned that planning for Surrey Downs be methodically planned out so that the large parcel is not named a "community park" when it should be an "urban park" or vice versa. He suggested that planning efforts include forward thinking to consider potential high-rise buildings and their access to public parks.

Boardmember Heath suggested that a fund be earmarked for developers that want to add additional height to their buildings or have more density. Developers would donate money into the fund based upon a set of standards. In return, the fund can be utilized to fund more parks and open space. He also suggested that the transportation system incorporate a policy that encourages green and open space when making improvements. Mr. Foran added that any transportation improvement should include a park experience. Lastly, Boardmember Heath suggested that the Comprehensive Plan encourage long-term planning to capture raw land for the next 30-50 years. The property doesn't necessarily need to be developed right away but planners should be mindful of acquisition opportunities.

Vice-Chair Evans suggested that all of the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Elements be linked to the Transportation system and other policy statements so that when improvements are made they all tie together.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke requested clarification on the relationship between policies and regulations. Mr. Parker used the following analogy to explain the process: the Comprehensive Plan is the tree root; the functional plans, which include the Parks, Open Space & Recreation Plan and all of the other elements, are the branches. He added that everything in the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Plan should track back to the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Parker explained that the Comprehensive Plan is the starting point/policy. Mr. Inghram clarified that there are a number of policies about incentive systems and giving bonuses for various things. These are specific, short policies. Then, the code may have several pages of description. He added that there is a code, detailed policies, and then the purchasing/acquisition. Mr. Inghram noted that one of the objectives of the update is to be sure that all of the elements link together.

Chair Grindeland favors the policies overall. Vice-Chair Evans also favors the policies. However, he suggested that some of the linkage within the policies be reviewed/redefined.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke questioned if there is room within the elements for scenario-focused planning or persona-based planning or if it is involved in the process. For example, are current demographics evaluated to bring more connectivity between communities and parks?

Vice-Chair Evans explained that his park experience typically involves him leaving his private yard and going to high density places, like North Bellevue Community Center. He does not typically frequent parks—his yard is his park. Vice-Chair Evans does not think that the Surrey Downs Park gets well utilized by Surrey Downs neighbors. On the contrary, Vice-Chair Evans views Downtown Park as a high use park with local neighbors as primary park users. Vice-Chair Evans hopes that parks are carefully evaluated for how they are utilized and who is using them so this can be taken into consideration for future planning.

Mr. Parker noted that staff will evaluate the themes identified and bring the edited policies back to the Park Board in early 2014.

Motion by Boardmember Van Hollebeke and second by Vice-Chair Evans to extend the meeting until 8:35 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

Vice-Chair Evans requested data about how community members, in high density areas, utilize parks. He is having a difficult time conceptualizing why the city invests in community parks, rather than urban parks. He wants to be sure that the urban areas are being considered, since it appears to him that people in the downtown corridor seem to utilize parks far more than the suburban areas.

10. BOARDMEMBER COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS:

A. Network on Aging

No report.

B. Bridle Trails Neighborhood Park Update

Boardmember Heath explained that one of the land owners adjacent to the Bridle Trails Corner Park has filed an appeal of land use decision. Construction on the park has been postponed until the issue is resolved.

C. Downtown Livability Study

No report.

11. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Future agenda items

None.

12. **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:**

A. CIP Project Status Report

B. Email from Jerri Stook re Nancy Kartes and Bellevue Botanical Garden

13. **INFORMATION:**

A. List of upcoming Parks special events

B. Next regular Park Board meeting—November 14 (Thursday—date change due to holiday earlier in the week)

14. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None.

15. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Boardmember Van Hollebeke and second by Vice-Chair Evans to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).