

**CITY OF BELLEVUE
PARKS & COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday
October 13, 2009
6:00 p.m.

Conference Room 1E-112
Bellevue City Hall
Bellevue, Washington

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Keeney, Vice-Chair Roland, Boardmembers George, Grindeland, LaPine, Robinson, Stokes

COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT: John Chelminiak

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Jan Beck, Shelley Brittingham, Pam Fehrman, Pat Harris, Nancy Harvey, Nancy Kartes, Glenn Kost, Shelley Marelli, Jerry Nissley, Randy Ransom, Terry Smith

OTHERS PRESENT: Don Crowe, Norma Edler, Barbara Eisenstein, Ian Elliott, Frank Kuske

MINUTES TAKER: Michelle Cash

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Keeney at 6:04 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion by Vice-Chair Roland and second by Boardmember Robinson to approve the meeting agenda. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Boardmember Stokes and second by Vice-Chair Roland to approve the September 10, 2009 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Parks & Community Services Board as presented. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Motion by Vice-Chair Roland and second by Boardmember Robinson to approve the September 26, 2009 Special Meeting Minutes of the Parks & Community Services Board as presented. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Don Crowe, 9040 Willows Road, Redmond, WA

Mr. Crowe is the owner of Arena Sports. He submitted a proposed alternative configuration (Alternative D) for the Eastgate Area Properties. He highlighted his ideas on the benefits of the Alternative D configuration, which include:

- Two multi-purpose outdoor fields and an indoor sports facility;
- Indoor facility provides space for public restrooms, concessions, meeting rooms, WiFi, and outdoor field lighting; and
- Eliminates the need for other park structures including restrooms and concession stands.

Arena Sports' proposal includes funding of all capital costs and limiting the liability for the City. Mr. Crowe expressed his appreciation that the proposed alternatives include outdoor sportsfields.

Barbara Eisenstein, 12609 SE 29th St., Bellevue, WA

Ms. Eisenstein distributed a summary of her comments and urged Boardmembers to retain an off-leash area within the Eastgate Area Properties, either by recommending Alternative B as the preferred option or by suggesting that an off-leash area be placed on Building Site "A," in place of the picnic facilities.

Ms. Eisenstein feels that expansion of Robinswood's corrals is not an acceptable alternative and will not meet the needs of Bellevue dog owners. In addition, she feels the proposed off-leash area at Lakemont Park is unsuitable.

Ms. Eisenstein views the proposed off-leash park at Wilburton Park as the only suitable park in the current off-leash plan.

Ms Eisenstein asked the following questions:

- What public input will be sought for an off-leash facility?
- If there is significant opposition, will the idea be abandoned altogether?
- Will dog owners have input?
- What priority would be given to the project?

Norma Edler, 2060 – 166th Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Ms. Edler helps exercise service dogs. She feels the City caters to the soccer associations, that the soccer fields are badly managed, and that the City should stay within the budget. She would like an off-leash park included at the Eastgate Area Properties.

Ian Elliott, 1079 – 108th Ave. NE, #4, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Elliott expressed his appreciation for the many great parks throughout Bellevue and asked Boardmembers to consider adding a skate park to the Bellevue downtown area, specifically to Ashwood Park. Mr. Elliott encouraged Boardmembers to view the Pacific

Science Center Skate Park or the skate park located in downtown Redmond. He suggested a 50 feet x 50 feet skate park for optimal size.

Frank Kuske, 16612 SE 26th Street, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Kuske expressed his support of Ms. Eisenstein's and Ms. Edler's comments. He feels the voice of the Spiritridge community is not being heard regarding the plans for the Eastgate Area Properties.

5. CHAIR COMMUNICATIONS:

Chair Keeney thanked Boardmembers for attending the recent Board retreat. He also expressed his appreciation to Parks staff for assisting with the event.

6. BOARD COMMUNICATION:

Boardmember Grindeland recently attended the Youth Court Open House. She was very impressed with the Youth Link activity and encouraged Boardmembers to observe a Youth Court session. Boardmember Grindeland also attended the Kelsey Creek Farm Fair.

Boardmember Stokes attended the Kelsey Creek Farm Fair and distributed photos of the event.

Boardmember LaPine traveled to Bend, Oregon and visited Drake Park, which is Bend's waterfront park. This park helped him envision some of the future plans for Meydenbauer.

Boardmember Robinson has been involved with Network on Aging activities and will provide a committee update later in the agenda.

Boardmember George attended the Youth Court Open House and was impressed by the overall program. She also frequently visits the Lake Hills greenbelt.

Vice-Chair Roland often visits the Bellevue Botanical Gardens.

Chair Keeney attended the Kelsey Creek Farm Fair and congratulated staff on accomplishing all of the improvements to the creek.

7. CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS:

Councilmember Chelminiak expressed his appreciation to Boardmembers for attending the recent Board retreat.

Councilmember Chelminiak noted that the City Council has been discussing budget issues. The Council would like to make the parks levy a priority.

Councilmember Chelminiak reported that the City Council spent a great deal of time with Sound Transit discussing potential routes, in particular C9T, which is the tunnel option. This option does not have a north end exit, which originally affected some of the north end parks. He added that Sound Transit is also brainstorming a different transition plan through Bel-Red.

8. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:

A. Eastgate Area Properties Master Plan

Ms. Fehrman summarized the Eastgate Area Properties Master Plan process. There have been numerous community workshops, workshop exercises, neighborhood meetings, petitions, e-mails, phone calls, surveys, and other meetings conducted. She explained that overall neighbors close to the park favor less development for the Eastgate Area Properties.

Ms. Fehrman explained that the three final alternative designs are identical except for the east-central area of the site. Elements common to all include:

- The core area.
- Enhance trails and park connections.
- Preserve views.
- Limit vehicle access to 160th.
- Maintain residential buffers.
- Sportsfields.
- Accessible picnic facilities.
- Two children's play areas.
- Utilize existing parking if possible.
- Provide restroom/park furnishings.
- Environmentally responsible.

Ms. Fehrman explained some of the elements unique to each alternative, which include:

Alternative A: Adds a second lighted, multi-use sportsfield area that together would provide three baseball/softball fields and two soccer/lacrosse field overlays. This option maximizes outdoor athletic use, and splitting the fields into two distinct areas allows for the most universal and flexible sportfield use. Tournaments, extended-season sports, and same-season sports can be accommodated as needed. If this alternative is selected, staff recommends that the off-leash dog area at Robinswood Community Park be expanded and enhanced to provide facilities to serve east Bellevue.

Alternative B: Adds a 3 ½ acre off-leash dog area. This alternative provides a fenced off-leash facility approximately twice the size of the off-leash facilities at Robinswood Community Park, and could be designed as a complement to Robinswood's facilities. This alternative would not accommodate a sportfield complex or the minimum 5-10 acre off-leash facility requested by many off-leash advocates. If this alternative is selected, improvements are not recommended to the existing off-leash facilities at Robinswood.

Alternative C: Adds a 40,000-50,000 square foot indoor recreation building. The building would provide opportunities for complementary indoor-outdoor programming year-round, and could support indoor activities such as aquatics, soccer, hockey, baseball, basketball, or a combination. This alternative has not enjoyed significant community support, as specific program elements have not been identified. Over the years, the staff has been approached by several groups interested in partnering with the City to provide indoor recreational opportunities, and this plan would provide a “placeholder” to allow for discussions to occur and partnerships to emerge. This plan does not satisfy community requests for an off-leash dog area on site, or for an outdoor athletic complex. If this alternative is selected, improvements and expansion of Robinswood’s off-leash facilities would be recommended.

Ms. Fehrman explained that the solution that best reflects the goals for the Eastgate Area Properties is reflected in Alternative A. She added that this option, when combined with enhancements to the existing off-leash facilities in Robinswood Park, best responds to the programmatic goals expressed by the community. In addition, Alternative A:

- Is most consistent with the original intent of the purchase of the property and goals outlined in the City’s Parks & Open Space System Plan;
- Is most consistent with the recreational priorities identified in earlier discussions by the Park Board and City Council;
- Most effectively responds to the need for additional, high-quality sportsfields;
- When combined with the off-leash improvements in Robinswood Park, responds to the community’s desire for more and better off-leash facilities in Bellevue;
- Can be implemented in a manner that is both sensitive to the neighbors and responsible to the environment.

Boardmember George requested further clarification regarding Alternative D, which was submitted by Don Crowe, Arena Sports. Ms. Fehrman clarified that the facility in Alternative D is placed directly on top of the landfill, which would significantly increase the development costs. Mr. Kost added that the building in Alternative C was strategically placed, keeping in mind the landfill. If a plan is desired with a facility, then Alternative C should be selected.

Responding to a question by Boardmember Grindeland, Mr. Harris clarified that there are 26 ball fields, 10 soccer fields, and two synthetic soccer fields located throughout Bellevue. Ms. Fehrman further clarified that those numbers do not include school sportsfields.

Boardmember LaPine questioned what the characteristics of the proposed Robinswood dog park expansion include. Mr. Kost clarified that Robinswood currently provides amenities for particular types of dogs. If an expansion is desired, it would include amenities that better respond to all types of dogs. Mr. Kost added that the expansion would include the facility along 148th as well as behind the tennis center.

Boardmember LaPine inquired if a 5-10 acre off-leash area is feasible at Robinswood Community Park. Mr. Kost views a 5 acre off-leash area as a possibility. However, 10 acres would not be possible given the park’s topography.

Chair Keeney questioned how long the process will take to fully implement the selected alternative. Mr. Kost explained the long permitting process involved due to the landfill. He noted it would be several years before the alternative is complete. Most likely, the project would be conducted in phases.

Boardmember Stokes requested further clarification on the number of indoor sports facilities within Bellevue. Mr. Kost discussed the various types of facilities, including indoor basketball courts and swimming pools. However, the City does not maintain any indoor soccer fields, baseball or ice facilities.

Boardmember LaPine questioned if the Parks levy anticipated construction of a building and if there is sufficient funding for this project. Mr. Kost explained that the levy did not contemplate a specific plan. However, the expense of treating the landfill was taken into consideration for the levy. Chair Keeney added that the levy was not intended to cover the entire cost of developing the Eastgate Area Properties.

Boardmember LaPine expressed his concern with the recurring theme of citizens not feeling that their voices have been heard throughout the planning process. However, there have been numerous community meetings. Boardmember LaPine questioned where the gap lies. Mr. Kost explained that this is a common occurrence for this type of process. He added that everyone's voices are being heard, and that the staff carefully listened to the comments from the community and considered many options throughout the planning process. However, not all ideas could be incorporated into the recommended option. Mr. Kost noted that it is common for citizens to claim that they have been ignored if they disagree with the outcome of the process. The overall goal has been to drive to a consensus, while recognizing there will be some disagreement.

Vice-Chair Roland views Alternative A as the greatest level of accomplishment of the sportsfield vision, which was the original intent of the property. She favors this recommendation and would like the Robinswood Community Park off-leash area improvements included with the recommendation.

Boardmember Stokes suggested that the recommendation include a detailed vision of the Robinswood expansion. He also questioned whether or not the Robinswood improvements would be part of the initial budget that was allocated for the Eastgate Area Properties or if it is a separate budget.

Boardmember Robinson inquired if a covered facility or open facility would contribute more revenue to assist with funding an off-leash dog park. Mr. Kost clarified that facilities typically don't generate enough revenue to fund additional facilities and/or parks. Any revenue made is used for maintenance and a maintenance reserve fund.

Boardmember Robinson questioned if Alternative D would generate more revenue because it proposes a partnership. Mr. Kost felt it would be difficult to speculate if there would be a surplus of revenue if a partner were involved. He also reminded Boardmembers that the off-leash area discussions were tabled until the Eastgate Area Properties recommendation was finalized.

Vice-Chair Roland recommended Alternative A and supports improvements to the dog area at Robinswood. However, she suggested that all discussions regarding the improvements at Robinswood be tabled until the next Board meeting. Vice-Chair Roland also suggested that partnerships be encouraged.

Boardmember George does not support Alternative A. She feels Alternative A is a duplication of the facilities available at Robinswood. Boardmember George favors Alternative C because there isn't an indoor facility in the neighborhood so this would be an added benefit to the community. In addition, she feels Alternative B would be a duplication of the efforts at Robinswood.

Boardmember Grindeland favors Alternative B and would like to keep the open space areas throughout the Eastgate Area Properties.

Boardmember Stokes favors an indoor multi-use facility, Alternative C, with the recommended improvements at Robinswood.

Boardmember LaPine reiterated the original intent of purchasing the Eastgate Area Properties, which was to develop sportsfields. He feels there are many other purposes for the property, and some of the purposes are accommodated in the designs and some are not in all of the various alternatives. Boardmember LaPine commended the City for incorporating the 100 foot buffer for local neighbors; preserving view corridors, noise buffers, trails, buffers for light/noise; and limiting vehicle access in all the alternatives. Boardmember LaPine supports the improvements and expansion of the off-leash area at Robinswood. He also supports Alternative A as a recommendation to City Council and suggested including requirements for the Robinswood off-leash area (i.e., the off-leash area at Robinswood should be no less than five acres with amenities that are consistent with the direction of off-leash area planning already underway by staff).

Boardmember Robinson concurred with Boardmember LaPine's comments regarding Robinswood. She feels a minimum of five acres for an off-leash area dog park is important. However, Boardmember Robinson favors both Alternative A and Alternative C because Alternative C opens prospects of incorporating revenues not otherwise available.

Chair Keeney reiterated that the Eastgate Area Properties is not a neighborhood park. It is a community park. However, the neighborhood concerns should be taken into consideration. Chair Keeney supports Alternative A, at the same time ensuring that the Robinswood off-leash improvements are made. He would like off-leash dog groups included in the design process for Robinswood improvements. Chair Keeney does not feel a building at the Eastgate Area Properties would accomplish the original goal and intent of the property.

Motion by Vice-Chair Roland and second by Boardmember Robinson to recommend to City Council Alternative A as the preferred Master Plan for the park at Eastgate Area Properties.

Vice-Chair Roland liked Boardmember LaPine's previous comments about the Robinswood off-leash improvements and suggested including these comments in a cover memo to City Council. On the contrary, Boardmember Stokes suggested that any modifications to Robinswood be included in the motion.

If Boardmembers would like specific requirements considered for Robinswood, Councilmember Chelminiak suggested the requirements be included in the motion, rather than a cover letter.

Motion by Boardmember LaPine and second by Boardmember Stokes to amend the previous motion to include a requirement that an off-leash area be created at Robinswood Community Park of no less than five acres with amenities that are consistent with what staff develops for an overall City of Bellevue off-leash area plan.

Boardmember Grindeland requested clarification on whether or not the five acres was an additional five acres for the park or if five acres is the total acreage for the off-leash area at Robinswood. Boardmember LaPine explained that the five acres should include the best five acres for off-leash facilities within Robinswood Community Park, which may include areas currently used for off-leash and/or additional areas.

At the question, motion carried unanimously (7-0) to include the above motion to the original motion recommending Alternative A to include a requirement that an off-leash area be created at Robinswood Community Park of no less than five acres with amenities that are consistent with what staff develops for an overall City of Bellevue off-leash area plan.

Motion by Boardmember George and second by Boardmember Robinson to recommend to City Council that funding for the Eastgate Area Properties project be used to improve the off-leash area at Robinswood Community Park.

When Boardmember LaPine questioned whether or not the Parks Board should provide a funding recommendation to City Council, Councilmember Chelminiak explained that it would be helpful to City Council to understand the thoughts of the Park Board to determine if the Eastgate Area Properties and the Robinswood off-leash area are tied together from a finance standpoint.

Vice-Chair Roland explained that the Parks Board has not typically provided recommendations to City Council for line-item funding. She feels the funding recommendation is out of context since Council may better know the City's funding priorities. However, from a Parks standpoint, Vice-Chair Roland would like the improvements at Robinswood placed on a high priority list. On the contrary, Chair Keeney disagreed with Vice-Chair Roland and suggested that the Parks Board make a statement to City Council that the two projects are tied together. Boardmember Stokes added that the Parks Board can make the recommendation and City Council can determine whether or not to follow the recommendation. He concurred with Chair Keeney's comments.

At the question, motion carried (5-1, with 1 abstention) to approve the recommendation to City Council that funding for the Eastgate Area Properties be used to improve the off-leash area at Robinswood Community Park.

At the question, motion carried (5-2) to recommend to City Council Alternative A as the preferred Master Plan for the park at Eastgate Area Properties with the requirement that an off-leash area be created at Robinswood Community Park of no less than five acres with amenities that are consistent with what staff develops for an overall City of Bellevue off-leash area plan; and to recommend that funding for the Eastgate Area Properties be used to improve the off-leash area at Robinswood Community Park.

Motion by Boardmember George and second by Boardmember LaPine to amend the meeting agenda and table the Parks Resource Management Division Overview until the next Board meeting. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

B. Eastgate Area Properties Park Name

Ms. Fehrman presented the top eight responses for the Eastgate Area Properties park name. All of the names presented conform to the City's park naming policy. Ms. Fehrman noted that the most frequently used names that referenced nearby geographic areas or neighborhoods included Phantom, Spirit, and Eastgate. In addition, popular natural features included meadows, woods, ridge, and ponds. She added that the historical use of the site as an airfield also surfaced.

After reviewing the numerous recommendations, Ms. Fehrman explained that staff recommends the name Phantom Woods Community Park for the following reasons:

- It has been identified through a community-based process;
- It is consistent with the City's park naming policy. It references a neighborhood near the park (Phantom Lake neighborhood), a nearby natural feature (Phantom Lake), and a dominant natural feature of the park (the woods);
- It minimizes confusion by avoiding references to existing park names such as Eastgate Park, Spiritridge Park, and Spiritwood Park.

Chair Keeney suggested that the historical significance of the property be preserved by referencing "airfield" in the park name.

Boardmember LaPine explained that the original owner of the airfield was the father of Nancy Dunnam. He added that Ms. Dunnam is a Bellevue resident and is being awarded a Congressional Gold Medal for her service with the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs), who flew non-combat military missions during World War II. Boardmember LaPine would like the airfield name included with the Eastgate Area Properties park name since it has historical significance to aviation, as well as Bellevue history.

Boardmember Grindeland concurred with Chair Keeney and Boardmember LaPine. In addition, she suggested that a plaque be included within the park noting the historical significance of the airfield.

Boardmember George suggested “Airfield Community Park” as the park name. Boardmember Robinson concurred with this suggestion.

Boardmembers debated whether or not the words “Meadow” or “Community” should be included in the park name. There was favoritism for a simpler park name.

Motion by Boardmember Stokes and second by Boardmember George to recommend to City Council the name Airfield Park as the preferred name for the park at Eastgate Area Properties. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

C. Parks Resource Management Division Overview

Tabled until the next Board meeting.

9. DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

Mr. Smith reported on the following items:

- Staff is reviewing the suggestions and recommendations made at the Board retreat.
- There are a tremendous amount of opportunities available for networking with the community. Boardmember are encouraged to review the list of upcoming Parks special events.
- Reminders will be sent out about pre-meetings.

Motion by Vice-Chair Roland and second by Boardmember Robinson to extend the meeting for 10 minutes. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

10. ONGOING/OLD BUSINESS:

A. Boardmember committee/liaison reports

Chair Keeney reported that the Meydenbauer Bay Steering Committee is working on the Environmental Impact Statement.

Boardmember Robinson provided a committee report on the Bellevue Network on Aging. She highlighted the recent Senior Day event at the Farmer’s Market and noted that there was an article in the Bellevue Reporter that discussed hearing loss and assistance available. Boardmember Robinson also noted that the Parks Plan Update was recently presented to the Bellevue Network on Aging.

Chair Keeney encouraged Boardmembers to visit the Parks Department blog.

11. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Future agenda items

Boardmember Robinson suggested that hearing devices be available at Bellevue Youth Theatre. Mr. Smith will discuss the suggestion with staff.

12. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:

A. CIP Project Report

B. Staff Communications:

- i. Memo to Board re Well-KEPT program
- ii. Memo to Board re Larsen Lake Enhancement project
- iii. Memo to Board re PARKDance program
- iv. Memo to Board re Summer Park Ranger program
- v. Memo to Board re the Park Plan Update

C. Citizen Communications

- i. E-mail from and response to Trisha Adams re monument
- ii. E-mail from and response to Dan Edds re Newport Hills Park
- iii. E-mail from and response to Ruby Lindner re Eastgate Area Properties
- iv. E-mail from and response to Barbara Patterson re Eastgate Area Properties
- v. E-mail from and response to Marc Peterson re Eastgate Area Properties
- vi. E-mails from and response to Mary & Dwight Schrag re McCormick Park

13. INFORMATION:

A. List of upcoming Parks special events

B. November 10, room 1E-112 – next scheduled regular Park Board meeting

14. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Barbara Eisenstein, 12609 SE 29th St., Bellevue, WA

Ms. Eisenstein thanked Boardmembers for supporting the expansion of off-leash areas in Bellevue and for addressing the funding issues at Robinswood.

Ms. Eisenstein discovered a website that explained the history of the Eastgate Area Properties and the airfield. Anyone interested in the web information should contact Ms. Eisenstein.

Frank Kuske, 16612 SE 26th Street, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Kuske expressed his disappointment regarding the Eastgate Area Properties decision and suggested neighborhood meetings not be conducted in the future because he feels citizens' voices are not being heard.

15. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Vice-Chair Roland and second by Boardmember Grindeland to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).