CITY OF BELLEVUE
PARKS & COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday
April 13, 2010
6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers
Bellevue City Hall
Bellevue, Washington

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

COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT: Councilmember Robertson

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Mike Bergstrom (PCD), Pam Fehrman, Patrick Foran, Nancy Harvey, Glenn Kost, Shelley McVein, Terry Smith

OTHERS PRESENT: Stefanie Beighle, Rod Bindon, Louise Brewer, David Browne, Rob Cash, Blyth Claeys, Aaron Dichter, Bob Drexler, Pamela Ebsworth, John Evans, Victoria Evans, Jodi Freudenberger, Mike & Suzanne Hoonan, Jason King, Angie Morgenstern, Mike Nesteroff, D.R. O'Hara, Roger Orth, Marv Peterson, Shelly Roger, John Rowland, Toni Savzillo, Richard Schweet, Firman & Jean Smith, Robert Thorpe, Iris Tocher, Daryl Williams

MINUTES TAKER: Michelle Cash

1. CALL TO ORDER:

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

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Chair Keeney explained that the Meydenbauer Neighborhood Association requested an amendment to the meeting agenda so they could be allowed 45 minutes to present their position on the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan. There was no motion to grant their request. Therefore, the request was denied.

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

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Vice-Chair Roland and second by Boardmember Robinson to approve the March 9, 2010 regular meeting minutes of the Parks & Community Services Board as presented. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Jodi Freudenberger, 16047 SE 45th Pl., Bellevue, WA

Ms. Freudenberger asked Boardmembers to adopt the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan in its entirety. She favors combining some of Bellevue's waterfront with Old Bellevue and other parks. Ms. Freudenberger envisions her family enjoying the following Plan elements:

- Transparent elevated foot bridge.
- Kiosks near shoreline.
- Swimming in the lake.
- Artwork throughout the plaza.
- Kayaking.
- Transient moorage.

Ms. Freudenberger also supports the following:

- Activity center, similar to Lewis Creek Park's center, for community-oriented gatherings.
- Closure of 100th Avenue, which is necessary for safety, to connect the park to the surrounding areas. This will make Meydenbauer Park accessible to all community members.

Rob Cash, 4663 – 161st Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Cash urged Boardmembers to approve the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan. He commended the Board and Parks Department for creating "experiences" throughout the parks system.

Mr. Cash hoped that Boardmembers kept in mind that the lack of testimony in support of the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan does not indicate the overall community's opinion.

In particular, Mr. Cash expressed his support of the following Plan elements:

- Safe pedestrian movement from Downtown Park to the waterfront should be maximized; this includes the closure of 100th Avenue, south of Main.
- An activity building, similar to Lewis Creek Park.
- Portable vendor carts or kiosks in the park.
- Safe and convenient visitor parking.

- Incorporate the Bay's rich heritage for Bellevue's children.
- Increased physical and visual access, as incorporated through the viewing platform and other Plan concepts.

Richard Schweet, 9951 Lake Washington Blvd. NE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Schweet endorsed the idea of making Meydenbauer Bay more accessible for the people of Bellevue. However, he requested that Boardmembers remember that people live and sleep in close proximity to the Plan development.

Mr. Schweet cautioned Boardmembers that the greatest risk of failure is going too far. Specifically, Mr. Schweet feels the following Plan elements are too far:

- Elevated walkway—steel columns and cross-bracing will rust; litter will be thrown off the structure; young people may use the structure as a high-dive into the Bay.
- Community Center with noisy outdoor events—noisy events will disturb the entire Bay community.
- Transient speed boats that use the Bay—transient boaters are typically loud and disrespectful.

Shelly Roger, 6233 – 162nd Pl. SE, Bellevue, WA

Ms. Roger believes the proposed Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan would not only enhance Meydenbauer Bay Park but the entire downtown park system by providing a wider variety of recreational opportunities for residents and visitors in Bellevue.

Ms. Roger has a 20-year career working as an Environmental Attorney for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service. She supports the proposed environmental changes in the Plan and knows the importance of protecting natural resources.

Ms. Roger urged the Board and City Council to support the Plan and the recommendations of the Steering Committee to create a 21st century park for Bellevue residents.

Lastly, Ms. Roger trains for triathlons and encouraged Boardmembers to include swim lanes in the Plan.

Rod Bindon, 9927 Meydenbauer Way SE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Bindon spoke on behalf of the Meydenbauer Bay Yacht Club. He said he is co-chairman of the Meydenbauer Bay Yacht Club Community and Governmental Relations committee, as well as a Boardmember of the Meydenbauer Bay Neighbors Association.

Since Bellevue was incorporated, Mr. Bindon feels the City Council has gone to great lengths to ensure the integrity, and general concurrence of neighborhoods when contemplating projects with major impacts to neighborhoods. However, Mr. Bindon feels the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan goes directly against public statements made by Councilmembers in support of Bellevue neighborhoods.

Mr. Bindon feels the park proposal has been over managed and pushed through the process to its present form by focusing more on trying to build something big and special, rather than recognizing that the Bay is special, that the neighborhood around the Bay is special, and thus focusing on trying to create a Park without messing up what is already there.

Mr. Bindon suggested that the Park Board recommend to the City Council that the proposed Plan be adopted, with fiscal responsibility, and with the neighborhood's concerns in mind, including:

- 100th be kept open.
- Moorage be retained and redesigned.
- The 8,000 sq. ft. community center be eliminated or reduced in size.
- Elimination of the elevated walkway.
- Concerns of the neighborhood relating to noise, transient moorage, police and fire access, and commercial uses in the Park be addressed.

Aaron Dichter, 10000 Meydenbauer Way SE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Dichter spoke on behalf of Ten Thousand Meydenbauer Homeowners Association. He said he is the President of this homeowners association and Vice-President of the Meydenbauer Bay Neighbors Association.

Mr. Dichter explained that the Meydenbauer Bay community has continually supported a true park but has also made it abundantly clear that specific impacts must be mitigated by incorporating changes into the proposed Plan. In particular, Mr. Dichter requested that 100th Avenue remain open. He feels the decision that 100th be closed will impose an incredible hardship on the homeowners because it will create a cloud on their homeowner title that destroys their property value. In addition, Mr. Dichter feels the closure of 100th would impair emergency medical response and firefighter capabilities.

Mr. Dichter feels the proposed elevated walkway will be an eyesore for the community and a taking of view that results in an economic penalty to those effected. He added that the elevated walkway is unnecessary and will block views that would otherwise occur from the park property along an open 100th. He suggested the best view of the Bay is from the front of the city-owned property.

5. **CHAIR COMMUNICATION:**

None.

6. BOARD COMMUNICATION:

Boardmember Robinson reported that the Bellevue Network on Aging recently met with Councilmember Balducci and the Sound Transit Board to discuss the aging community's needs for light rail.

7. CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION:

Councilmember Robertson explained that the Sound Transit Capital Committee made a recommendation to the Sound Transit Board for alignment, which is the B2 modified plan. She noted that the Sound Transit Board will act on the recommendation later in April. Once the recommendation has been adopted, Sound Transit and Bellevue staff will continue to work on the Environmental Impact Statement and conduct further analysis on the 19 original routes included in the EIS, as well as the four additional downtown routes. Councilmember Robertson noted that the route that the Park Board originally opposed (B7 modified), will not move forward into the final EIS process.

8. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:

A. Meydenbauer Bay Waterfront Plan

Mr. Foran provided an overview of the proposed Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan and highlighted recommended Plan design choices. Items discussed included:

- Pictures of existing environmental conditions.
    - Cost/benefit balance for environmental improvements.
    - Water quality improvements.
- Pictures of existing gateway conditions.
    - Simulated views of improved gateway conditions from lower plaza.
- Existing views along Lake Washington Blvd.
    - Simulated views of improved view corridor.
    - Simulated walkway sketch.
- Existing marina conditions.
    - Simulated pictures of a "garden experience" along the waterfront.

Mr. Foran explained that closing 100th Avenue would provide a greater potential for people to develop areas to exceed expectations and to complement the future park.

Board Discussion:

Boardmember George requested clarification on what City Council prefers (i.e., a vote or comments on specific Plan elements). Although Councilmember Robertson could not speak on behalf of City Council, she thought a recommendation with explanation would be helpful for her to make a decision.

From a physical therapist's perspective, Boardmember Robinson requested further clarification on the experience of someone who is wheelchair dependent visiting the park. Mr. Foran explained that the Planning Principle for public access means that everyone be provided access to the waterfront. However, there are elevation challenges within the Park. To provide full park access, Mr. Foran clarified that there are a variety of ways to conveniently traverse the elevation (i.e., elevators, elevated walkway, pick-up and drop-off locations throughout the gateway and marina, etc.).

There was a discussion regarding the storm drain, which collects a combination of storm drain materials and stream water. Mr. Foran explained that the proposed Plan includes a cleaning source for the stream. He also discussed other environmental benefits of the Plan.

Boardmember Roland made the following comments:

- Wants to be able to walk on the Meydenbauer Bay property knowing she made the right decision.
- The community is proud of centers like Lewis Creek and South Bellevue; similar facilities are needed throughout the community.
- Can't go too far with parks in Bellevue.
- Has visited Meydenbauer Bay Park numerous times. The Board prides itself on paying attention to the details and reviewing projects.
- Open spaces add value—Meydenbauer Park is no exception. Ads are marketing neighboring condos by touting "adjacent to new Meydenbauer Park" as an amenity.
- Need to make sure the process is performed in a respectful manner.
- Need to provide water access to the community.
- Supportive of the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan.

Boardmember Stokes made the following comments:

- Was unfamiliar with the project when first joining the Board. However, has visited Meydenbauer Bay many times and became acquainted with the project.
- There has been a tremendous amount of communication, and people have been heard, although not always agreed with.
- A thoughtful plan has been put into place.
- The Plan is open, inviting, beautiful, and designed to be a community park.
- The other plan, provided by the Meydenbauer Bay Neighbors Association, seems to be designed to keep people out.
- The Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan is a plan for the future that will enhance the neighborhood and community.
- Wonderful plan that will serve the city for years to come.
- Doesn't think the scary issues raised are real scenarios; the Board and the Council wouldn't allow situations to happen that would lead to these scenarios.
- Whole-heartedly endorses Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan, and came to his decision without any preconceived ideas.

Boardmember Grindeland made the following comments:

- Thanks to the citizens for all of their comments.
- Stunned by adamant disapproval about transient boaters. When boating with friends and using transient moorage, has always felt welcomed.
- Transient moorage can have a big economic impact to Bellevue.
- Empathizes with citizens about concerns of closing 100th Avenue; however, parks are great neighbors.
- Beautiful plan, which will result in a much-loved park.
- Supportive of the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan.

Boardmember LaPine made the following comments:

- People look at Bellevue as a service-oriented city—an environment where people want to do the right thing and help solve problems.
- Feels fortunate to be in a city that is willing to be audacious.
- Appreciates community perspective.
- Visits the Meydenbauer Bay Park frequently.
- No plan is perfect and there have been many concerns raised—particularly regarding road closure, costs, environmental impact, design issues, moorage reduction, usage issues (noise, police/fire access, traffic impact, ingress/egress, commercial activity). It is important to acknowledge that residents have been heard.
- The focus is on how to serve the public interest. The proposed Plan provides enhanced shoreline availability, improved environment, and expanded possibilities for activities (i.e., "people powered activities" like swimming, kayaking and other forms of water/land based recreation).
- Cities smaller than Bellevue have much larger shoreline parks (i.e., Bend, Oregon).
- The proposed plan will be a wonderful resource for Bellevue citizens.
- Supportive of the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan.

Boardmember Robinson made the following comments:

- The proposed Plan is a reminder of the Olmsted Brothers, who designed New York Central Park and Mount Baker Park in Seattle, because the Plan takes prime real estate and creates positive changes, opening up the park for everybody equally.
- Removal of buildings and covered moorage will make a significant difference in the views.
- Previous concerns have been addressed (i.e., increased boater activity and safety will be managed with a partnership between Bellevue and Mercer Island; public safety confirmed response time will not be increased).
- Supportive of the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan.

Boardmember George made the following comments:

- Thinks the City Council should adopt the Meydenbauer Bay Park Plan, and doesn't want anything she says to detract from that overall message that this is, as a whole, a good project.

- Supports the following elements that fulfill specific Planning Principles:
  - Community center—building will provide a venue to draw people.
  - Environmental improvements.
  - Water uses (i.e., curved pedestrian pier, kayak/canoe launches, swimming beach, transient moorage), which promote use of water, fulfill Planning Principles and increase waterfront access.
  - Active uses of park land (i.e., playground, picnic area, shoreline promenade).
  - Whaling building and art.
- Elements that are less than favorable include:
  - Closure of 100th Avenue - Although it's not ideal, this needs to be part of the Plan, especially when considering the Planning Principles, which state that we are supposed to facilitate pedestrian movement from the Downtown Park to the waterfront, establish Bellevue as a waterfront city, and avoid pedestrian conflicts with automobiles. Access to 100th Avenue is required to enter the park area. She considered proposing that a compromise could be accomplished by using 100th Avenue as a one-way, one-lane road, but decided not to.
  - The Planning Principles suggested making this park an extraordinary public asset. The elevated walkway is the only element that seems to achieve this Planning Principle goal. It promotes the Principle of visually opening up the waterfront. However, she thinks the walkway is located in the wrong place.
  - The Yacht Club end of the marina lacks certain logic. The Plan notes that the amount of long-term moorage will be reduced and reconfigured to open views of the Bay. However, the superior views are at the beach-end of the property, not where the Yacht Club is located. The design draws people from Downtown to the 100th Avenue end, removing piers 2 and 3 with the premise that views of the Bay will be opened. However, this end is the wrong view corridor. The Plan expands pier 1, which has the superior views. This part of the Plan does not reflect the Planning Principles.
- Suggests that the Plan be adopted with a statement requesting that City Council review the proposed configuration of the marina.
- The plan for up to six kiosks is inconsistent with the Planning Principles. Suggests reducing this number from six to a maximum of three, which would support the local business community.

Chair Keeney made the following comments:

- Following the guidelines, the Steering Committee was bold and showed the courage to propose something truly remarkable.
- The proposal has the "wow" factor.
- Discovered that honest, passionate people can disagree.
- All sides have been listened to.
- The Plan reflects the input and attempts to address all major issues heard. Not all concerns were agreed upon, but all were taken into account.
- The Committee created a Plan that is truly in the best interest of the citizens of Bellevue, while taking into account the surrounding neighborhood.

- There have been many changes to the Plan since its inception, along with changes on positions (i.e., items that were once in the plan are no longer there; some issues spoken as fact are not true).
- The Meydenbauer Bay Park is intended to be a city park with a plan that envisions increasing Bellevue's access to the waterfront opportunities for future generations.
- The first Planning Principle suggests that the Plan should be a remarkable and memorable shoreline experience. The Plan does not specify a marina, a traffic solution, a neighborhood park, etc. It is a city park for the citizens of Bellevue.
- Nothing in the Plan is arbitrary. Every component has a reason for inclusion.
- Although many nearby neighbors oppose the closure of 100th due to traffic related issues, the traffic concerns will need to be addressed. Closing 100th Avenue will aid in safety of pedestrians. It also creates a dramatic entry to the park system.
- The park will have a positive impact on property values.
- The local Bellevue Fire Department attended a meeting and verified that there would not be an impact on their ability to respond to an emergency to any of the sites nearby the park.
- The Plan will enhance the views throughout the corridor.
- The Committee's decision was that boats were part of the overall park experience. However, the area is not being developed as a marina—it is being developed as a park. The marina was strategically relocated to open the water and shoreline so the Bay can recover from pollutants.
- Supportive of the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan.

Motion by Vice-Chair Roland and second by Boardmember Grindeland to adopt the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan as recommended, with no changes.

Motion by Boardmember George to amend the above motion by:

- **Changing the maximum number of kiosks from six to three; and**
- **Recommend the Plan with a statement that the Parks Board encourages the City Council to reexamine the proposed configuration of the marina.**

There was no second to the amendment. Therefore, Boardmember George withdrew the motion.

At the question, motion carried (6-1) to adopt the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Plan as recommended, with no changes.

Motion by Vice-Chair Roland and second by Boardmember Stokes to extend the meeting until 8:15 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

9. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

None.

10. ONGOING/OLD BUSINESS:

A. Boardmember committee/liaison reports

Boardmember Grindeland discussed Youth Link's Gumbo Night and the wonderful interactions that occurred between youth and adults during the event.

11. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Future agenda items

None.

12. OTHER COMMUNICATION:

A. CIP Project Report

B. Memo from Patrick Foran to City Council re Earth Day/Arbor Day 2010 and Tree City USA Award

C. Memo from Shelley Brittingham to Park Board re Bellevue Botanical Garden item

D. Email from Camron Parker to Park Board re East Link Update

E. Communication from citizens (in alphabetical order):

- Bill Diller re Meydenbauer Bay Park Plan
- Jodi Freudenberger re Meydenbauer Bay Park Plan
- Charles Klinge and Meydenbauer Bay Neighbors Assoc. re Meydenbauer Bay Park Plan
- Dan Lewis and PACCAR re Meydenbauer Bay Park Plan
- Karen Lowry re Meydenbauer Bay Park Plan
- Cheryl Lunzaga re Meydenbauer Bay Park Plan
- Peter Marshall re Meydenbauer Bay Park Plan
- Ed Mathewson re Meydenbauer Bay Park Plan
- Karen Trimble re parks ballfield schedulers
- Natasha Vorley re Meydenbauer Bay Park Plan

13. **INFORMATION:**

A. List of upcoming Parks special events

B. May 11 – next scheduled regular Park Board meeting – back in Council Conference Room (1E-113)

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

None.

15. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Vice-Chair Roland and second by Boardmember Stokes to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).