

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

Thursday
April 8, 2008
6:00 p.m.

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

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Keeney, Vice-Chair Bennett, Boardmembers, Henrickson, Maxim, Roland

BOARDMEMBERS ABSENT: Aron, Karle

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Shelley Brittingham, Patrick Foran, Nancy Harvey, Paul Inghram, Nancy Kartes, Glenn Kost, Terry Smith, Cathy VonWald

OTHERS PRESENT: Eric Anderson, Betsy Blackstock, Gary Dickerman, Joel Glass, Kathy Haggart, Bill Miller, Jessica Powers

MINUTES TAKER: Michelle Cash

1. **CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Keeney at 6:00 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Motion by Boardmember Maxim and second by Boardmember Roland to approve the meeting agenda. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Boardmember Maxim and second by Boardmember Roland to approve the March 11, 2008 Meeting Minutes of the Parks & Community Services Board as presented. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Betsy Blackstock, 712 – 109th Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Ms. Blackstock's lives in the Surrey Downs community. She attended the master planning meeting and expressed her enthusiasm about the preferred plan discussed. In addition, she appreciated the opportunity to provide input.

Ms. Blackstock reminded boardmembers that the Surrey Downs neighbors would like to be part of the entire planning process, not just the park planning.

Eric Anderson, Mulvanny G2, 1110 – 112th Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Anderson attended the master planning meeting for Surrey Downs. In addition, he has participated in the workshops. In Mr. Anderson's opinion, the public programming sessions have been primarily focused on the neighborhood. In addition, he feels an overwhelming majority of the input has been provided by nearby neighbors. Mr. Anderson added that during the public process, there has not been a voice heard from the larger community. The Boys & Girls Club has offered to be this voice.

Mr. Anderson noticed a placeholder for a potential building in the final Master Plan Draft. Yet, there are no programs being discussed for this building. Mr. Anderson questioned if the placeholder that appears in the Master Plan is the right size. He added that the Draft Master Plan stipulates that no park program can be diminished. Mr. Anderson asked:

- How can Parks staff make such an assertion or request when programming for a potential community center building has not been conducted?
- Have parking requirements been studied?
- Have sports groups been approached and queried?
- Does the reduced size of the baseball diamonds meet the needs of any community groups?
- Will the soccer fields shown be adequate?
- If it is later decided that the fields need to be increased in size, which other programs will be reduced?

Mr. Anderson requested that boardmembers urge parks staff to mobilize the programming for all of the community related activities now before the final Master Plan is presented. He also asked boardmembers to instruct staff to realign neighbors' expectations, emphasizing that Surrey Downs is a community park and input is needed from outside the park neighborhood.

Kathy Haggart, Bellevue Boys & Girls Club, 209 – 100th Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA

Since the BB&GC has demonstrated a successful relationship with the City and the South Bellevue Community Center, BB&GC proposes that the City lease the Surrey Downs land, on which the BB&GC would build a community center. The BB&GC would pay the majority of the cost to build a multi-generational use community center and oversee the indoor programming. The BB&GC proposes that the City would continue to own and manage the outdoor spaces of the park. Ms. Haggart reviewed some of the quotes

provided to the City by people commenting on Surrey Downs Park. Ms. Haggart reported that nearly half of the people commenting urged the City to thoughtfully consider a relationship with the BB&GC. Since there are no further options to build community centers in west Bellevue, the BB&GC would like to take advantage of this opportunity.

The BB&GC has investigated the indoor programming needs of the community. Surrey Downs residents as well as community leaders, youth, families, and teens have been interviewed. The BB&GC has worked closely with Mulvanny Architects and consulted with Boys & Girls Clubs of America to develop preliminary programming space for the kinds of uses that would encompass a wide variety of activities for all ages. The BB&GC is anxious to work with Parks staff to begin to develop the plans for the community that would meet the needs of citizens for generations to come.

Bill Miller, 10015 NE 4th Street, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Miller is a Boardmember and former Chair of the BB&GC. In addition, he is a small business owner in downtown Bellevue.

Mr. Miller expressed enthusiasm and optimism that the BB&GC can work with staff members to build a community center. He added that the BB&GC is committed and confident that they can raise the funds necessary to build the type of facility that can serve the community.

Mr. Miller expressed his frustration throughout the planning process because the BB&GC has not been able to actively engage in indoor programming discussions. He asked that community members be actively engaged with indoor programming discussions, prior to the completion of the Master Planning process.

Although the BB&GC Board remains excited about the opportunities available, they continue to evaluate their existing site to see if there are any expansion opportunities available. Mr. Miller feels any expansions that occur at the existing 100th Street BB&GC location would fall short of community demands.

Joel Glass, 1652 – 105th Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Glass is a member of the Bel-Red Steering Committee. He referenced a memo dated April 8, 2008 to Chair Keeney and Members of the Park Board from Paul Inghram.

Mr. Glass discussed the “park blocks” as one of the signature park pieces of the Bel-Red Corridor vision. He was disappointed to see that these park blocks had shrunk from the previous designs. The justification given to Mr. Glass regarding the change in design plans was due to cost and functionality. While these are reasonable concerns, Mr. Glass does not want these concepts to be rejected until all means have been considered. Mr. Glass believes it is too early to abandon the park blocks vision and encouraged boardmembers to evaluate this plan change.

Jessica Powers, Wright Runstad & Company, 1201 – 3rd Ave., Seattle, WA

Ms. Powers thanked boardmembers for their diligent and thoughtful work on the Bel-Red Corridor project. Wright Runstad & Company is excited about the vision that is emerging for the corridor and believes it matches their vision for the Spring District.

Wright Runstad & Company's goal for this site is to create a world-class transit oriented development offering Bellevue cutting-edge carbon reduction strategies and climate change opportunities. Ms. Powers noted that Wright Runstad & Company will look for opportunities to build in state-of-the-art environmental techniques and technologies. She added that Wright Runstad & Company is planning to provide a significant amount of public open space as part of the Spring District. Their current Master Plan includes a one-acre non-active park plus a youth size regulation soccer field. These will both be included in the first phase of development.

Ms. Powers noted that the Spring District open-space (N-2 in the Bel-Red Corridor Project List), is listed as four acres. Ms. Powers asked boardmembers or Parks staff members to clarify the acreage of this project.

5. CHAIR COMMUNICATION:

Chair Keeney reported that former Boardmember White was recently hospitalized with a serious blood disease. Flowers will be sent to Mr. White on behalf of the board.

Chair Keeney suggested boardmembers conduct a tour of some of the upcoming projects. Chair Keeney suggested this tour take place once the new boardmembers have been appointed. Ms. Harvey will send out an e-mail survey to determine the best date for this tour. Some of the tour sites suggested include: Ashwood, Meydenbauer, Surrey Downs, Eastgate, Highland Skate Park, and Mercer Slough.

6. BOARD COMMUNICATION:

Vice-Chair Bennett attended the Surrey Downs Master Plan meeting. She was quite impressed by how the neighbors' voices were incorporated into the plans. She also liked the park and building portions being treated separately. Vice-Chair Bennett also appreciated the buildings and parking being placed away from the neighbors.

7. CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

8. CONSENT ITEMS:

None.

9. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:

A. Bellevue Network on Aging

Ms. VonWald is a Community Services Supervisor for the Parks Department. She manages the North Bellevue Community Center and Aging Services.

Ms. VonWald summarized the purpose of the BNOA as well as the Mission Statement. She also discussed the goals and strategies for accomplishing the mission. She noted that there will be a joint project, which has yet to be identified, with the Kirkland Senior Council. In addition, Mercer Island is forming a Senior Foundation so further partnerships can be explored. The Eastside Human Services Forum Older Adults Subgroup was recently formed. There are a few BNOA members that will serve on this subgroup as well.

In 2004, Parks & Community Services staff completed the Senior Service Review Project. Ms. VonWald reviewed the purpose of this project. She added that one result of this project was the Vision 2009 document, identifying strategies and recommendations for serving older adults in the next five years. The BNOA was formed in 2006. The charter membership includes 14 people that either live and/or work in Bellevue. Ms. VonWald noted that 51% of the BNOA members are over the age of 50. All boardmembers are invited to join any of the regular meetings of the BNOA on the first Thursday of each month from 8:30-10:30 a.m. at Bellevue City Hall.

In 2006, the BNOA formed three committees, which include:

- Transportation
- Support Services
- Housing

Mr. Dickerman discussed the accomplishments of each of the above committees. In addition, Mr. Dickerman reviewed the 2008 Work Plan for the committees.

Ms. VonWald added that the EZ Rider collaborative is an initiative that was started approximately a year prior to the BNOA formation. This partnership is with the City of Bellevue Parks and Transportation Departments, Aging Services, Human Services, Metro Transit, Sound Transit, United Way, and Hopelink. The first item that was derived from this partnership was identifying the gaps for transportation disadvantaged older adults. In addition, the partnership was successful in obtaining federal grant funding to start the Bus Buddy Program and Dial-A-Ride.

Mr. Dickerman further explained the Bus Buddy Program. Ms. VonWald clarified that the program is used to supplement King County Metro Access, which provides service to people that qualify for a disability. The Bus Buddy Program helps people that do not qualify for the Access bus. In addition, the Dial-A-Ride program is used to link the older population with public transportation.

Chair Keeney questioned what the top challenges are for the aging community in Bellevue. Ms. VonWald responded that getting the information to the people that need it the most is one of the biggest challenges. Other areas of concern include transportation and housing.

Boardmember Maxim recently visited the Philadelphia area. He explained that if riders show a Medicare card on any city bus, they travel for free. Ms. VonWald suggested that the EZ Rider Collaborative could research the potential for this program in Bellevue.

B. Bellevue Botanical Garden Society and City Partnership

Ms. Kartes is the Garden Manager at the Bellevue Botanical Garden. The BBG opened in 1992 with two primary objectives, which Ms. Kartes summarized. The Garden is owned by the City of Bellevue and managed and budgeted through Parks & Community Services.

The Garden was created in partnership and has operated in the partnership model, uninterrupted, for over 16 years. Ms. Kartes noted that the primary partner group for the Garden is the Bellevue Botanical Garden Society, which was formed in 1984 to support the Garden as a learning resource in partnership with the City of Bellevue. The agreement with the Society was formalized in 1993 to define roles and responsibilities.

While the City is responsible for the overall Garden management, Ms. Kartes explained that the Society provides the mission based programming. Ms. Kartes summarized the recent BBGS financial support and the programs that have been supported.

The decision-making process between the City and the BBGS was reviewed. While consensus is always a priority, as the owner, the City of Bellevue has final decision-making authority.

Ms. Kartes reviewed the other groups that participate at the Garden. She reported the total volunteer efforts at the Garden are estimated at 21,000 hours per year (valued at \$380,000).

Boardmember Maxim explained that many Wilburton community members expressed their opinions about the City's relationship with the BBGS. He added that perhaps there was a misperception about the relationship between the BBGS and the City.

Ms. Kartes clarified the roles of the BBGS and the other groups involved. The other groups involved (i.e., Bellevue Sister Cities Association, Bellevue Utilities, Eastside Fuchsia Society, Northwest Perennial Alliance, to name a few) tend to have other roles and responsibilities beyond the BBG. The BBGS's sole reason for existence is to support the BBG. The Society was formed before there was a Garden.

Boardmember Maxim thinks it was a mistake that community members were not represented on the BBG Master Plan Task Force. In addition, he is under the impression that the larger need for parking is because of the Garden d'Lights and the number of people volunteering for the program. Mr. Foran stressed that the additional parking is not related to Garden d'Lights. He added that it is very important that the Master Plan indicate where future parking may be needed—it is a placeholder for parking. Mr. Foran explained the reasons this placeholder is critical.

Boardmember Maxim also questioned how signage would occur for crediting donors' contributions to the Garden. He suggested a plaque be displayed in the Shorts House that lists donors and the donated pieces. If plaques are going to be placed throughout the Garden, Boardmember Maxim suggested the taxpayers of Bellevue should be recognized because their tax dollars have contributed to most of the pieces throughout the Garden. Mr. Foran thought a review of the donor policies may be in order.

C. Bel-Red Plan

Mr. Kost reintroduced the Parks, Open Space, Trails & Streams component of the Bel-Red Corridor Plan. He called attention to a Draft letter to the Planning Commission to endorse the conceptual plan and project list.

Mr. Kost discussed the concerns expressed by Mr. Glass earlier in the meeting. He added that the main focus has been on NE 16th/15th as a major trail corridor that connects this area to all of the trails along the stream as well as to the Downtown area.

Boardmember Roland was quite surprised by the change in the wide corridor area that was in previous designs.

Mr. Foran explained that the focus has been on the design ethic and character of the corridor rather than geography and acreage. It is his understanding that the corridor would be “green” with public spaces, trails, beautification, etc.

Boardmember Roland recalled previous discussions regarding acreage being attached to specific parcels in the corridor area. Originally, committee members were discouraged to place specific acreage figures on the parcels. However, Boardmember Roland disagrees with the acreage currently identified because the parcels identified are smaller than original discussions.

Boardmember Maxim questioned where the major sports complex would be placed. Mr. Kost clarified that the complex is identified in the list of parks; however, it is not specifically located on the Subarea map. Boardmember Maxim is worried that Transportation and Planning will eliminate the potential complex if it is not strategically placed on the designs.

Mr. Kost explained that the designs shown were presented at the February board meeting. He added that the only changes to the list were that the width of the corridors and stream buffers was clarified, and that the NE 15th/16th corridor was included. Mr. Kost added that the current plan is a precursor to Council so they can direct PCD to determine cost estimates.

Mr. Kost explained that the plan is being built based upon policies. If the policy requires stream protection and buffers, this translates into open space acreage. He added that there are several mini-parks and trailheads sited throughout the plan. Mr. Kost noted that there is approximately 10% of the corridor land designated towards parks, and open space systems. However, this estimate includes the stream corridors. Mr. Kost will clarify the exact acreage of valuable park systems for the corridor area.

Boardmember Roland felt the Bel-Red Subarea Committee fought very hard for the park block concept. She recalls a wider arterial spine to the Bel-Red Corridor system. She is surprised that the City is not valuing a 100-200 foot wide linear corridor through the center of the Bel-Red Subarea. Boardmember Roland wants assurance that this specific right-of-way is included in the price estimates.

There was a brief discussion regarding how to inform the Planning Commission of the boardmember's concerns.

Boardmember Maxim requested the specific acreage of the Downtown Chicago Park.

Motion by Boardmember Roland and second by Boardmember Maxim to defer the board's decision on the Bel-Red Plan until the next board meeting pending further clarification on the parks blocks concept from Mr. Kost. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Parks staff will prepare a letter to inform the Transportation Department of the above decision. Vice-Chair Bennett will also attend the Transportation Commission meeting to share the boardmembers' decision.

10. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Foran reported that the City of Bellevue will be receiving the following awards at the Washington Recreation & Parks Association conference:

- Facility and Park Award for the best sports complex—Robinswood
- Spotlight Media Award for myparksandrecreation.com
- Program Awards: Garden d'Lights and Wrap Around Services

Overall, Surrey Downs community members seem very pleased with the Master Plan process thus far. Mr. Foran added that the BB&GC have been part of the discussions that have taken place. The process has made it clear that the Surrey Downs Park is a community asset. Mr. Foran added that various sports groups have provided feedback regarding the fields, etc. The consensus is that people want a building at Surrey Downs. Mr. Foran explained that there needs to be a community process to determine the greatest needs for a community center. The process will be similar to the process that occurred with the South Bellevue Community Center.

There was a brief discussion regarding the agreement the City currently has with the BB&GC at South Bellevue Community Center.

A. National Volunteer Recognition Month

In honor of National Volunteer Recognition Month, Mr. Foran presented boardmembers with a BBQ toolset as a token of appreciation. In addition, he praised boardmembers for their continued support.

11. **OLD BUSINESS:**

A. Boardmember committee/liason reports

Boardmember Roland reported that the Light Rail Best Practices Task Force is meeting two times per month. A formal presentation will be given at the May board meeting. Boardmember Roland added that there has been a significant amount of citizen input at the meetings.

Chair Keeney reported that the Meydenbauer Task Force will continue its efforts in May. He added that it is critical that boardmembers are current and up-to-date on the project because there are significant decisions that will be made.

There was a brief discussion regarding potential PCSB applicants. Ms. Harvey will send out the deadline information. Boardmember Roland reiterated the board's interest in seeking youth community members for a board position.

12. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Future agenda items

13. **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:**

A. Staff Reports

B. CIP Project Report

C. MSEEC Monthly Project Report

D. City Council agenda memo and presentation – from Parks re potential voter initiative (for 3-17-08 City Council meeting)

E. Memo from Human Services Commission to Planning Commission re Bel-Red Plan and affordable housing

F. Email from Ruth Edwards to City Council re volunteering at Bellevue Botanical Garden

G. Memo from Terry Smith to Park Board re youth participation at Park Board meetings

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

14. **INFORMATION:**

A. List of upcoming Parks special events

B. May 13, 2008 – next Park Board meeting

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

None.

15. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Boardmember Maxim and second by Boardmember Roland to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).