City of Bellevue
Parks & Community Services Department

MEMORANDUM

Phone:	452-5258; 452-4169
Date:	May 6, 2008
To:	Parks & Community Services Board
From:	Glenn Kost, Scott Vander Hyden
Subject:	Surrey Downs Park Master Plan
Action Requested:	*Recommend Surrey Downs Master Plan and building parameters to City Council*

Summary: Parks staff will review the master planning process since your February 12 meeting, present a preferred Master Plan design together with parameters for a potential future building, and request that the Park Board recommend approval of the plan and building parameters to the City Council for adoption. The package is tentatively scheduled for Council review on May 19th. After a SEPA determination is complete, the City Council will be asked to adopt the Master Plan.

Process/progress since your February 12 study session: A summary of the comments received from the second (January 31) public workshop is attached. It was clear from the first two workshops that a strong consensus of the community felt that Surrey Downs Park was an appropriate location for a community center. However, the size and specific uses of this facility remained unanswered questions, and the staff and design team felt that a separate process would be needed to establish a more specific building program.

Much of the focus of the first two workshops centered around the merits of a community center. To help focus on the park-related portions of the master plan, the design team used feedback from the second community workshop to develop a single preferred concept plan from the four alternatives presented, but *without* a community center. Rather, a "building zone" was identified as a placeholder to allow for future discussions about a building and parking to occur. Examples of how three different building programs could be integrated into the site were prepared. A series of parameters were also proposed to place limitations on the building zone to allay concern that a future community center would overwhelm the remainder of the park.

Summary of Surrey Downs Master Plan: The preferred concept plan and building parameters (see attached) were reviewed with the community at a third workshop held April 1 at City Hall. Approximately 40 people attended, mainly from the surrounding neighborhood. In general, the plan and building parameters were very well received. A summary of the comments is attached. As a result of the comments received at the final workshop, no changes are proposed to the building parameters, but the following modifications are reflected in the proposed Surrey Downs Master Plan:

- Both ballfields have been relocated and reoriented slightly to increase the buffers to adjacent park neighbors;
- The promontory has been relocated to increase buffers;
- The labyrinth has been reduced in size and shifted slightly to better respond to its location;
- The playground area has been enlarged to accommodate a separate tot lot;
- The water feature has been eliminated for maintenance considerations;
- A picnic shelter has been added;
- The basketball court has been enlarged to accommodate full court games and relocated near skate spot to create separation from play area;
- Pathways have been modified to accommodate the above plan changes.

The Surrey Downs Master Plan balances passive and active recreational areas while providing a variety of elements to accommodate the multi-generational interests of the community. The plan contains a large open lawn area, walking trails, picnicking and gathering spots, a picnic shelter, environmental and traditional play areas, two Little League-sized baseball/softball fields, a soccer field overlay, small basketball court, skate spot, and contemplative area. The design also responds to Surrey Downs' agricultural past by preserving remnants of the existing hazelnut groves. While the number of athletic fields remains the same, the condition and sizes of the existing fields will accommodate greater programmed use.

At the April 8th Parks Board meeting, representatives of the Boys & Girls Clubs requested that the final Master Plan incorporate the building and program. The staff recommends that the Surrey Downs Master Plan be submitted to the City Council with a building placeholder and parameters, with a process to establish the building program to follow shortly.

Attachments:

- Summary of comments from the January 31 public workshop
- Summary of comments from the April 1 public workshop
- Preferred concept plan reviewed at the April 1 public workshop
- Preferred concept plan with building zone feasibility options
- Proposed Surrey Downs Master Plan and building parameters

January 31, 2008
Public Meeting #2
FINAL Summary Report

Prepared for:

The City of Bellevue

Prepared by:

Norton-Arnold & Company

February 4, 2008

Overview

The City of Bellevue is embarking on a master planning process for Surrey Downs Park, located at 546 112th Avenue SE. The site is a public park containing both passive and active recreational elements. It is popular and well used by the surrounding neighborhoods. Park assets include two programmable ball fields, a pedestrian loop trail, hazelnut grove, children's play area, and a small basketball court.

The Master Plan will lay the groundwork for the site's redevelopment by identifying opportunities and constraints of the site, and connections to the surrounding neighborhoods. Through a transparent public involvement process, the City of Bellevue wants to collaborate with citizens to plan for the future of the park while protecting it as an important feature within the City's parks and open space inventory.

Public Meeting

Approximately 140 people attended the second public meeting for the Surrey Downs Master Plan. The purpose of the meeting was to update the public on the current stage of the master planning process, present four design schemes for the park, and hear from meeting participants on their likes, dislikes, and ideas for the preliminary schemes for Surrey Downs Park.

The second public meeting was attended by the following City staff and consultants, Patrick Foran, Director, Glenn Kost, Planning and Development Director, and Scott Vander Hyden, Project Manager, of the Bellevue Parks and Community Services; Guy Michaelsen, Andy Mitton, and Whitney Summerland, of The Berger Partnership. Margaret Norton-Arnold, Chris Hoffman, Todd Peterson, Kristin Anderson, and Shanon Kearney of Norton-Arnold & Company coordinated the public meeting and facilitated the small group discussions. The City of Bellevue advertised the meeting on the City's project website and through an invitational postcard sent to approximately 2,900 households within a geographic area bounded by Main Street, 112th Avenue SE, the Village of Beaux Arts, and Lake Washington.

Margaret Norton-Arnold opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. with an overview of the meeting and the current phase of the master planning process. This introduction was followed by a welcome and project update from Patrick Foran, Director, and Glenn Kost, Planning and Development Manager, of Bellevue Parks and Community Services. Scott Vander Hyden, Bellevue's project manager for the Master Plan, was also introduced.

Patrick Foran provided information about the planning process and indicated that although the Boys & Girls Club has approached the city about building a new facility at Surrey Downs Park, no decisions have been made about this proposal. The potential of locating community center facilities in this park will be considered and evaluated with other possible schemes during the public involvement process. He openly invited everyone present to share their ideas for the Park during the Master Planning process, as this is the process that will be used to determine the plan for the park.

Presentation

Guy Michaelsen, Principal with The Berger Partnership, the landscape architecture firm under contract to the City of Bellevue to complete the Master Plan, presented his design team's four design schemes – generally on a scale from no build to maximum build - based on indoor and outdoor programming ideas generated at the first public meeting. The schemes were shared in order to spark comments and critiques – the remainder of the meeting was focused on hearing reaction to these schemes from the meeting participants.

Discussion

After the presentation, attendees divided into five discussion groups, each of which was led by a professional facilitator. The groups were charged with addressing these questions:

1) For those of you who find yourself particularly drawn to Scheme 1, what is it about this scheme that you like the most - and why? For those of you who are not inclined to favor Scheme 1, what do you dislike about it - and why? Scheme 2? Scheme 3? Scheme 4?

2) The real fun in looking at schemes like this is the ability to mix-and-match various elements of each of the designs. As you look at all four of them up here – are there ideas from one that you like? An element from one of the schemes that you would like to see in another scheme?

3) And... what's missing? Is there an idea you suggested at the first public meeting or a new idea that you do not see reflected in any of these schemes? If so, what did we leave out?

After about an hour of discussion, the five groups reconvened to share their thoughts and ideas with one another. What follows is a summary of the small group discussions.

Review of Schemes Based on the Discussion Guide

Amongst the groups, there were several common topic threads. Many meeting participants approved of Scheme 1 because it provided the maximum amount of green space– serene, with plenty of open green space, a playground for smaller children, adequate parking, and ball fields for active recreational play. However, many people urged that Surrey Downs be revamped to provide for a greater diversity of uses; especially the incorporation of an indoor community center that would offer activity and meeting space, gym space, and activities for people of all ages. The dominant theme was "balance" with no single element or program dominating other potential uses.

Scheme 2 received some support from meeting participants because it provided a balance of activities for a broad range of uses year-round and incorporated a small, appropriately scaled building in the right location creating natural buffers between the

active and quiet spaces. However, several people criticized this scheme for creating a grade change that divided the ball fields, impaired sightlines, and took valuable green space for surface parking.

Scheme 3 received a lot of support for keeping a building on the site. Many people approved of this scheme because they saw the building offering recreational opportunities year round and a green-roofed parking structure that allowed for other uses while providing adequate parking. However, Scheme 3 did spark some debate about the size of the building. Some meeting attendees felt it was too large for the park and would have negative impacts on the neighborhood because of noise, traffic, and nighttime use. Others argued having one big building would allow one type of user to dominate the park.

When discussing parking alternatives, most attendees preferred Scheme 3's structured parking lot built into the hillside, and wanted to see that idea incorporated into the final preferred alternative. Others argued that the parking structure was not central enough to make ball fields and play ground access easy for users.

Scheme 4 was deemed unacceptable by most due to excess of surface parking on the site.

When describing "mix and match" opportunities, one popular idea was to build a smaller community center in the same location as the building shown in Scheme 3. Several people urged flexibility in the design, noting that the community center could be built with large "garage-type" doors that could be opened in the summertime.

Regardless of the opinions about the various schemes, there were several park elements that received continued support from meeting participants. On the list of approved park details was a well-maintained perimeter walking trail, an unstructured play area, and an upgrade to the current playground equipment. Open space and view preservation were other elements that meeting attendees agreed were important.

There was considerable discussion about the ideal sites for programmed activities, with group members suggesting alternatives for various uses, on and offsite. For example, some people said that the Bellevue Botanical Gardens, which are nearby, offer the serene walking space many desire. In contrast, others said that the nearby Bellevue High School offers structured areas for teenagers particularly for recreational use. And still others voiced concern about the size and scale of a 40,000 square foot community center, noting that it might be better suited for Bellevue's downtown park. At the same time, there were several people who said that Bellevue badly needs a year round facility for indoor activities.

Other Comments

The concept of a parking garage with a green roof or a dual purpose such as a basketball court was mentioned, although there was some concern about the cost of the structure.

One man urged the meeting attendees to consider other programming uses for the community center such as classes for the performing arts or for senior citizens.

A suggestion was made to make the parking lot accessible at the intersection of SE 6th Street to improve safety for drivers and park users.

One concerned mother suggested fencing in the playground to protect kids from fly balls if the ball fields are nearby.

Others adults commented that having an open lawn near the kids play area was a great idea because it allowed them to keep a watchful eye on children at play.

Another person stressed orienting the ball fields so that the sun is not shining in batters' eyes.

The bathrooms are too far from the fields. Please add a closer second set of bathrooms.

Several participants said they liked the idea of including some "unique" elements in the park such as a maze, a water feature, topiary animals, art/sculpture.

One man advocated for the construction of tennis courts like the ones across the street at the Bellevue Club.

Several people liked the idea of maintaining and improving the neighborhood entrances to the park.

What Happens Next?

The Berger Partnership team will use the comments and ideas generated at this meeting, and the feedback they receive from the Parks Board and City Council to craft a preferred design alternative. The resulting scheme will be presented at a public meeting scheduled for March 2008 at Bellevue City Hall. At this meeting, participants will have the opportunity to review and comment on the preferred alternative. That review will, in turn, guide the remainder of the Surrey Downs Park master planning process.

On January 31, meeting attendees were invited to provide additional comments to the Parks and Community Services Board at their regular meeting on February 12.

Those who were unable to attend the January 31 or February 12 meetings can review the materials presented – and provide comments – by accessing the project website at: http://www.bellevuewa.gov/surrey_downs.htm or contacting Scott Vander Hyden, Project Manager, at (425) 452-4169 or svanderhyden@bellevuewa.gov

Appendix: Raw Notes from the January Public Meeting

Group 1

Scheme 1 Likes

- Walkways and the perimeter trail
- The meadow
- The "lookout" on a rise of land
- Scheme 1 provides a range of outdoor activities, both structured and unstructured, for a range of ages
- Ample playground space
- Openness
- Adequate parking
- Given the proximity of Surrey Downs to downtown Bellevue, the park serves as a much needed green space for people living in apartments and condominiums
- It's important that the park not be overwhelmed with high intensity activity
- The activities and their scheduling should be consistent with the relatively small size (eleven acres) of the park

Scheme 1 Dislikes

- The bathrooms are too far from the fields. Add a second set of bathrooms
- Do not install high intensity lights for night games
- The terrace between baseball fields reduces their usefulness. The east field needs at least 200 feet of level ground
- Orient the ball fields so the sun is not shining in batters' eyes

Scheme 2 Likes

- The community center. This center would provide space for classes, meeting rooms and indoor sports particularly basketball. Facilities of this kind are in short supply in Bellevue. If, however, the goal is a balance of indoor and outdoor recreation, the community center as proposed in Scheme 2 may be too small
- Offers many of the amenities of Scheme 1 in terms of outdoor recreation
- Overall the challenge is to balance neighborhood use and use by the wider community. Local residents of long standing have supported and enjoyed the park for many years. With Bellevue's rapid growth, the amenities and facilities the park provides have become increasingly important to people throughout the city. The overarching issue is the need for more parks and recreational facilities in Bellevue

Scheme 3 Likes

- Scheme 3 provides green space as well as indoor activities in the community center
- The proposed bowl area offers a good way for adults to keep a watchful eye on children at play
- The underground parking is a plus. This feature could be incorporated into Scheme 2 as well
- The size of the building proposed in Scheme 3 would accommodate both youth and adult activities
- The green roof on the parking garage
- This scheme provides multi-generational use – two years to seniors
- Provide exercise stations throughout the park
- This alternative addresses the problem of park users parking in the neighborhood
- Provides basketball courts for use by adults as well as youth

Scheme 4

- Too much space devoted to parking. The parking lot and the building overwhelm the park's green space and recreational areas. The park's green spaces and sports fields are a high priority that this alternative diminishes

Group 2

Scheme 1 Likes

- Maintains open space – most park-like of schemes
- Allows for a good blend of busy time (weekends) and quiet times (weekdays)
- Greenest scheme – need more green areas as City grows and develops
- Restroom
- Fields
- The unique, small interest areas and trails makes the park interesting and feel quiet
- Trails – good for jogging, close to Bellevue Athletic Club
- Remains a dawn to dusk park
- Provides visual and environmental respite
- Smallest level of programmed activity, brings the least traffic to the neighborhood, and the least impacts

Scheme 1 Dislikes

- Not enough parking
- Parking distance from fields is too great
- Not enough trees by playground – it gets very hot in the summer
- It feels like a private park – there is no draw to make people want to go there

- Needs destination draw
- No indoor space – need it in the winter and when it rains
- Not enough diversity of activities – offers just one type of experience
- Needs indoor/multi-use function to maximize opportunities
- Too much of a blank slate – opens up opportunities for non-park development
- Not enough fields – there is lots of demand (even a small practice field would help)
- Lighting should be considered

Scheme 2 Likes

- Compartmentalizes activities – separates intense and quiet activities with vegetation
- Balanced approach
- The indoor/outdoor opportunities reflect the reality of our climate
- Location of the building has the least impact on the neighborhood
- Size of building fits the park
- Appeals to broad spectrum of users – indoor/outdoor
- Size of building - it means that one organization/activity will not dominate the park
- The building won't impact outdoor activity too much
- The building size respects the nature of the park and the neighborhood

Scheme 2 Dislikes

- Not enough parking to support building
- Indoor activities require more parking
- Building not large enough to for gyms and other sports
- Building too small – more opportunities for indoor programming in larger building
- Need drop-off area in front of building – need easy in/easy out (for all schemes)
- Placement of parking – impacts neighbors to north and west
- Orientation of baseball fields – too close to one another
- Too much massing of hard surfaces (building and parking lot)
- Too much opportunity for "hangers on" at night from activities in building
- No lighting – park could be lit in a manner that is not intrusive to neighbors

Scheme 3 Likes

- Underground parking – allows for more green space
- The "break up" of fields and lawn bowl – keeps family and sports activities separate
- Large community center and the way it complements the park – parking, looks into green bowl area, and allows park to maintain "spread out" feeling

- Appeals to a number of uses
- Enough parking and in right area – not on neighborhood streets
- Smart use of garage roof
- Efficient use of space – has scale that is usable
- North and south areas of park have functional space
- Parking is adequate
- Greatest amount of parking with least amount of impacts
- Orientation of fields
- Large building – need it for growing community

Scheme 3 Dislikes

- Building too large for park and users it will attract
- Cost of parking structure
- Building spillover – activities spill outside of building and eat up capacity of park affecting other users
- Bathroom too far from fields
- Building and parking not big enough for future – the weather we have here means it will be used more than people think
- Concerned about security of parking structure
- Concerned that large structure will be expanded in the future and will continue to limit green space
- The size of the building appears that it will be a regional facility that the City will not control
- This park is not the place for a building of that size (but the community as a whole does need a building like the one that is proposed)
- Not enough trees by play area – it gets hot in the summer

Scheme 4 Likes

- Size of building meets demand for indoor space and reality of our climate
- Location of the building
- Trees by the play area

Scheme 4 Dislikes

- Parking lot too big – turns park into a parking lot
- Fields bunched too tightly together
- Too much activity in park
- Balconies of building look right into parking lot (not green area)
- Access to the parking lot will lead to congestion – need multiple access points
- Parking lot location – proximity to homes and the noise it will create
- Loss of informal gathering areas (like in Scheme 3)
- It's basically just a parking lot and ball fields

- Programming too intense for surrounding neighborhoods
- Playground too close to parking
- No picnic area

Mix and Match

- Use the parking that is proposed in Scheme 3 in Scheme 2
- Use the same design of Scheme 2 play area in Scheme 3
- Use "opposite" field orientation (like in Scheme 1 and 3) in all schemes
- Divide up informal area for different uses in Scheme 3
- Make sure all paths are soft surfaces
- Put a small structure in Scheme 1

Group 3

Scheme 1 Likes

- Has the most greenery, openness, and least environmental impact
- Holds environmental character, supports neighborhood element, open space, room for informal activity
- Only legitimate representation of park
- Demographics in neighborhood are changing to include individuals and couples without kids and this concept is good for those populations
- Has the most opportunity for most variety of activity, not dominated by one single use, still maintains tranquility of open space
- It's site specific, fits the true meaning of a park in a small neighborhood of an urban area
- Outdoor play space because includes range of ages
- It is daytime use only meaning less impact on neighborhood
- It's peaceful, like big play area and the basketball court
- Neighborhood entrance, special piece of park for neighborhood, like idea of using landscaping or even gardens in those areas

Scheme 1 Dislikes

- Too dull
- Need more covered areas in this climate, need indoor options
- Scheme 1 does dominate with a single use
- It is wasted space, doesn't serve needs of entire community
- Kids need more indoor places to go that are public
- The grading of the park in this scheme would limit the amount of sports field and sports fields are needed in Bellevue

Scheme 2 Likes

- The parking plan in this scheme

- The variety of uses provided here

Scheme 3 Likes

- Formal elements of Scheme 3, the minimal impact parking and the formal separation of activities
- Allows for more variety of uses
- Balances the uses
- Nice green space, parking minimized, accommodates indoor and outdoor uses
- Like building right on 112th Avenue SE with it built into hill
- Best scheme
- Balance between open space, building and park
- Not all sports, big open space has facility, minimal impact parking, art more use for more people
- Need more community centers in Bellevue
- Community centers are good because they serve all ages and they bring together people of all ages which is lacking on community
- Has best use of available space, ball fields, underground parking
- Reminds me of my favorite park (Greenlake Park) which has play area, community building with rooms for variety of uses, pool, games, etc.
- Groups ball fields by play area which is easy for family use
- Sports fields, they are much needed
- Mixed use facility is good
- Good to mix people of all ages in community center
- Not losing green space here
- Need more mixed use like this scheme provides
- The art idea in the scheme
- Has opportunities for everyone with many activities

Scheme 3 Dislikes

- The intensity of use is too much as well as associated intensity of traffic
- The scale of the building is too big. By including a building more the size of one in Scheme 2, this Scheme would better meet the needs of the community AND the neighborhood

Scheme 4

- Building is way too big for the park

General Comments

- In all the schemes, I would like to see the children's play area be as close as possible to the sports fields so parents with kids of different ages can easily go back and forth between the two

- Should not focus just on elements for children. The park is within walking distance of an aging population and should therefore include some activities for older adults, such as a putting green, volleyball court and other programming for adults
- Trail around park is great element
- Don't need a park with views and lots of open space because we have such easy access to that just outside the urban area
- Point of park is to have open spaces right in the city
- Would like to see a recirculating water feature/pond
- Don't need to maximize utility, need to decide what is right/appropriate use so space feels right for the largest number of people
- Like idea of maze or other unique feature in park
- What about topiary animals or other unique landscaping features?
- Unstructured space is needed in all of the schemes
- Ask that the final plan meets and considers the surrounding neighborhood
- Have a building with programmed and unprogrammed space in the final scheme
- Concern if there is correlation between crime and underground parking, increased capacity and layout of activities

Group 4

Scheme 1 Likes

- Love the open space
- Unstructured play for children
- Like open sightlines – break from big buildings
- Prefer Scheme 1 – it is a PARK not structures
- Track is fine
- Love openness. Climbing wall or water feature? Rose garden? Barbecue? Covered basketball?
- Really like looped trail – Scheme 2 better for options
- Like ability to see views
- Like open space. Park is not that big
- People from offices to enjoy park
- Water feature
- Glad to see baseball field
- Young kids like watching basketball
- Make sure water-feature is safe
- Love openness, walking trails expanded – integrated
- High school campus provides many opportunities
- Should provide respite
- Strong perimeter with loop is good (shown is Scheme 2)
- Those other parks are not just for neighborhood – need to drive

Scheme 1 Dislikes

- Miss children playing after school closes
- Don't like basketball. Attracts teenagers – unsupervised
- Concern about berm interfering with second field
- Worried about drawing people to neighborhood
- Use the park to provide amenities we don't have
- It would be good to add more amenities
- Don't let teenagers take over small kids playground
- Downtown park is wide open. Why develop this park?
- This should offer diversity – not just passive
- Community center would serve more people
- Bellevue Botanical Garden is fantastic for "respite" nearby

Scheme 2 Likes

- Like the trail – want it to go clear around site
- Like the idea of a meeting space
- Support idea of community center: kids benefit from programs
- Like sports related programs
- Kids are in structured programs. Don't see behavior problems
- Family picnics – roof; no sides
- Opportunity for a natural amphitheater on north end of property for outdoor plays
- Like idea of program space for kids
- Like the small building like Lewis Creek
- Middle of site perfect for soccer/football for small kids

Scheme 2 Dislikes

- Negative on small community center - build larger for the future

Schemes 3 & 4

- Scheme 3 is attractive – building tight to road, lots of green
- Like meeting space, gathering place, exercise
- Asset to community
- Location of structure is correct (prefer 3,000 square feet)
- Structured parking is good. Use with any building
- Scheme 3 is best – you get greenery & program space – trail works
- Scheme 3 is "highest & best use" – doesn't use lots of surface for parking
- Build for the future – like South Bellevue
- Do it properly!
- Like Scheme 3 but too formal in design

Scheme 3 & 4 Dislikes

- Why can't a community center that size be built in Bellevue Park?
- There would be more people able to walk
- "Highest and best" doesn't mean most intense
- Too intense
- Programming would dominate other uses
- How will all those cars get onto 112th Avenue SE?
- Put the building on the west side of Bellevue Park
- Skip the building. Just play areas, some could be covered

Scheme 4

- Works to have sightlines to multiple fields

Group 5

Scheme 1 Likes

- Maximizes green space
- Maintains open space
- Respects the history of the site

Scheme 1 Dislikes

- Needs facilities and parking. Preference for a structured parking lot due to its minimal visual impact by being built into the ground and covered
- One man who identified himself as a "senior" asked that the following "adult" activities be added: tennis courts, hiking trails

Scheme 2

- Consider closing the park at dusk. Make the building to scale with the surrounding neighborhood. Scalability is important. Clyde Hill Center is a good example of an appropriately scaled community center that is useable, multi-functional, and multi-generational
- The community center does not have to be big to serve everybody

Scheme 3 Likes

- I like how the play fields are programmed and there is space for free play
- Scheme 3 successfully provides space for the community and neighbors
- I am in favor of Scheme 3 because it has a facility and an amount of green space unlike Scheme 4
- This park has the opportunity to be a gathering space for Bellevue through a community center
- I like the size of the community center, the conservation of green space, and the year round usage supported in Scheme 3

Scheme 3 Dislikes

- The building is too large
- Make the parking closer or more central to the ball fields so we don't need to haul sports equipment long distances. There needs to be equal access for all
- There are other opportunities for programming at the community center such as performing arts. Please keep the uses open to ideas
- The soccer fields are not large enough for pitch
- Put the soccer fields on the north end of the site. Do not overlay them with the baseball fields
- Place parking and heavy use areas across from the intersection at SE 6th Street to keep facilities centrally located
- The playgrounds should be closer to the ball fields. There should be a fence to protect kids at the playground from flying balls

Scheme 4

- Scheme 4 is unacceptable because there is too much surface parking

General Comments

- No new surface parking or minimize parking impacts
- When placing the sports fields, consider fly balls landing on 112th Avenue SE
- Retain a record of local history
- Emphasize maximizing passive green space
- Build facilities that are multi-use (i.e. parking and basketball courts)
- Explain the fiscal impacts on the neighborhood of building multi-purpose facilities and the costs of construction
- Give park an organization structure
- Make the entrance to the park safer by placing it at SE 6th Street
- There needs to be a balance of facility and green space
- Do not add a skate park
- The park is a community place not simply a neighborhood place
- The park could benefit the community and the Surrey Downs neighborhood

Surrey Downs Park Master Park
April 1, 2008
Public Meeting #3
Summary Report

Prepared for:

The City of Bellevue

Prepared by:

Norton-Arnold & Company

April 4, 2008

Overview

The City of Bellevue is nearing completion of a master planning process for Surrey Downs Park, located at 546 112th Avenue SE. The site is a public park containing both passive and active recreational elements. It is popular and well used by the surrounding neighborhoods. Park assets include two programmable ball fields, a pedestrian loop trail, hazelnut grove, children's play area, and a small basketball court.

The intent of the Master Plan is to make recommendations for the site's redevelopment. The City of Bellevue has engaged the public at all phases of the plan to encourage collaboration with citizens for the future of the Park, and to protect Surrey Downs Park as an important feature within the City's parks and open space inventory.

April 1 Public Meeting

Approximately 40 people attended the third public meeting for the Surrey Downs Master Plan on April 1, 2008 at Bellevue City Hall. The primary purpose of the meeting was to present a "preferred concept plan" for the Park, which was based on previous ideas and input from the public. The City and Design Team also presented development parameters for a "building impact zone" at the Park. The goal of the meeting was to hear from meeting participants about their suggested refinements to the preferred concept plan for Surrey Downs Park.

The third public meeting was attended by the following City staff and consultants, Patrick Foran, Director, Glenn Kost, Planning and Development Director, and Scott Vander Hyden, Project Manager, of Bellevue Parks and Community Services; Guy Michaelsen, Andy Mitton, and Greg Bower of The Berger Partnership. Margaret Norton-Arnold, Chris Hoffman, Todd Peterson, Kristin Anderson, and Shanon Kearney of Norton-Arnold & Company, which coordinated the public meeting and facilitated the small group discussions.

The City of Bellevue advertised the meeting on the City's project website and through an invitational postcard sent to approximately 2,900 households within a geographic area bounded by Main Street, 112th Avenue SE, the Village of Beaux Arts, and Lake Washington. Invitations were also sent to attendees of all previous workshops.

Margaret Norton-Arnold opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. with an overview of the evening and a description of the current phase of the master planning process. This introduction was followed by a welcome and project update from Patrick Foran and Glenn Kost.

Glenn provided information about the park planning process and indicated that, although the public agrees a building is appropriate at Surrey Downs Park, no decisions will be made on the building during this park master planning process. To address the potential siting of a building within this Park, the City, in collaboration with The Berger Partnership, created a "development impact zone" with recommended building parameters. He openly invited everyone present to share their ideas for the preferred

concept plan and the development parameters, but noted that this meeting's primary goal was to collect community feedback on the Park itself.

Presentation

Guy Michaelsen, Principal with The Berger Partnership, the landscape architecture firm under contract to the City of Bellevue to complete the Master Plan, presented his design team's development zone parameters and the preferred concept plan. The preferred concept plan was described by specific areas – the Great Lawn, the Sports Meadow, Pathways and Loop Trails, Play Area and Discovery Trail, Neighborhood Portals, and Promontory and Labyrinth - in order to spark comments and critiques. The remainder of the meeting was focused on collecting feedback from meeting participants on the design elements and the development parameters.

Discussion

After the presentation, attendees divided into four discussion groups, each of which was led by a professional facilitator. The groups were charged with addressing these questions:

1) What additional input do you have on the following specific design goals?

    a) Great Lawn
    b) Sports Meadow
    c) Pathways and Loop Trails
    d) Play area and Discovery Trail
    e) Promontory and Labyrinth
    f) Neighborhood Portals
    g) Parameters for the Development Zone

2) Do you have any suggestions for elements that were not represented?

After about an hour of discussion, the four groups reconvened to share their thoughts and ideas with one another. What follows is a summary of the small group discussions.

Summary of Public Comments

Among the groups, there were several common themes. The majority of meeting participants generally approved of the preferred concept plan because it demonstrated that the team had listened and generally reflected public opinion of how the Park should be organized – passive recreation space to the north with active recreation to the south. The public also appreciated that other features were centralized for easier access and

visibility, including a playground for smaller children, adequate parking, and public restrooms.

However, most of those attending also shared ideas for ways to improve the preferred concept plan. Specifically, they urged leaving the Park visibly "open" while simultaneously putting some needed distance between Park users and neighbors abutting the Park. The dominant theme was "balance" with the design creating spaces that were inviting and seemingly private, yet accessible to everyone.

The Great Lawn received a great deal of support from meeting attendees because it provided an area for unprogrammed activities year-round. Some people also approved of the addition of a small, appropriately scaled skate spot in a location naturally buffered from the surrounding neighborhood. Others criticized the skate spot for inviting noise and unruly skaters and preferred that the skate spot not be included in the design. Some parents commented that the distance of the Great Lawn is still too far from the ball fields and impairs sightlines for parents, who need to watch both the ball fields and their younger children in the Play Area.

When discussing buffers along the Park edge, some attendees commented that they preferred low plantings like blackberry bushes to tall trees like cedars. One neighbor along the upper northwest edge of the Park commented that the existing cedars are messy and keep sunlight from reaching neighboring yards. Others argued that screening is appropriate to allow neighbors privacy but should not obstruct sight lines or create "hidden" places for illegal behavior.

The Sports Meadow received substantial support for keeping at least two baseball diamonds and room for a soccer field on the site. Many people approved of the closer proximity of the ball fields and the Play Area in relation to the parking area. However, the Sport Meadow did spark some debate about the orientation of the home plate to the sun and the close proximity of neighboring yards. Some meeting attendees felt the ball fields dugouts should be flipped: one close to the proposed Labyrinth and the other next to the Play Area. Others argued that home base should never face West, putting the sun directly in the batter's line of vision.

When discussing the Pathways and Loop Trails, everyone grew very excited. One popular idea was to include distance posts as well as stretching or exercise stations. Several people urged softer surfacing for the paths, noting that the hazelnut groves could also be planted as clusters, as opposed to lines, to look more natural. Several participants advised relocating the walking trails to the west side of the building rather than near 112th Avenue NE.

Regardless of the opinions about the details, there were several Park elements that received continued support from meeting participants. On the list of generally approved Park details was the Play Area and Discovery Trail. However, as mentioned previously, many meeting participants wanted to see the Play Area even closer to the ball fields and the addition of climbing surfaces, for example, animal sculptures, for young kids. Others

added that bike racks and picnic tables were missing from the overall plan and that the basketball half court should be expanded to a full court.

There was considerable discussion about the location and design intent of the Promontory and Labyrinth, with group members recommending alternative uses for this part of the site. Many people suggested that this part of the Park be reserved for adult use and that a "permeable" design should be implemented to discourage illegal or inappropriate behavior. Some participants said this corner of the site would be more appropriate for a passive feature, such as a sitting area or shade garden since the neighboring properties are so close. Several commenters stressed that, regardless of the type of activity ultimately located here, screening is necessary in order to provide neighbors with additional privacy. And still others proposed more active uses, such as a covered picnic area, climbing area, or a water feature.

With regards to the neighborhood portals, many meeting participants saw these gateways as a way to provide a visual identity for the neighborhood in the form of a common design element such as art, arbors or plants. However, others commented that neighborhood access should not be overemphasized and thus create a security problem.

When asked about the development parameters, participants asked a number of questions and shared their comments about any new building and how it relates to the master planning process. Amongst some groups, there was a discussion as to whether using historic precedence as a determinant for building size parameters was appropriate. Others expressed frustration that the building or "white area" on the plan would not be addressed during this master planning process. A common recommendation amongst the groups, however, was to make sure any future building be sited closer to 112th Avenue NE than shown on the preferred concept plan. Overall, the public was glad the City was thinking about capping development at a certain size to protect the neighborhood feel of the Park.

Other Comments

One man suggested that the Master Plan include a fiscal impact analysis in order to address how Park changes will impact surrounding property values.

There were multiple requests for screening or fencing along the Park boundary to discourage Park users from looking into neighbors' yards.

One discussion group recommended grafting the existing trees to maintain a historic DNA link to the hazelnut grove.

A concerned mother suggested lighting the neighborhood portals when possible to improve safety for neighbors and Park users.

One older meeting participant asked that the design include an area for recreational activities for seniors such as bocce ball.

One woman asked that the madronas near the proposed Labyrinth be preserved if at all possible.

Another person stressed that the north and south neighborhood entrances to the Park be protected to allow easy pedestrian circulation from the community.

Make sure there is good drainage on and off the fields to reduce erosion on and off the site.

Several participants said they liked the idea of including a natural amphitheater in the Park. Consider installing this feature in the Park's northwest or southwest corner.

Plant a rose garden in the northwest corner of the Park.

Several people asked that the green buffer around the Park not be so dense that it blocks the ability of neighbors to keep an eye on the Park.

Wrapping Up the Surrey Downs Park Master Plan Process

The Berger Partnership team will use the comments generated at the April meeting and the feedback they receive from the Parks Department to "tweak" the preferred concept plan. The resulting scheme will be presented at the next Parks Board meeting scheduled for May 13, 2008, at Bellevue City Hall. At this meeting, participants will have another opportunity to review and comment on this preferred concept plan. The Parks Board will then consider these comments when they prepare a recommendation to the City Council on the Surrey Downs Park Master Plan. This recommendation will then be reviewed by the City Council, with the goal of having the City Council adopt the Master Plan prior to their Council recess in August of 2008.

Those who were unable to attend the three public meetings can review the materials presented by accessing the project website at http://www.bellevuewa.gov/surrey_downs.htm or contacting Scott Vander Hyden, Project Manager, at (425) 452-4169 or svanderhyden@bellevuewa.gov.

Surrey Downs Park Preferred Concept Plan

PLAN SCALE: 1"=40'

The Berger Partnership PS Landscape Architecture

City of Bellevue Washington

Feasibility Studies of Development Zone

Surrey Downs Park

The Berger Partnership PS
Landscape Architecture

City of Bellevue
WASHINGTON

Surrey Downs Park Proposed Master Plan

PLAN SCALE: 1" = 40'

The Berger Partnership PS Landscape Architecture

City of Bellevue WASHINGTON

SURREY DOWNS PARK MASTER PLAN
Site Development and Operational Parameters for Building Program

Site development parameters:

- The development zone shall be located along the northern portion of 112th.
- Within that development zone, a maximum square footage of development impact is approximately 65,000-70,000SF.
- Buildings should take advantage of existing grade at 112ft to mitigate building mass, with general building mass not exceeding 1 story above park grade at upper side (west side of building). (Not including mechanical and "punched" elements.)
- parking is preferred at the south end of building development impact zone, but could be shifted to the north dependent upon traffic analysis.
- As building program requires increased parking quantities, structured may be necessary with park elements built over portions of the parking area.
- Parkland buffer shall be maintained between any building or parking development and the property line to the north.
- Any building design shall maintain all program elements of the park master plan.
- Any building must seamlessly merge with the park and the master plan, recognizing that park elements immediately adjacent to the building will need to be adapted to best merge with the building.

Operational parameters:

- Any recreational facility would need to provide public access and use.
- Any recreational facility shall be multigenerational though the programs offered and facilities provided.
- Any recreational facility shall have reasonable hours of operation
- The recreational facility would not control use and scheduling of the park as exclusive to center users, nor shall the facility over program or use park elements to diminish the character of Surrey Downs Park as a community park unto itself.