CITY OF BELLEVUE
PARKS & COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday
June 9, 2009
6:00 p.m.

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

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Keeney, Vice-Chair Roland, Boardmembers George, LaPine, Robinson[1], Stokes

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Councilmember Chelminiak

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Maritza Alfonso, Cherie Clayton, Patrick Foran, Susan Fraser, Nancy Kartes, Glenn Kost, Roger Ledbetter, Shelley Marelli, Alex O'Reilly, Camron Parker, Lourdes Salazar, Tandra Schwamberg, Terry Smith, Viki Stover, Scott VanderHyden

OTHERS PRESENT: Michelle Bienfang, Dave Demontigns, Dan Edds, Kaye Edds, Todd Foley, Ann Harkness, Steve Hasman, Vicki Hasman, Suzanne Howle, Maggie Kennedy, Ali Marashi, Ludwig Nguyen, Michael Ogliore, Teryl Orrico, K. Pham, Mark Samac, M/M Sharma, Debbie Vaught, Dan Worthey, Norman Wright

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:

Motion by Vice-Chair Roland and second by Boardmember George to approve the meeting agenda. Motion carried unanimously (5–0).

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Vice-Chair Roland and second by Boardmember George to approve the May 12, 2009 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Parks & Community Services Board. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

[1] Arrived at 6:20 p.m.

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Dan Edds, 6046 – 118th Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Edds' house backs up against the Newport Hills Community Park. The center of his dining table is approximately 62 feet from the center of the baseball field. Mr. Edds cited examples of acceptable and unacceptable sounds expected from a community park, in particular foul language and unacceptable noise levels.

Mr. Edds is opposed to expanding the use of Newport Hills Community Park to a year-round facility and does not feel this proposal is in alignment with the 2003 Parks & Open Space System Plan.

Alex O'Reilly, City of Bellevue, Parks & Community Services, Human Services

Ms. O'Reilly discussed the Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative Annual Report for 2008, which addressed transportation issues for disadvantaged people. Ms. O'Reilly explained that many forward-thinking special projects have been funded and piloted through the efforts of the EERC, including the Bus Buddy program, travel ambassador, and mobility coordinator for the Eastside communities.

There was general consensus with Boardmembers to alter the meeting agenda to allow City Council Communications.

5. CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS:

Councilmember Chelminiak welcomed new Boardmembers John Stokes and Sherry Grindeland to the Board. He also reported that the Off-Leash Area Study Report and Recommendations will be discussed at the June 15 Council meeting.

Item 4 continued from above:
ORAL COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Cherie Clayton, City of Bellevue, Parks & Community Services, Special Events
Michael Ogliore, Bellevue Downtown Association

Ms. Clayton invited Boardmembers to the Symetra Bellevue Family 4th of July celebration. Mr. Ogliore discussed some of the activities scheduled at the park, including an international food court, climbing wall, and Family Fun Zone.

Debbie Vaught, 15041 NE 144th St., Redmond, WA

Ms. Vaught explained a youth program that has recently been formed that offers paid community internship programs with the Bellevue Botanical Garden Society. Ms. Vaught introduced Sara Morsi who was recently selected as the youth intern.

Suzanne Howle, 6059 – 118th Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Ms. Howle expressed her concern about the safety and traffic impacts with the Newport Hills Community Park expansion. After reviewing the 2003 Parks & Open Space System Plan, Ms. Howle feels the park is too small for the use the expansion will generate. Ms. Howle is opposed to the Newport Hills Community Park expansion.

Vicki Hansman, 6042 – 118th Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Ms. Hansman agreed with Ms. Howle's comments relating to Newport Hills Community Park and is opposed to the proposal.

Ali Marashi, 6014 – 118th Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Marashi also agreed with Ms. Howle's comments relating to Newport Hills Community Park and is opposed to the proposal.

Todd Foley, 6050 – 118th Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Foley commended Bellevue Parks for the wonderful parks system throughout the city. Mr. Foley cautioned that the Newport Hills Community Park is too small for the proposed expansion. He explained that residents cannot always use the park because there are currently so many sports programs held at the field and feels the expansion would exacerbate this concern. Mr. Foley is opposed to the expansion proposal.

Norman Wright, 6058 – 118th Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Wright expressed his concern with the expansion concept for the Newport Hills Community Park. If the proposal is executed, Mr. Wright feels the park will be a sports facility, rather than a community park.

Resident (name not given), 6018 – 118th Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

This resident expressed her concern with the number of baseballs that end up in her backyard. She is concerned that a ball will break her window if the park usage is increased.

Chair Keeney polled audience members to tally the number of attendees opposed to the Newport Hills Community Park proposal. There were 24 audience members opposed to the concept.

5. CHAIR COMMUNICATION:

Chair Keeney welcomed new Boardmembers Sherry Grindeland and John Stokes to the Board.

6. BOARD COMMUNICATION:

Chair Keeney and Boardmembers Robinson and George attended the Youth Link Community Leadership Awards ceremony and were amazed by the character of the youth members in attendance.

In addition to the CLA, Chair Keeney recently visited the Bellevue Botanical Garden and Boardmember George visited the Newport Hills Park.

7. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:

A. Newport Hills Community Park

Mr. Vander Hyden reviewed the Newport Hills Sportfield Improvement project. He explained that the project scope includes converting the existing grass soccer field to synthetic turf and upgrading to a state-of-the-art lighting system. As budget allows, other improvements will be considered, including a pedestrian walkway connection along the east edge of the park, new ballfield fencing and backstop, restroom upgrades, baseball infield conversion to synthetic turf, and infield relocation to the east side of the park to help with traffic and pedestrian flow.

Mr. Kost clarified that the property was purchased by King County in 1973 primarily for the purpose of baseball and soccer use at the urging of the Newport Hills Park Society. He added that the installation of synthetic turf at Newport Hills Park has been a high priority park project for many years, and is identified in the adopted 2003 Parks & Open Space System Plan. The project would satisfy an identified need for more high quality soccer game fields, is located in an area especially lacking in quality fields, makes use of an existing lighted field to maximize program capacity, and is located in a park with existing infrastructure such as parking and restroom facilities.

Mr. Kost called attention to the Board packet, which included information about neighborhood and community meetings, and outreach activities conducted. He noted that there was a petition received from the Newport Hills Park neighbors that highlighted some neighbor concerns with the improvement project, including:

- Lighting.
- Inappropriate behavior.
- Parking.
- Additional event scheduling.
- Limited usage for neighbors.

Mr. Kost clarified that the Newport Hills project was identified in the levy, which was approved in November 2008. Prior to the ballot, there public meetings were conducted to inform the public about the levy, including the distribution of fact sheets and attendance at community meetings.

Boardmember George suggested moving the soccer field to the corner of 120th Ave. SE and SE 60th Street so a larger buffer to homeowners could be maintained.

Boardmember LaPine requested examples of suspended field use due to inappropriate language. Mr. Foran clarified that the City typically tries to resolve any disputes before revoking usage.

Boardmember Robinson suggested that the field drainage be upgraded rather than changing the field to synthetic turf. She also referenced a recent e-mail received discussing this issue. Mr. Foran explained the safety issues with muddy fields. This concern was addressed at Robinswood Park by adding synthetic fields, which have been a huge success.

Boardmember LaPine expressed his concerns with the safety of the play area, since it is in close proximity to the ball field. Mr. Kost clarified that the use of the baseball field is limited to the Little League. However, the designs are still being developed and the safety of the play area is being taken into consideration. Mr. Kost also explained the state-of-the-art lighting systems that are currently being utilized in parks. A new system would help mitigate sky glow and noise. Mr. Kost will include sample lighting pictures with the next presentation.

Boardmember Robinson suggested that a plant buffer be created between the fields and the neighboring houses to alleviate noise and increase privacy for the neighbors. Mr. Vander Hyden noted that fencing options are also being considered.

B. Probation Division Overview

Ms. Schwamberg provided an overview of the Probation Division, which is part of Parks & Community Services. The mission of the Probation Division is to monitor adult misdemeanor offenders and hold them accountable to court ordered sanctions in order to protect the public and curtail recidivism.

Ms. Schwamberg explained that probation officers work hand-in-hand with community groups and social service agencies to provide offenders and victims with the support they need. Probation officers maintain partnerships with law enforcement and other justice agencies to share information and expertise.

Ms. Salazar, Ms. Fraser, Ms. Alfonso, and Mr. Ledbetter discussed the following probation programs:

- Pre-sentence Investigation and Pre-Trial Diversion Interviews.
- SOC (Stipulated Order of Continuance)
- In-Custody Interviews
- Court Duty
- Certified DUI Assessment
- Case Management of Offenders
- Record Check Program
- Electronic Home Detention Program
- Volunteers in Probation

Ms. Schwamberg noted that the majority of crimes committed in Bellevue are either DUI or domestic violence related.

There was a general discussion about the volunteer projects conducted by offenders, in particular:

- How projects are identified.
- How offenders are identified.
- How offenders are qualified.
- How offenders are supervised/monitored.
- Typical community service hours projects.

Ms. Schwamberg clarified that community service is court ordered. Failure to comply could lead to jail time. In addition, there is a list of agencies that allow for court-referred community services hours requests. The agencies then track community service hours.

Boardmembers requested periodic updates on Probation Division activities.

C. Parks & Open Space System Plan Update

Mr. Parker explained that over the next twelve months, Parks & Community Services will be updating one of its long-range policy planning documents, the Parks & Open Space System Plan. This Plan guides staff and the Board when making recommendations to the City Council on the acquisition, development and management of parks and open space citywide. The current Plan was last updated in 2003 and is on a six year schedule for renewal and adoption by the City Council.

Mr. Parker discussed the following items:

- Context for Park & Recreation Planning.
- Recreation & Conservation Office (State) Planning Policies.
- Plan Relationships.
- Timing.
- Focus Areas.
- Public Participation.

A final Plan will be presented to the state in June 2010.

In addition to the identified focus areas, Vice-Chair Roland suggested that skate parks be added to the list since this has been an ongoing request from the community.

Boardmember LaPine asked that the following items be incorporated during the planning process:

- Access to parks—would like to walk to all of the parks.
- Identify underserved areas—apply the national standards to determine park standards and ratios.

Boardmember Stokes suggested that school communities be involved in the process. In addition, there was a general discussion on partnering with youth activities and events to identify a youth wish-list.

Boardmembers offered their assistance with the process and would like regular progress reports and feedback on the project.

Motion by Vice-Chair Roland and second by Boardmember Robinson to extend the meeting until 8:30 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).

9. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Foran noted that the City has been evaluating the budget due to the current economic conditions.

10. ONGOING/OLD BUSINESS:

A. Boardmember committee/liaison reports

Boardmember Robinson reported that the Network on Aging recently received two Proclamations – Older Americans Month (May) and World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (June 15, 2009). In addition, the Network on Aging received an update regarding the Bel-Red Corridor project. Boardmember Robinson discussed some of the concepts incorporated in the plans. Mr. Foran clarified that the long parkway concept is a core element of the Bel-Red Corridor project.

Chair Keeney reported that the Meydenbauer Bay Steering Committee will have a recommendation for City Council in July 2009. Boardmembers are encouraged to attend the meetings and public hearings.

11. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Future agenda items

12. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:

A. CIP Project Report

B. Greenway Days Proclamation

C. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Proclamation

D. Bellevue Family 4th of July celebration

13. INFORMATION:

A. List of upcoming Parks special events

B. July 14 – next scheduled Park Board meeting

14. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ann Harkness, 6036 – 118th Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Ms. Harkness cited the following concerns about the Newport Hills project:

- Park is too small for proposed improvements.
- Lighting is too close in proximity to property lines.
- Project will negatively impact property values.
- Project will impact three neighborhoods.
- The use does not account for non-league games.
- There is currently much more field use than what is registered with the City.
- Have not received proper notification for future meetings.

Suzanne Howle, 6059 – 118th Ave. SE, Bellevue 98006

Ms. Howle expressed the following concerns about the Newport Hills project:

- Outreach is lacking and/or unsuccessful.
- Concerned about how the process has been accomplished in accordance with Chapter 5 of the 2003 Parks & Open Space System Plan.
- Research school partnerships for other field options.
- Community facilities need to be upgraded.

Ali Marashi, 6014 – 118th Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA 98006

Ms. Marashi averages approximately 10 baseballs per day in her yard. She is concerned that the balls will break a window or her fence. Ms. Marashi is outraged about discussions for a higher fence and feels the park is too small for the proposed plans.

Todd Foley, 6050 – 118th Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA 98006

Mr. Foley expressed his concerns with people walking behind cars to the park due to the lack of sidewalks. Since the ball fields are near the tree line, there is limited space for spectators and movement around the fields. Mr. Foley suggested deferring the money for the project.

Maggie Kennedy, 11842 SE 62nd St., Bellevue, WA

Ms. Kennedy expressed her concern about the proposed synthetic turf at Newport Park. She feels that children need real grass for proper child development.

Teryl Orrico, 11811 SE 62nd SE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Orrico concurred with his neighbor's comments regarding the Newport Hills project. He feels that a sports complex would detract from property value. He also questioned whether or not money was being made from people using the field.

15. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Vice-Chair Roland and second by Boardmember George to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).