

*The Parks & Community Services Board approved these meeting minutes on April 14, 2015.*

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

Tuesday  
March 10, 2015  
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
Room 1E-113  
Bellevue, Washington

**BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Grindeland, Vice-Chair Evans, Boardmembers Heath, Kumar, Powell, Van Hollebeke

**BOARDMEMBER ABSENT:** Boardmembers George

**PARKS STAFF PRESENT:** Shelley Brittingham, Dan DeWald, Patrick Foran, Pat Harris, Nancy Harvey, Camron Parker, Tom Purcell, James McClain, Shelley McVein, Terry Smith

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Carl Vander Hoek

**MINUTES TAKER:** Michelle Cash

1. **CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Grindeland at 6:09 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**Motion by Boardmember Van Hollebeke and second by Boardmember Powell to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).**

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Motion by Boardmember Kumar and second by Boardmember Van Hollebeke to approve the February 10, 2015 Parks & Community Services Board Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).**

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

Carl Vander Hoek, 342 – 102<sup>nd</sup> Ave. SE, #218, Bellevue, WA 98004

On behalf of a stakeholders group surrounding the Downtown Park, Mr. Vander Hoek distributed a memo regarding the group's concerns pertaining to parking. In particular, Mr. Vander Hoek clarified that the Stakeholders are concerned that there is not enough parking at the Downtown Park for taxpayers and park users. If there is not enough parking for users, then the surrounding neighborhoods' and businesses' livability and viability are threatened, not to mention the success of the park.

Mr. Vander Hoek stressed that the parking issue at Downtown Park is not solely an issue of concern for Old Bellevue Merchants. The Stakeholders that have convened to discuss their concerns about parking in the Downtown Park include:

- Bellevue Downtown Association
- Bellevue Chamber of Commerce
- Old Bellevue Merchants Association
- Downtown Bellevue Residents Association
- Meydenbauer Bay Neighborhood Association
- Visit Bellevue Washington
- Bellevue Boys and Girls Club
- Bellevue Rotary
- Kemper Development Company
- Vander Hoek Corporation
- Pistol Creek

Mr. Vander Hoek explained that the above parties did not sign the Stakeholder letter to the City dated January 28, 2015 because in large part these parties have partnerships or funding they receive from the City so they are unable to speak out publicly against the City. However, he stressed that this should not nullify their concern.

As stated in Mr. Vander Hoek's September address to City Council, he requested that the City explore a public/private partnership to build more parking in the Downtown Park funded by a Local Improvement District (LID). He noted that an Ad Hoc Committee never explored the potential for a LID or researched what it would take to put one together. Furthermore, the memo stated that the Stakeholders invited to the Ad Hoc meetings received proposals to do the following: 1) to do an expanded parking study in Old Bellevue; and 2) to consider a public/private financial partnership to construct additional underground structured parking on the west side of the park. However, Mr. Vander Hoek stated that the Stakeholders never received the said proposals.

Mr. Vander Hoek clarified that the Downtown Park Stakeholders share the same viewpoint, including Vander Hoek Corporation, which is also the conduit for delivering the message.

Mr. Vander Hoek stated that the Stakeholders are concerned because they were told that the Board can do nothing about the parking issue at Downtown Park. The Stakeholders disagree and believe that the reason the Board volunteers their time is because they care about the community and preserving the viability of the parks system. The Stakeholders believe that the problem is not just for the Parks Board or department to solve. They asked that the Parks Board join forces with other boards and departments to take an interdepartmental approach to resolving the concerns of the community.

5. **CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION:**

No report.

6. **CHAIR COMMUNICATION:**

Chair Grindeland encouraged Boardmembers to attend the following events:

- Youth Link Gumbo Night on March 11.
- Grand Opening Celebration of the new Bellevue Youth Theatre-Crossroads on March 14.
- Grand Opening Celebration of the new gym at Hidden Valley Sports Park on March 28.

7. **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:**

Boardmember Van Hollebeke reported that he will be sending a letter to the Conservation Board in support of the Mercer Slough land swap. He commended Boardmember Powell for her thorough research on the issue. Boardmember Van Hollebeke expressed his frustration with some of the groups involved with disputing the land swap. He feels that they may be more concerned with disputing light rail than they are about preserving the Mercer Slough.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke does not think that there is a viable Sound Transit route into Bellevue that doesn't impact the Mercer Slough. However, he views the current Sound Transit alignments as the least impactful to the Mercer Slough.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke applauded the City for utilizing a democratic process to deal with concerns expressed about the Downtown Park parking issues. He stressed that the parks are not intended to solve the parking issues and strongly encouraged all parties (i.e., Stakeholders and interdepartmental groups) to explore additional parking options along 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast. He views this as a viable option if a LID could be involved in co-funding.

Boardmember Powell made the following report:

- Visited the Mercer Slough Nature Park.
- Visited Surrey Downs Park.
- Visited Robinswood Park.
- Visited Hidden Valley Park.
- Hiked Tam O'Shanter Park.

Boardmember Kumar made the following report:

- Participated in golf lessons at the Bellevue Golf Course (kudos to Patrick Vaughan for his efforts at the course).
- Attended a Bellevue Botanical Garden class.
- Walked various trails that ended at Spiritridge Park.

Vice-Chair Evans commended Mr. DeWald, Mr. Harris, and Mr. Purcell for their efforts in managing Bellevue's parks and open spaces.

#### 8. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Mr. Foran reminded Boardmembers that a letter was received on January 28, 2015 from the Downtown Park neighborhood Stakeholders regarding the next phase of development of the Downtown Park and its parking plan. Mr. Foran explained that at the February 10, 2015 Park Board meeting Boardmember Van Hollebeke requested information regarding the work of an "Ad Hoc" committee working on various aspects of parking issues in Old Bellevue. He summarized the work to date regarding the issue.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke called attention to the dispute regarding the Gibson Study. Mr. Foran noted that the Gibson Study was a real time car and person count in June, July, and August. The study counted cars as they came into the park and recorded if the occupants stayed in the park or left the park to determine the actual park users. The basis of the study was to determine parking demands for new park users. The current parking demand at Downtown Park is 102 parking stalls. With the addition of the Inspiration Playground and closing the circle, it was determined that an additional 35 parking stalls are needed. Mr. Foran noted that the study did not include any discussion regarding changes/improvements to the northeast entry of the park.

Mr. Foran clarified that the Gibson Study was not conducted to evaluate the parking problems in Old Bellevue. The study was conducted to determine the adequate parking needed for the two additional projects. He explained that the study determined that there is adequate parking for park users, with the addition of the 35 parking stalls.

Boardmember Powell called attention to the significant amount of information included in the Downtown Livability Advisory Committee study that concluded that addressing the parking issues was not within the scope of the CAC.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke commented that there is a general acceptance that there won't be one solution to the parking related issues. He suggested that expansion of parking along 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast be considered, along with evaluating traffic flows, valet options, and mass transportation. He noted that there have already been deliberate changes to parking restrictions to create greater access to Old Bellevue (i.e., parking in Downtown Park is allowed in the evening).

9. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. Parks Re-Accreditation Update

Mr. DeWald explained that accreditation is a process for evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of agency operations by comparing practices to generally accepted professional standards. The Parks & Community Services Department initially obtained accreditation from the Commission for Accreditation of Park & Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) in February, 2005. As part of this process, the Department is required to submit a self-assessment report to CAPRA during every five year cycle.

Mr. DeWald noted that the City started with approximately 2.5 acres of parkland in 1953 and has grown to over 3,100 acres to date. The inventory of assets not only includes acreage but also buildings/structures, and hard surfaces.

The Maintenance Management Plan (MMP) includes the following:

- Budget and planning tool.
- System-wide and site-specific.
- Evaluates property and assets.
- Identifies labor, equipment, and materials for safe and effective site maintenance.
- Systematic and consistent approach based on national standards.

Mr. Harris stated that the MMP includes individual work plans, which provides the Department with flexibility and scalability to manage parks. Maintenance tasks are identified and itemized for each site/asset to help create the annual workload plan.

Mr. Harris reviewed various parks and discussed some of the maintenance standards involved in maintaining the parks. In addition, Mr. DeWald discussed the following:

- Natural Areas – Forest Management
- Street Trees and Arterial Landscaping
- Trails and Greenways
- Community Farms and Gardens

Mr. Purcell discussed the Structural Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Management Plan, which is the management plan for the control and upkeep of property and equipment. He stressed that effective operations and maintenance is one of the most cost-effective methods for ensuring reliability, safety, and energy efficiency within the City's facilities and park system.

Mr. Purcell summarized some of the City's buildings and facilities, and the maintenance involved in caring for these structures. Performance of preventive, corrective and reactive maintenance actions aimed at preventing equipment failure or decline will increase efficiency, reliability, and provide a safe environment for the public.

Boardmembers commended Mr. DeWald, Mr. Harris, and Mr. Purcell for the thorough presentation and for providing such high quality maintenance throughout the City. Boardmember Van Hollebeke added that the parks are an extension of people's homes and their home value. People take pride in parks and open spaces because the City takes pride in these areas.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke inquired how the extensive MMP helped staff manage the budget during the recession. Mr. Foran explained the various ways the MPP was utilized during the recession. For example, Mr. Harris noted that flower plantings were eliminated, restroom service was reduced, etc.

**Motion by Vice-Chair Evans and second by Boardmember Kumar to endorse the Maintenance Management Plan, and the Structural Operations as part of the Parks & Community Services Department accreditation process. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).**

*Break: 7:45-7:50 p.m.*

Mr. Parker explained that the Recreation Program Plan works in concert with other key Parks & Community Services documents, including the Parks & Open Space System Plan and the Human Services Needs Update to convey the department's functions in providing parks, recreation and community services to Bellevue residents. The policy bases for these functions are established in the Bellevue Comprehensive Plan and the Parks & Community Services Strategic Plan. The goals of the Recreation Plan are to:

- Ensure recreation opportunities for all residents.
- Place special emphasis on teens, youth, older adults, persons with disabilities, and those with limited opportunities for recreation.
- Use a collective impact service delivery model with other community recreation providers.
- Promote full utilization of the park system.
- Build a healthy community.
- Understand and plan for future recreation needs.

Some of the updates that were made to the 2015 Recreation Plan include:

- Cultural Competence was added as a new Guiding Principle.
- A goal focused on partnerships and coordination was modified to better incorporate the Collective Impact model.
- An Implementation Strategy has been added that encourages flexibilities in programming to meet evolving community need.
- The City's involvement in the Eastside Pathways initiative was highlighted.

- An updated inventory of public, private and non-profit recreation service providers was included.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke questioned if the City plans for safe, unstructured play for youth. Mr. Smith clarified that the Parks and Open Space Plan addresses creating a safe place for kids to play. This issue was also addressed in the *Last Child in the Woods* book by Richard Louv. Vice-Chair Evans concurred about the need for unstructured plan and commented that unstructured play promotes creativity, while structured play brings people together.

**Motion by Vice-Chair Evans and second by Boardmember Kumar to endorse the 2015 Recreation Plan. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).**

#### B. Comprehensive Plan Update

Based upon the comments received at the joint Comprehensive Plan meeting, Mr. Parker questioned if Boardmembers would like to add any additional information to the Comprehensive Plan. Boardmember Heath responded that his table group from the Comprehensive Plan meeting suggested that a mechanism be included to study achievements and lessons learned from other jurisdictions.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke inquired how the notes from the joint Comprehensive Plan meeting are being utilized. Mr. Parker explained that all of the documents are being compiled. If there are repeat messages or common themes identified in the notes, then this information is extracted to determine the proper way to utilize the information. Boardmember Van Hollebeke noted that his Comprehensive Plan table group had several people emphasize the importance of connections between various parts of the Comprehensive Plan (i.e., Parks to Arts; Transportation to Parks, etc.).

Vice-Chair Evans explained that the policy statements included in the Comprehensive Plan are written from the property owner's perspective. Yet, the perspective of the commuter that cannot afford to live in Bellevue is not considered. He thinks the plan is lacking the perspective of the 30,000+ people that commute to Bellevue each day. He also would like to see more information included in the Plan about public transportation and affordable housing.

**Motion by Boardmember Van Hollebeke and second by Boardmember Heath to extend the meeting until 8:35 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).**

When discussing park placement, Boardmember Heath questioned if the City should consider worker opinions (i.e., commuters) about where parks should be placed or only taxpayer opinions. He added that there are a lot of assumptions made that aren't necessarily supported by consumer actions.

10. **BOARDMEMBER COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS:**

No report.

11. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Future agenda items

Chair Grindeland requested that an update be provided regarding Eastside Pathways and Youth Link University.

Mr. Foran informed Boardmembers that they will be presented with park renaming options for Bovee Park at the next Board meeting.

Boardmember Van Hollebeke requested a public outreach update regarding Meydenbauer Beach Park.

12. **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:**

A. CIP Project Status Report

B. Memo from Patrick Foran re Old Bellevue Parking

C. Letter from Thor Gray (student)

D. Email from Kim re Bellevue Youth Theatre

13. **INFORMATION:**

A. List of upcoming Parks special events

B. Next regular Park Board meeting—April 14, 2015, Bellevue City Hall

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

None.

15. **ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion by Boardmember Van Hollebeke and second by Boardmember Powell to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).**