

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

Tuesday
October 9, 2018
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E-113
Bellevue, Washington

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Kumar, Vice-Chair Trescases, Boardmembers Clark, Hamilton, Heath¹, Synn², Unger

COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT: Councilmember Robertson

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Betsy Anderson, Shelley Brittingham, Patrick Foran, Nancy Harvey, Emil King (Community Development), Glenn Kost, Shelley McVein, Camron Parker, Dustin Van Nieulande, Siri Nelson (Pacific Science Center), Curt Warber (KC Parks & Rec)

OTHERS PRESENT: Jeri Albertini, Ann Breese, Marcia Edwards, Ashley Kaiser, Lydia Lauer, Santiago Naranjo, Pearl Nardella, Carol Postell, Candy Roy, Dwight Schrag, Ryan Scott, Robert & Marilyn Shay, Sue Thomas

MINUTES TAKER: Michelle Cash

1. **CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kumar at 6:01 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Motion by Boardmember Hamilton and second by Boardmember Synn to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Vice-Chair Trescases and second by Boardmember Unger to approve the August 13, 2018 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Motion by Boardmember Unger and second by Vice-Chair Trescases to approve the September 11, 2018 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

¹ Departed at 8:09 p.m.

² Departed at 7:45 p.m.

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

Sue Thomas

12635 NE 2nd Street, Bellevue, WA

Ms. Thomas does not want the fieldhouse located in Wilburton Hill Park. She explained that when the School District held meetings regarding the new elementary school on Main Street, no one imagined the large scale facility that is there today. She does not think that the illustrations of the proposed fieldhouse properly depict the size and scale of the facility, not to mention the necessary additional parking.

Ms. Thomas believes that the BGCB has deep pocket donors and is not short on funding. She does not want the fieldhouse located in Wilburton Hill Park that tax payer dollars have funded.

Ms. Thomas views the Wilburton Hill Park as a jewel to the community and stated that it should not be defaced with an added sports facility and parking. She urged Boardmembers to keep Wilburton Hill Park as is.

Ashley Kaiser, President/Wilburton Community Association (WCA)

12927 SE 6th Pl., Bellevue, WA

On behalf of the Wilburton Community Association, Ms. Kaiser stated that most Wilburton residents do not support a proposed fieldhouse at Wilburton Hill Park. An electric poll was conducted of Wilburton residents with 112 respondents. In this poll 74% oppose the project and 15% were in support of the project. In a smaller paper poll of 31 respondents, 48% oppose the project, while 42% support the project.

Ms. Kaiser explained that the Wilburton community values the BGCB's many meaningful contributions; however, the community raised the following concerns about locating the fieldhouse at Wilburton Hill Park:

- Loss of wooded park land
- Increased traffic in Wilburton, especially along 124th Avenue NE and north/south cut-through traffic)
- Loss of park land to any structures
- Potential need for additional parking, which would destroy more green space
- Intensification of park usage, causing degradation of the quiet, neighborhood feel of the park

The WCA feels that the proposed fieldhouse would significantly change the Wilburton Hill Park's character and adversely impact the human and ecological services that the park currently provides. They urge the city to concentrate the placement of new structures on already developed spaces rather than on Wilburton Hill Park's natural areas. Ms. Kaiser added that Wilburton residents have yet to hear evidence of a significant, unmet need for the fieldhouse that would justify a large structure on public park lands, especially in a park located in a residential neighborhood already burdened by traffic.

The Parks & Community Services Board approved these meeting minutes on November 27, 2018.

Ms. Kaiser urged staff to spend time and money on plans to preserve the public forests and playfields, not on plans to redevelop them into structures.

Ryan Scott, Boys & Girls Clubs of Bellevue (BGCB)
209 100th Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA

On behalf of the BGCB, Mr. Scott explained that the fieldhouse concept arose from the increased need for recreational activities for kids. Gym and field time are at a premium for the current facilities. There is also an explosion of highly competitive sports programs adding more demand on these facilities. Mr. Scott clarified that the BGCB asked the Parks Board to evaluate the fieldhouse concept. He added that there are a lot of critical issues to address and understand. The BGCB wants to find an effective partnership to provide year-round activities for families in Bellevue.

Dwight Schrag
1106 108th Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Schrag asked Boardmembers to encourage City Council to include improvement of Ashwood Park in the next budget cycle. With the explosive population in Bellevue, it will be difficult to stop a building developer from taking over this park if it is not fully developed as intended. Mr. Schrag expressed his frustration about the timing of development of Ashwood Park and the park's condition.

Robert Shay
610 123rd Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA

In regards to the proposed fieldhouse project, Mr. Shay expressed his support of the project but opposed the fieldhouse being located at Wilburton Hill Park for reasons stated by other Wilburton community members. He called attention to the Bellevue School District property, near Wilburton Hill Park, as an ideal location for the fieldhouse.

Carol Postell
12641 NE 7th Street, Bellevue, WA

Ms. Postell explained that introducing the fieldhouse project at the Wilburton community picnic was very preemptive. She expressed her frustration that Council was unaware of the project as well and that the process has been less than transparent.

Ms. Postell agreed with Mr. Shay that the Bellevue School District property should be evaluated for the fieldhouse.

There were 13 community members that stood in support of their concerns and opposition to a fieldhouse being located at Wilburton Hill Park.

5. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:**

Councilmember Robertson welcomed Boardmember Unger to the Board. She also provided the following update on Council projects:

- Working on the city's budget
- Authorized commencement of neighborhood area planning update, this includes outreach and remaking area plans
- The city recently won an award for the city's robust and comprehensive website

Councilmember Robertson explained that development of Ashwood Park has been on the priority list; however, this project has been delayed in the past due to workload demands. The park is in need of an updated master plan, which is scheduled in late 2018 or 2019. Mr. Foran added that the projects at Downtown Park, Meydenbauer Park, and Surrey Downs Park have been extremely time consuming for staff. Development of Ashwood Park will remain on the priority list until the project is complete.

Boardmember Unger inquired if there are interim improvements that can be made at Ashwood Park until the park is fully improved (i.e., park benches).

6. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

No report.

7. **BOARD COMMUNICATION:**

Boardmember Unger visited the northeast corner of Downtown Park and is anxious for the project to begin. She also attended the Kelsey Creek Farm Fair and was impressed by the community engagement at the event.

Boardmember Clark visited Downtown Park and attended the Kelsey Creek Farm Fair. He also visited Goddard Mini Park.

Boardmember Hamilton visited the Crossroads Community Center and commended Vicki Drake for her leadership at the facility. Chair Kumar encouraged Boardmembers to volunteer at the Thanksgiving Dinner or Holiday event at Crossroads Community Center.

Boardmember Synn's wife is taking the Bellevue Essentials course and he spoke very highly of this program.

Boardmember Heath called attention to the October 1 City Council meeting, noting the conduct at the meeting made him sad. He explained that it is sad that people only attend the meetings

when they are upset about something. Boardmember Heath stressed the importance of changing communication patterns with neighborhoods and the importance of proactively communicating.

Boardmember Heath expressed his support for a facility that hosts both a men's homeless shelter and a community pool. He cited the four acres near I-405 as a favorable location.

Vice-Chair Trescases participated in the Bellevue Downtown Association tour of Santa Monica. She was amazed that Santa Monica's Central Park was sparsely used. Vice-Chair Trescases discussed some of the design elements at the park that made the park appear more enclosed and less inviting. She also discussed the ambassador program that is utilized throughout Santa Monica parks that serves a role to help with the homeless population.

8. **CHAIR COMMUNICATION & DISCUSSION:**

Chair Kumar attended the Kelsey Creek Farm Fair. She encouraged inclusion of more food trucks at next year's farm fair. Chair Kumar also visited Tam O'Shanter Park.

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

No reports.

10. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. **MSEEC and Pacific Science Center Update**

Ms. Nelson discussed the hands-on, experiential environmental education that the Pacific Science Center has provided for 25 years. Since 1993, there have been approximately 250,000 program participants, with 14,000 program participants in 2017-2018. The preK-12 programming focuses on STEM learning, inspiring curiosity and building connections with nature and the community.

Mr. Van Nieulande reviewed the milestones for the MSEEC, which included:

- 25 years of onsite programming
- Halfway through 20-year Joint Use Agreement, which was signed with Pacific Science Center in Autumn 2008
- First Pacific Science Center program at Mercer Slough Nature Park: October 1993 in the Sullivan House, moved from Downtown Park

Mr. Van Nieulande also discussed the new interactive, interpretive exhibits that were installed in the Visitor's Center. Planning for these exhibits began in 2012 and was eventually delivered in August, 2018. Mr. Van Nieulande also discussed an idea to utilize an area designated for a classroom building to instead be used to build an outdoor classroom. This would be used jointly by the Pacific Science Center and the City of Bellevue for programming, as well as a place for

public use during non-programming hours. Mr. Foran clarified that costs and an operational partnership would need to be explored in order to complete the outdoor classroom.

Ms. Nelson invited Boardmembers to attend the MSEEC 25th Anniversary Open House on October 20, 2018.

B. Boys & Girls Clubs of Bellevue's Fieldhouse Proposal

Mr. Foran explained that the BGCB has proposed entering into a partnership with the city that would allow them to fund design, construction, maintenance and operation of an athletic fieldhouse on city property, similar to the city's gymnasium partnership at Hidden Valley Park. He added that community use of the facility would be a collaboration between the BGCB and the city with each party providing programs unique to their respective program goals.

Mr. Foran noted that the fieldhouse concept was introduced to the Wilburton community at their recent neighborhood picnic. City Council was briefed at their October 1, 2018 Council meeting regarding the BGCB proposal to develop a fieldhouse in the City of Bellevue. Council then directed the Parks & Community Services Board to establish a process to review the proposal, including site analysis, and staff is to prepare a management brief outlining this process for Council. The Board has been directed to engage the public, provide opportunities for feedback, and deliver a recommendation to the Council regarding this proposal.

Boardmember Hamilton asked when the fieldhouse concept was first introduced. Mr. Foran explained that the partnership with the BGCB is somewhat iterative. However, the fieldhouse project was first introduced in 2017. Mr. Foran also reviewed the typical structure of a BGCB partnership and clarified that the fieldhouse partnership is with the BGCB and is not dependent on a specific site location (i.e., Wilburton Hill Park).

Boardmember Heath expressed his confusion about the fieldhouse project since he understood Council's direction from the October 1, 2018 Council meeting to specifically target Wilburton Hill Park.

Councilmember Robertson discussed the city's history with partnerships and the benefits to the community. She also reiterated the need for more indoor facilities. She clarified that the overall goal is to have the Parks Board and staff create an open and transparent dialogue with the community to study the proposed fieldhouse project.

Boardmember Heath asked if Council or staff have any plans to notify the other neighborhoods that are identified as potential fieldhouse locations. Councilmember Robertson clarified that the scope and process must first be identified before communities are notified. Boardmember Heath expressed his frustration with the vague communication process.

Mr. Kost highlighted the key question for the fieldhouse project, which is: *Should the city continue to explore a partnership with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Bellevue (BGCB) that allows the BGCB to construct and operate a fieldhouse in a public park, and if so, under what circumstances.* Specific Council direction included:

The Parks & Community Services Board approved these meeting minutes on November 27, 2018.

- Establish a process to review the proposal.
- If approved by Council, conduct further analysis, including community engagement and site analysis.
- Recommend to Council whether to continue exploring the partnership, and if so, under what circumstances.
- Define the scope and process

Mr. Kost reviewed the fieldhouse concept, potential uses, facility size comparisons, common interests, and legal and regulatory requirements.

Vice-Chair Trescases inquired if Wilburton Hill Park is a neighborhood or community park. Mr. Kost clarified that the park is a community park.

Some of the concerns/issues to explore include:

- Need/public benefit
- Facility uses
- Traffic and parking impacts
- Environmental impacts
- Site alternatives

Boardmember Synn expressed his appreciation for the city's incredible track record of stewardship and the methodical thought process on partnerships.

Boardmember Heath asked if there has been any consideration given to non-park spaces for the fieldhouse location. Mr. Kost responded that there has been brief consideration but nothing formal. Boardmember Heath also called attention to the discussions at last month's Parks Board meeting regarding the aquatic facility. He recalled that the two locations being contemplated for the aquatic facility were Wilburton Hill Park and Bellevue College. Mr. Kost clarified that there haven't been discussions about considering Wilburton Hill Park for the aquatic facility but the Grand Connection area is a consideration, along with other locations. Boardmember Heath encouraged Boardmembers to view the October 1, 2018 Council meeting online video.

Boardmember Clark requested clarification about the fieldhouse location, since he didn't see Wilburton Hill Park as the chosen site in the Board packet. Mr. Parker clarified that the goal is to first define the project.

C. Eastside Rail Corridor

Mr. Warber discussed the Wilburton segment of the Eastside Rail Corridor, which runs from I-90 north through Bellevue to 108th Avenue NE. He noted that the Eastside Rail Corridor Master Plan was completed about two years ago, and now the project is transitioning into the design phase. The next phase of the major capital projects includes the I-405 crossing in partnership with WSDOT, as well as the Wilburton Trestle and NE 8th Street crossing. The trestle work and NE 8th crossing are dependent upon the new King County Parks Levy in 2019.

Vice-Chair Trescases asked if there will be historic interpretation for the trestle. Mr. Warber responded that there will be.

Motion by Boardmember Unger and second by Vice-Chair Trescases to extend the meeting until 8:45 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Councilmember Robertson asked if the Eastside Rail Corridor will include a connection to the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway Trail. Mr. Warber explained that improvements will be made for this connection in the short-term and there are longer-term plans to build a new bridge, which would provide a direct connection for people using the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway Trail. However, the bridge project is currently not funded.

Boardmember Clark called attention to information included in the meeting packet that discussed the corridor as being “rail-banked.” Mr. Warber clarified that the corridor has several easements and by federal law must be preserved as a continuous route; there is the potential for reactivation of the corridor for freight rail under certain circumstances.

Ms. Anderson discussed the benefits to Bellevue parks and trails from the Eastside Rail Corridor. She added that this corridor will connect many significant origins and destinations within the city and regionally. There will be many areas throughout the community that will benefit from the connectivity.

11. **NEW BUSINESS:**

None.

12. **PROPOSED AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:**

No discussion.

13. **OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:**

- A. CIP Project Status Report
- B. 2018 Well-KEPT Program Brief
- C. Letter and attachments re Ashwood Park from Dwight and Mary Schrag
- D. List of upcoming Parks special events

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

Robert Shay

610 123rd Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA

Having served on countless community boards and commissions that the City Council has convened, Mr. Shay expressed his disappointment for the lack of transparency with the fieldhouse proposal. Mr. Shay feels that when the BGCB presented the idea to the city in 2017, the community should have been notified. He requested that full transparency occur from this point forward.

Motion by Boardmember Clark and second by Boardmember Hamilton to extend the meeting until 8:50 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Santiago Naranjo

11800 SE 4th Pl., #200, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Naranjo expressed his appreciation for the benefits the BGCB has provided to the community. He clarified that the Wilburton community is nervous because of the narrow scope of the project and lack of communication. If the scope is broader, then all possibilities and alternatives should be explored.

Councilmember Robertson clarified that there has not been extensive behind the scenes work conducted on the fieldhouse project.

Boardmember Hamilton expressed his appreciation to Council for recently forwarding the fieldhouse project to the Parks Board. He looks forward to exploring this project in further detail.

15. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Boardmember Clark and second by Boardmember Unger to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).