CITY OF BELLEVUE
PARKS & COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday
February 12, 2008
6:00 p.m.

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

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT: Vice-Chair Bennett, Boardmembers Aron, Karle, Maxim

BOARDMEMBERS ABSENT: Chair Keeney, Boardmembers Henrickson, Roland

COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT: John Chelminiak

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Shelley Brittingham, Patrick Foran, Nancy Harvey, Paul Inghram (PCD), Glenn Kost, Jerry Nissley, Terry Smith, Scott Vander Hyden, Jon Wilson

OTHERS PRESENT: Malia Alexander, Earl Anderson, Dick Applestone, Nell Applestone, Betsy Blackstock, Ruth Chaus, Bob Cromwell, Anne Davis, Bill Easterbrook, Carol Easterbrook, Udell Fresk, Neil Huber, Denis Johnson, Anna Littlewood, Carolyn Maxim, Bill Miller, Andy Mitton, David Plummer, Jim Pratt, Joe Rosmann, Bonnie Renn, Dan Renn, Hal Scott, Jo Scott, Mark Walsen

MINUTES TAKER: Michelle Cash

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Bennett at 6:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion by Boardmember Maxim and second by Boardmember Aron to approve the meeting agenda. Motion carried unanimously (4–0).

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Boardmember Karle and second by Boardmember Maxim to approve the January 8, 2008 Meeting Minutes of the Parks & Community Services Board as presented. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Bob Cromwell, 21333 SE 35th Way, Sammamish, WA

Mr. Cromwell is the Co-President of the Bellevue Botanical Garden Society (BBGS). In addition, he was on the Task Force that participated in updating the Master Plan. The Board of the BBGS supports and endorses the Master Plan Update. The BBGS's principle concern is balancing the need for additional facilities to satisfy society goals in the future, while preserving the peaceful and sensitive nature of the Garden. The BBGS Board has thoroughly reviewed the Master Plan Update and feels it strikes an optimal balance. The BBGS offers its fullest support.

Bill Miller, 10015 NE 4th St., #4004, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Miller is a current Boardmember and Former Chair of the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club (BB&GC). Mr. Miller was also the Capital Campaign Chair for the Capital Campaign that helped contribute to the South Bellevue Community Center. In addition, Mr. Miller is a small business owner. The BB&GC is very interested in the opportunities available at the Surrey Downs project. Mr. Miller favors Scheme #3 for Surrey Downs. If the Parks Board supports a community center, the BB&GC would offer a capital contribution to support the center.

Earl Anderson, 2304 Killarney Way, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Anderson expressed his support for development of the BBG.

Dick Applestone, 319 – 111th Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Applestone has been a Surrey Downs resident since 1959. He complimented Mr. Vander Hyden and the Parks staff for the positive approach and clear choices regarding Surrey Downs. Mr. Applestone supports Scheme #2 for Surrey Downs. He cited the reasons why he feels this is the best option and also discussed his reasons for not supporting Schemes #3 and #4. Mr. Appleston feels the City has failed to provide adequate facilities and field resources in West Bellevue, which has caused contention for the limited resources.

Udell Fresk, 11275 NE 37th Pl., Bellevue, WA

Ms. Fresk is a volunteer at the BBG. She envisions a 200 person seating capacity in a visitor center on the east side of the Garden. However, she feels parking is an issue and does not feel managed or shared parking should be an option. She said that if she battles with parking issues at the Garden, she will be forced to stop volunteering.

Jim Pratt, 6517 – 153rd Pl. SE, Bellevue, WA

On behalf of the Bellevue Youth Theatre Foundation, Mr. Pratt requested that boardmembers consider further BYT programs when planning new community facilities, in particular at Surrey Downs. Mr. Pratt discussed the BYT programs and the heavy usage of the current facilities.

Malia Alexander, 257 – 100th Ave., Bellevue, WA

Ms. Alexander is a student at the University of Washington and a concerned community member. She requested that the Board consider a full-sized community center in the Surrey Downs area. In particular, she would like the facility to include BYT programs. She feels intergenerational connections are important and Surrey Downs could offer this link. Ms. Alexander encouraged Boardmembers to involve the youth community with Board activities and decisions.

David Plummer, 14414 NE 14th Pl., Bellevue, WA

Mr. Plummer suggested that the existing plan for the Bel-Red Subarea is adequate in its present form and urged Boardmembers to reject the staff's proposed Master Plan. Mr. Plummer reviewed the many reasons for his rejection recommendation.

Neil Huber, 12624 SE 4th Place, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Huber is a frequent user of the BBG and Wilburton Hill Park. He requested more time to review the proposed alternatives for the BBG Master Plan Update. Mr. Huber would like a staff member to follow-up on his request.

Hal Scott, 360 – 123rd Place, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Scott requested more time to review the BBG Master Plan Update. He feels the Master Plan is concentrating too much on structure and not enough on the Garden.

Anna Littlewood, 9433 NE 1st Street, Bellevue, WA

Ms. Littlewood would like discussions to take place between the community, City, and BBGS regarding timelines for the BBG project. She feels the community is not ready to move forward on the BBG Master Plan. It is apparent to her that a Visitor's Center is needed. Ms. Littlewood recommended that the City keep the momentum with the Update.

Carolyn Maxim, 12405 NE 2nd Street, Bellevue, WA

Ms. Maxim does not see compelling evidence for the public's demand for a larger Visitor's Center or parking area at the BBG. She asked the Board to revise the Master Plan to include smaller buildings, more retention of greenery, and protection of natural resources. She commended staff for the courteousness and thorough responses; however, she thinks a new policy direction is needed by the Parks Board.

5. CHAIR COMMUNICATION:

None.

6. BOARD COMMUNICATION:

None.

7. CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS:

Councilmember Chelminiak reported that the City Council would like to move forward for a bond issue for 2008.

Since Councilmember Marshall recently resigned from the City Council, a search is being conducted for her replacement. Councilmember Chelminiak discussed the various candidates being considered for the position.

8. CONSENT ITEMS:

None.

9. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:

A. Bellevue Botanical Garden Master Plan Update

Mr. Kost reminded Boardmembers that the BBG Master Plan is an update. In addition, he discussed the process that has taken place for the update. There have been community meetings, a website with updated information, and various other meetings conducted.

There are five key changes to the Master Plan Update, which Mr. Kost reviewed. They are as follows:

- Larger visitor center facilities.
- Expanded parking lot.
- Expanded/relocated maintenance facilities.
- Relocate the Eastern Garden.
- Added features.

Mr. Vander Hyden reviewed the key planning issues and task force recommendations. They are as follows:

- Sharps Cabin relocation.
- Maintenance facility location.
- Wilburton acquisition property use.
- Parking needs and access.
- Main Street frontage and Garden entrance.
- Public access and Lake-to-Lake Trail connection.
- Accessibility.
- Tree house/overlook.
- Eastern Garden sequence.
- Technology in the Garden.
- The Perennial Borders.

Mr. Vander Hyden explained the Visitor Center concept, which is a cluster of three different structures. Since various programming occurs at the Garden, it seemed most logical to break-up the facilities. In addition, the terrain of the Garden was discussed.

The current size of the BBG was discussed. Mr. Maxim asked if the recently acquired Wilburton Property was considered part of the Botanical Garden. Mr. Kost explained that the property between the rest of Wilburton Hill Park and the BBG does not have a distinct boundary line, and that the property lines are intentionally blurred to avoid having the property "assigned" to the garden. Boardmember Maxim stated that if he had known that the acquired 17-acres between the Park and BBG was going to be identified as BBG property, he would not have supported the decision. He criticized the fact that the Master Plan Task Force did not have participants from the community. Furthermore, Boardmember Maxim feels the designs are what the BBGS wants, not what the community envisions. Mr. Vander Hyden clarified that much of the 17-acres between the BBG and Wilburton Hill Park is considered wetland and will not be developed. Boardmember Maxim suggested specifics about the site and buildings should come before the Park Board rather than the decisions being made between the Task Force and the City.

Mr. Maxim asked about the rationale behind the recommendation to eliminate the pedestrian access from the west end of the garden. Boardmember Maxim is concerned that if there is one entrance/exit to the Garden, it will create the potential for admission charges to be applied. He is against this type of concept. Mr. Vander Hyden clarified that the reason for the recommendation is to add a greater degree of security to the plant collections, and that charging admission is not the City's intention.

Boardmember Karle expressed his support of the proposed Master Plan Update. In particular, he likes the idea of moving the entrance and the maintenance location.

Boardmember Aron inquired how much Garden space would be lost due to the Plan revisions. He added that the entire tone of the Park may be changed due to the increase in building space.

Mr. Kost reviewed the increase in new facility space and the parking lot vision. He added that no changes should occur philosophically. Boardmember Maxim is opposed to increasing parking spaces at this time. He feels no need has been demonstrated for additional parking. Boardmember Maxim recently visited similar facilities and compared parking spaces. The following were his findings:

- UW Graham Visitor's Center Arboretum – 62 parking spaces, including overflow
- Volunteer Park Asian Museum and Conservatory – 85 parking spaces
- UW Urban Horticulture Center – 52 parking spaces

Boardmember Maxim is opposed to adding any additional parking spaces. Mr. Kost clarified that the additional parking spaces are not needed immediately. However the additional spaces should be included in the Master Plan Update as part of the long-term vision for the garden. Boardmember Maxim is opposed to adding additional parking spaces if they are not currently needed.

Boardmember Maxim reviewed his research from comparing other meeting facilities. The following were his findings:

- UW Graham Visitor's Center Arboretum – 1,100 sq. ft. room/seating for 80 people
- Volunteer Park Asian Museum and Conservatory – seating for 95 people
- UW Urban Horticulture Center – no meeting facility.

Some of the facilities above are rented for other functions (e.g., weddings). Boardmember Maxim would like a facility no larger than the UW Graham Visitor's Center Arboretum. Mr. Vander Hyden summarized the facility space that would be designated for meetings, which is approximately 1,500 square feet. Boardmember Maxim would like it no larger than 1,100 square feet, like the Graham Visitor's Center.

Regarding the proposed additional pieces to the park (i.e., tree houses, suspension bridge, etc.), Boardmember Maxim is concerned that BBG Society is creating a "Disneyland" of ideas with these concepts. In addition, he recalls that there have been rules in the past that specify Parks are not to be named for anyone that is currently living. However, he recalls that there are currently pavilions and similar spots within the Garden that have donors' names. He is concerned that the BBG could become a park for the rich and does not want the money to be very obvious (i.e., a donor's name being place on the suspension bridge or a tree house).

Motion by Boardmember Aron and second by Boardmember Maxim to defer any recommendations regarding the Bellevue Botanical Garden Master Plan Update until a future meeting. Motion carried unanimously (4–0).

Break 7:35 -7:38 p.m.

B. Surrey Downs Park Master Plan

Mr. Kost discussed the process that has taken place for the Surrey Downs Park Master Plan. There have been community meetings, a website with updated information, and various other meetings conducted. Mr. Kost noted that there are two unusual aspects to this particular Master Plan process:

- Bellevue Boys & Girls Club has expressed an interest in partnering with the City to construct a community center at Surrey Downs.
- Surrey Downs Community Club is actively participating in the planning process. There is a Surrey Downs Park Committee that has been actively providing feedback.

In addition to the community meetings, Mr. Kost noted that approximately 150 comments have been received regarding the master planning process.

Andy Mitton, The Berger Partnership, reviewed some of the program elements that are being studied for Surrey Downs Park. The ultimate goal of the study is to test the site capacity. There were four schemes presented. The common element within all of the schemes is a sports field. Additional common scheme elements include:

- Historic hazelnut grove.
- An intuitive park entrance.

- Loop trail around the park.
- Structured playground.
- Opportunities for environmental play.
- Gathering areas for picnics.
- Open lawn and meadow spaces.

Mr. Kost summarized some of the feedback received for the various schemes. He noted that there wasn't much support for Scheme #4. However, there was mixed-support for Schemes #1, #2, and #3.

Boardmember Maxim recommended keeping lights/sound out of the Surrey Downs Park area in consideration of the neighbors. In addition, he favored keeping the filberts and liked the lawn configuration in Scheme #3. However, he overall prefers the configuration in Scheme #2. The community center sizes throughout the community were discussed.

Boardmember Karle attended one of the recent community meetings and felt that there was a strong representation from the BB&GC and not as strong of a representation from local community members. Boardmember Karle would like to know the demographics of the meeting attendees. In addition, he questioned what portion of the site is paved and/or has buildings currently placed on the property.

Boardmember Maxim questioned if the proposed number of parking spaces are necessary. There was a general discussion on the potential users of the park and parking usage at other community centers.

Vice-Chair Bennett expressed her favoritism toward a community center for local residents and youth. She commended the BB&GC for their programs at the South Bellevue Community Center.

There was general consensus to eliminate Scheme #4 from consideration.

There will be another community meeting in March or April. Mr. Kost clarified that at the end of the Master Planning process, the goal is to identify the park and park's uses. The goal of the Master Plan is not to identify the building users and programming.

Mr. Foran stressed the importance of indoor programmatic community needs for a building facility.

C. Bel-Red Corridor Plan

Mr. Kost reported that the specific items addressed in the previous meetings regarding the Bel-Red Corridor Plan have been revised/inserted into the Draft. The following additional changes were made:

Boardmember Maxim corrected Page 47 of the Board packet, paragraph 3, first sentence should read: *"The Subarea Plan envisions a park system with an array of elements that cannot be neatly summarized in a suburban level of service standard…"*

Vice-Chair Bennett corrected Page 48 of the Board packet, Item S-BR-E4, second sentence should read: *"The system will emphasize recreation use, and provide transportation benefits as well:"*

Boardmember Maxim corrected Page 48 of the Board packet, Item S-BR-E4, first sentence should read: *"Provide an interconnected system of non-motorized trails for mobility within the study area, connected to the larger, regional trail system, including Marymoor and Bridle Trails."*

Boardmember Aron corrected Page 44 of the Board packet, paragraph 4, second sentence should read: *"Restoring 50 to 100 feet in width of natural streamside vegetation that incorporates…"*

In addition, Boardmember Aron corrected Page 64 of the Board packet, second bullet, should read: *"The Environment section that embraces the concept of restoring 50 to 100 feet in width of natural streamside vegetation…"*

Motion by Boardmember Maxim and second by Boardmember Karle to recommend support for adopting the park and open space elements of the Subarea Plan and endorse the Draft Letter with the revisions noted above. Motion carried unanimously (4–0).

Mr. Kost reviewed the goal for the parks system for the Bel-Red Corridor. He highlighted the key features of the policy. In addition, Mr. Kost pointed out the regional connections to the parks system, stream corridors, and to the downtown area. He stressed the importance of having the Bel-Red Corridor connection to the downtown area. Currently, the connection from the Bel-Red Corridor to downtown is proposed to be via NE 12th, although this route could change.

Some of the elements for the parks system include mini-parks, trailheads, and gateways, which Mr. Kost reviewed. He also discussed the four stream/riparian corridors.

The Bel-Red Corridor area is suitable for a major recreational facility. Mr. Kost reviewed this concept as well as the neighborhood parks, community parks, and trail corridors.

A level of service comparison was demonstrated in relation to the existing Bel-Red corridor versus the proposed Bel-Red corridor.

Boardmember Aron called attention to Mr. Plummer's letter, Comment #5, clarifying under the Endangered Species Act, a cost-benefit analysis is irrelevant. Mr. Inghram reviewed the many benefits to the area, including to the salmon. Several of the improvements/benefits would be difficult to quantify.

Overall, boardmembers were pleased with the presentation and thought the speaking points were right on track.

10. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Foran called attention to a recent article in the *Seattle Times* regarding Wrap Around Services. Mr. Smith will forward the article to Boardmembers.

11. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Boardmember committee/liaison reports

Boardmember Karle recently visited San Jose and San Diego to review the transit systems. He shared his thoughts regarding both systems.

12. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Future agenda items

13. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:

A. Staff Reports

B. CIP Project Report

C. Memo from Patrick Foran to City Council re Robinswood Tennis Center

D. Memo from Park Board to City Council re Potential Parks Voter Initiative

E. Memo from Terry Smith to Park Board re Open Public Meetings Act

F. Memo from Robin Cole and Mike Bergstrom to Park Board re Meydenbauer Bay Park & Land Use Plan Status

G. Letter from Kathy Haggart to Park Board re Surrey Downs Park Master Plan

H. Letter from Dennis Johnson to Park Board re Surrey Downs Park Master Plan

I. Letter from Bill Miller to Park Board re Surrey Downs Park Master Plan

J. Letter from Eric Anderson to Park Board re Surrey Downs Park Master Plan

14. INFORMATION:

A. List of upcoming Parks special events

B. March 11, 2008 – next Park Board meeting

15. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ruth Chaus, 13208 -68th Pl. NE, Kirkland, WA

Ms. Chaus is a former intern and current volunteer at the BBG. She noted that there are approximately 1,400 members. She advocated for the larger Visitor's Center size, which was recommended in the Master Plan Update, rather than a smaller scaled facility. In addition, she would like a growing area included in the maintenance facility. Lastly, Ms. Chaus reported that the perennial border changes have not been agreed upon by all Garden members. She suggested that Parks Boardmembers not approve this portion of the Master Plan Update until the BBGS Board and the Perennial Border Committee can come to an agreement.

Motion by Boardmember Maxim and second by Boardmember Aron to extend the meeting until 9:15 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

Jo Scott, 360 – 123rd Place, Bellevue, WA

Ms. Scott expressed concerns with the business model being used for the BBG Master Plan Update. Ms. Scott requested copies of policy statements and would like to know how the governance works with the BBG. She would like a larger public meeting so the City can gain further community input.

Mark Walsen, 317 – 109th Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Walsen lives in the Surrey Downs neighborhood and has been active in the Bellevue Youth Theatre. He strongly encouraged boardmembers to consider programming at Surrey Downs Park in conjunction with the overall planning process. Mr. Walsen feels the programming, facilities, and parking are highly integrated. He also expressed his favoritism for a medium-sized, multi-generational community center.

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

Ms. Blackstock serves on the Surrey Downs Park Committee. She expressed her appreciation for Mr. Kost and Mr. Vander Hyden's hard work on the Surrey Downs project. She encouraged Boardmembers to identify needs for Surrey Downs that would serve the desires of the Parks Department, the community, and the Downtown Community. The Surrey Downs Park Committee appreciates Boardmembers listening to all voices regarding the Master Plan process.

Joe Rosmann, 921 – 109th Ave. SE, Bellevue, WA

Mr. Rosmann urged Boardmembers to recognize future of the changing Downtown and aging community when reviewing the Surrey Downs Park Master Plan, while protecting the concerns of the local neighbors.

Motion by Boardmember Aron and second by Boardmember Karle to extend the meeting until 9:20 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

Anne Davis, 4315 – 171st Ave. NE, Redmond, WA

Ms. Davis is concerned with the proposed gift shop placement at the BBG. She feels that placing the gift shop in a secluded area near the parking lot poses security concerns for the volunteers who work in the shop. She urged Boardmembers to reconsider the gift shop placement.

15. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Boardmember Maxim and second by Boardmember Aron to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).