



Phone: 452-5258; 452-4169
Date: February 4, 2008
To: Parks & Community Services Board
From: Glenn Kost, Scott Vander Hyden
Subject: Surrey Downs Park Master Plan
Action Requested: *Feedback on Alternative Plans*

Summary: Parks staff will review the master planning process to date and present four alternative Master Plan schemes for review at your February 12 meeting. Based on Board and community feedback we will narrow the range of options and work toward a preferred design. We hope to return to the community in March and to the Parks Board in April with a preferred option. The preferred plan will be reviewed by the Parks Board, who will present a recommendation to the City Council. After a SEPA review, the City Council will be expected to adopt the Master Plan.

Progress to-date: The planning effort is lead by the Parks & Community Services Department staff with assistance from the landscape architecture firm of The Berger Partnership. The public involvement process began November 15, 2007 with a public workshop held at Bellevue High School. Approximately 35 residents attended, mostly from the Surrey Downs neighborhood, though several representatives from the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club attended. The meeting was mainly a visioning exercise where participants were invited to dream big and to offer their hopes and desires for the park. A summary of that meeting is included in this packet. A web site questionnaire was also created to enlist community feedback, and to-date, we have received comments from over fifty residents.

The Surrey Downs Community Association is actively participating in this process, and has established a Park Advisory Committee to help provide information about the desires of the neighbors. They have also designed a survey to solicit information from the residents about their interests for the park. The Surrey Downs community has met with representatives of the Boys and Girls Club to learn more about their proposal, and is hosting a meeting to learn more about the proposal the week of February 11. Information from their survey is expected to be available in late February.

Information from the first meeting and questionnaire helped inform the park program elements and four plan alternatives that were presented at the second community workshop held on January 31 at City Hall. Nearly 140 attended this workshop, which included a general presentation by City staff and The Berger Partnership, followed by five facilitated breakout sessions. The four master plan alternatives are briefly described below, and will be described in detail at your meeting:

- **Scheme #1** – an open park design with restroom, open air shelter, two small baseball fields with a soccer overlay, pathway, playground equipment, and a surface parking lot for approximately 70 cars;
- **Scheme #2** – includes a community center building of approximately 20,000 sq ft., two small baseball fields with a soccer overlay, pathway, playground equipment, and a surface parking lot for approximately 90 cars.
- **Scheme #3** - includes a larger community center of approximately 45,000 sq ft with a structured or underground parking facility for approximately 225 cars, two baseball fields with a soccer overlay, pathway, and play elements.
- **Scheme #4** - similar sized community center except with surface parking for 225, two baseball fields with a soccer overlay, pathway, and play elements

Attachments:

- Summary of the November 15, 2007 workshop
- Bellevue Boys & Girls Club community center proposal
- Park program elements from 1/31 workshop
- Design Alternatives 1-4 from 1/31 workshop



Surrey Downs Master Plan Public Meeting #1

Thursday, November 15, 2007
7:00-9:00 p.m.
Bellevue High School

--Meeting Report--

Overview

Approximately 40 people attended the first public meeting for the Surrey Downs Master Plan. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the master planning process, describe some very preliminary ideas and concepts for the Plan, and hear from meeting participants on their visions, values, and ideas for the future of Surrey Downs Park.

Margaret Norton-Arnold, facilitator, began at 7:00 p.m. with an overview of the meeting and of the master planning process in general. This introduction was followed by words of welcome 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.

Glenn shared three pieces of information of particular relevance to the Surrey Downs community:

- 1) Although Sound Transit is considering 112th Street for a potential light rail corridor, no final decisions about the route of the new light rail line have been made. This potential route, as well as several others, is currently being evaluated through Sound Transit's Environmental Impact Statement process. The Master Plan is proceeding without consideration of light rail. A Master Plan is needed for Surrey Downs regardless of what happens in the future. Should the route along 112th Street be selected as the preferred alternative, the impacts to the park can be assessed against an adopted Master Plan. Another public process -- Best Practices for Light Rail in Bellevue -- provides a forum for public comments and concerns related to light rail.
- 2) 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 evaluated along with numerous other ideas for the future of the park. Representatives of the Boys & Girls Club have been invited to participate in this Master Planning process, and to share their ideas for this facility.
- 3) The current lease that allows King County to operate a District Court at Surrey Downs Park expires at the end of 2008, though it can be extended. The City is continuing to explore options to accommodate a court in the future, though no timetable has been established. However, the City acquired the property from King

County as a park in 2005, and therefore, the Master Plan is proceeding on the assumption that the Court operations will be moving in the relatively near future.

Presentation

Guy Michaelsen is a Principal with The Berger Partnership, the landscape architecture firm under contract to the City of Bellevue to complete the Master Plan. Guy presented his design team's assessment of the park, identifying where there may be opportunities to preserve history, add new recreational elements, or restore various elements of the park. Guy's initial ideas were shared in order to spark creativity – the remainder of the meeting was focused on hearing the ideas and concepts generated by meeting participants.

Discussion

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

- 1) Let's start with the big picture. In your opinion, how should Surrey Downs **look and feel** in the future? What is your **vision** for the park? What are the inherent **values** of Surrey Downs Park that are most important to you? What are the values you want to see cultivated in the future?
- 2) As you listened to Guy and Andy's presentation about the **outdoor** programming opportunities they see, what was your reaction? What did you like about their ideas? What did they miss? What are your ideas for outdoor programming?
- 3) As you listened to Guy and Andy's presentation about the **indoor** programming opportunities they see, what was your reaction? What did you like? What did they miss? What are your ideas for indoor programming?

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.

Look and Feel/Visions and Values

Most of those attending the meeting said it was important to maintain a **family feel** at Surrey Downs. They appreciate the **inter-generational opportunities** at the park for recreation and for family gatherings, and they want these opportunities to be further encouraged. They want to **encourage children** to play in the park, but also want to make certain that **people of all ages** feel safe, comfortable, and welcome.

Views from the park are important, and many people urged that these views be protected. One participant commented about the contrast of sitting in peaceful Surrey Downs Park and being able to view the hubbub of a bustling downtown at the same time. He felt this contrast added significant interest to the park.

The existing hazelnut groves in the park are important, not only for the vegetation they provide, but also for the sense of history they impart. A number of participants wanted the historical character of the park site to be emphasized, perhaps providing information links back to the history of the area. Several people urged that the filberts be trimmed and renovated; a couple of people also suggested the nuts could be harvested to make money for the park. One suggestion was that, if some of the existing trees must be removed because of age, those original trees be used to propagate new ones. This would ensure that the same DNA would be used, retaining a historical link to the park's past.

There was a strong emphasis on preserving the residential feel of the park. Although people want the park to have a welcoming feel, they highlighted that some 30 homes share the park border, and that there are approximately 300 homes within a 10-minute walk of the park. They do not want potential new uses to overwhelm this existing residential character. The park, they said, should not become a major destination park for the entire region. Most of those attending said Surrey Downs should cater primarily to those within a 10-minute walk or drive to the park.

That being said, however, there was also a strong emphasis at the meeting on not allowing a single use – or a single user group – to completely dominate the park. A number of participants said balance at the park was extremely important; finding the right mix of uses and landscaping to encourage a variety of visitors.

There was some disagreement on the extent of landscape buffering that should be maintained between the surrounding homes and the park property. Some attending the meeting felt extensive buffering was important. Others said surrounding homeowners should have a clear line of sight into the park in order to be able to see and report on any suspicious activities. Several of those who live next to the park said they consider it an extension of their backyards.

A number of people commented on a couple of features that contribute to the park's neighborhood feel. For example, they liked that the park is not readily visible from 112th Street – there is a sense of buffering between the park and the street. The unique access points to the park located throughout the neighborhood are also appreciated by many of those who attended the meeting.

Several attendees urged that the park be refurbished with native plantings and new landscaping that would foster a contemplative feel. Suggestions were made to add art and/or water features.

Finally, an important theme throughout many of the groups was to preserve the relaxing and peaceful character of the park. One participant noted that many of the

new condominiums in the downtown area do not offer any green space for their residents. Surrey Downs is an important place to find a green lawn and relax from the stress of the world.

Outdoor Programming

The **existing walking trail** around the perimeter of the park is an important amenity. It is used often and in a variety of ways – for exercise, dog walking, and peaceful contemplation. Virtually all of those participating in the meeting wanted to make sure this trail is well-maintained. Some suggested it could be improved through the installation of exercise “stretching posts”, benches, and/or signage related to the history of the area. Several said that even minimal signage informing users of the length of the trail would be quite helpful. A few people wondered if it would be possible to add rollerblading into the mix of uses on the trail.

For many of those attending the meeting, **linkages** between the Surrey Downs trail and other trails in the area were important. One example was a walking trail linkage between Surrey Downs and Mercer Slough.

Meeting attendees were unanimous in their support for **new restrooms** at Surrey Downs.

There was strong support for the **existing ball fields**, as well as support for those fields to be refurbished to a level that allows them to be used year-round. Numerous participants commented on the general lack of playing fields in the area for little league and other organized sports. In particular, meeting attendees wanted to ensure that younger children (pre-school, elementary, middle school) would be able to use the fields. There was **not strong support for lighted fields**, or for the types of field renovations that might turn the park into a major destination for organized sports leagues. Again, the sense of balance was an important priority – those attending the meeting wanted to make certain that programmed play fields do not become the single focus of the park.

Many of those attending wanted to ensure that there are free and open areas of play for children. They wanted to encourage **unprogrammed play** in the park. Several commented that the existing play equipment is only good for very small children, and that this play equipment should be updated for elementary school children. The suggestion was made that a tricycle area for small children be included in the mix of outdoor activities.

A number of people urged that **new picnic tables – and perhaps barbeque pits** – be installed. Again, they said, this would help to encourage inter-generational, family-oriented activities.

Many people want to ensure that Surrey Downs is a vital space for **neighborhood and community gatherings**. The picnic tables are one step in this direction, but the suggestion was also made that a number of special events could also be scheduled at the park, for example, a “hazelnut harvest festival.”

In addition to the emphasis on children, a number of those attending also urged a **greater range of outdoor activities for adults**. These might include a P-Patch, the “stretching stations” mentioned earlier, and a viewpoint designed for photographic opportunities.

Indoor Programming

Perhaps the **most controversial subject area** on November 15 was the possibility that a new Boys & Girls Club facility might be constructed at Surrey Downs. Although a number of people at the meeting were open to this idea and felt that it warranted further discussion, numerous other attendees were strongly opposed to this possibility. They worried that the presence of the Club would create extensive noise, traffic, and lighting impacts, unruly behavior, and security concerns. A couple of people specifically suggested that Wilburton Park would be a better location for the Boys & Girls Club.

That being said, however, many meeting participants conveyed a fair amount of enthusiasm for some type of a **community center** located at Surrey Downs. A number of people commented on the general lack of meeting space throughout the area, and said a new center could offer meeting rooms. Other uses people envisioned for a community center included tutoring assistance for high school students, arts and crafts classes, environmental education, a daycare, and senior activities.

Again, however, there was a strong emphasis throughout this discussion on **achieving balance** at any new community center. Attendees said it was very important to not let one activity or user group dominate the center. For example, it should not be *just* a senior center, or *just* a daycare.

There were also concerns that any new center be **appropriately scaled** for the size of the park. The indoor activities offered by a new community center should not dominate the rest of the park. Some said the community center in Lewis Creek Park is a good example of the size and type of building that could be accommodated at Surrey Downs. One comment was that, if a new center is built, it should be constructed at a lower elevation than the rest of the park, so the center would remain somewhat hidden.

Several meeting participants also suggested that **indoor basketball, volleyball, and multi-use playing courts** be added as part of a community center. The courts at South Bellevue Community Center were highlighted as good examples to follow.

There were also some concerns about the impacts a new community center could have on the park overall. **Transportation and parking capacity** and the **possibility of parking spilling over into the adjacent neighborhood** were of particular concern, and attendees wanting to make certain these issues would be adequately addressed through the master planning process. Other concerns related to a new community center included the impacts of more people in the area overall, as well as the possibility that night time noise could become an issue.

Other Comments

Some of those attending the meeting made suggestions about the current use and ongoing maintenance of the park:

- Dogs should be on-leash as the rules call for, and not allowed to roam off-leash.
- There should be more garbage cans, and an emphasis on parents making sure their children clean up after themselves at games and other events.

What Happens Next?

The Berger Partnership design team will use the ideas generated at this meeting and through the park planning website, as well as the guidance provided by the Parks' staff, to craft three Master Plan alternatives. These alternatives will be presented at a public meeting scheduled for January 31, 2008 at Bellevue City Hall. At this meeting, participants will have the opportunity to review and comment on the alternatives. That review will, in turn, guide the remainder of the master planning design process.

Those who were unable to attend the November 15 meeting can review the materials presented – and provide comments – on the Surrey Downs website:
http://www.bellevuewa.gov/surrey_downs.htm

The **Positive** Place For Kids



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF BELLEVUE

THE BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF BELLEVUE NEED YOUR HELP!

We are proposing to pay the majority of the costs to build a brand new 45,000 square foot community center and Boys & Girls Club in the 11-acre Surrey Downs Park. This would not JUST be a Boys & Girls Club, but truly a center for the community, for all ages. *(See the other side for a list of all of cool things that could happen there for kids and families)!*

Along with incredible places to work on computers, do homework, play games and have fun, our plans call for four full-size gyms! As you know, there is a shortage of gyms in our City and these would be available, not only to Boys and Girls Club members, but to all of the kids in our community! And the gyms could be used for a multitude of activities other than basketball!

We are not asking for the entire Park—just the footprint of land to build the community center. The Park fields would continue to be managed and scheduled by the City, so they would remain open to all user groups!

We need your help! The City is hosting a public meeting on Thursday, January 31st, at 7PM at Bellevue High School. This is where we need families and kids to come to this meeting and voice their support of this project, or it may never happen!

There is also a questionnaire on the City's website at www.ci.bellevue.wa.us. In the "Search" box, enter Surrey Downs and it will take you to a list and the link to the questionnaire is the first in the list. Please take a moment and let your voice be heard!



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF BELLEVUE

**Proposed New
City Community Center
and Boys & Girls Club**

**Surrey Downs Park
SE 6th and 112th Ave.**



New Community Center

112th Avenue

A New Community Center: The Boys & Girls Clubs of Bellevue is proposing to pay the majority of the costs to build a **45,000 square foot community center**, located in Surrey Downs Park. The Club is asking the City to provide a long-term lease for the footprint of the facility at \$1 per year. **The City would own, maintain and schedule the park land and fields and the Club would own and maintain the building.** The Club would run all of their youth programs in the building and would job-out other programming elements to the City or other outside vendors who specialize in those areas.

Although the Club would run our out-of-school programs from the facility, it would truly be a community center, open to the residents of the neighborhood and offering a wide variety of programs and spaces. The vision is to create a **multi-generational facility** with programming to serve **youth, teens and seniors**.

The following indoor elements could include:

- A **lounge/lobby** with a **coffee/juice/concession** area
- An information desk with **access to community resources**
- **Community meeting/conference rooms**
- **Spaces for other groups** to meet such as bridge clubs, Boys Scouts, Girl Scouts & Camp Fire
- A **preschool** with a play yard that would serve 120 youth per week
- **Four full-size basketball courts**, partially recessed into the landscape
- A **games room** with pool tables, ping pong tables, etc.
- **Large multi-purpose room** that can be used for banquets/parties or divided into smaller spaces
- **Commercial/service kitchen** with loading dock and storage
- **Exercise room** with treadmills and rowing machines
- **Showers and lockers**
- **Technology Center** that would be open to the community,
- **Arts and Crafts Room** that would be open to the community.
- **Education Center with a library** and other quiet study spaces
- **Lounge areas**
- **Administrative offices** for Boys & Girls Club along with other non-profits such as Y.E.S.

We would like to ensure that the baseball fields remain and a soccer field could be added to the outfields. (There are even opportunities for the Boys & Girls Club to receive "matching" funding to improve the fields). Although there must be adequate space for parking, we would work to maximize the amount of green spaces by placing the building and the majority of parking as close to 112th as possible. The building would also be built "green" at the LEEDS silver level.

Again, the idea is to have the entire building be **flexible** so that programming elements can be added when needed. If you have any questions, you can contact Kathy Haggart at khaggart@bellevue-bg-clubs.org

Sports Fields:

- Maintain, at a minimum, the existing athletic fields
- Consider some upgrades including size and year round capacity

Indoor program and structures:

3 degrees of building intensity considered:

- Public restroom with adjacent covered but open (not climate controlled) pavilion to provide cover from both sun and shade.
- Community Center (Approx 20000 SF) providing meeting and activity space, possibly including Youth Theater.
- Community Center (approximately 45, 000 SF) providing athletic space as well as meeting and activity space.

Parking:

Parking options include:

- Surface Parking of 70, 90 and 225 cars
- Structured parking of 225 cars
- There is the opportunity to construct rain gardens as an integral element of the park with the surface parking options.



Common Park Elements:

There are several elements that are common to most schemes of the park design: based on need and the comments we received in our first meeting.

- Hazelnut grove remains (particularly East Grove)
- Iconic and intuitive park presence and arrival
- Loop trail around park
- Structured playground
- Opportunities for environmental play
- Gathering areas for picnics or other events (concentrated or scattered)
- Open lawn and meadow (sometimes overlaying athletics)

*Opportunities – Destination and special element in the park:

While major park elements and options for those elements are addressed on the proposed designs, many of the smaller, special places in the park that shape its character and give it "soul" remain to be finalized. Opportunities include:

- Environmental play
- Maze or Labyrinth
- Overlooks and Viewpoints (using site topography)
- Neighborhood "portals" for pedestrians
- Basketball
- Spray park or "spray ground"
- Structured gardens (rose garden, perennial garden, rain gardens, etc.)
- Historical elements
- Exercise stations
- Climbing wall
- Water feature
- Skate spot
- What are we missing?



Surrey Downs Park Park Elements



Surrey Downs Park Scheme 1

PLAN SCALE: 1" = 40'





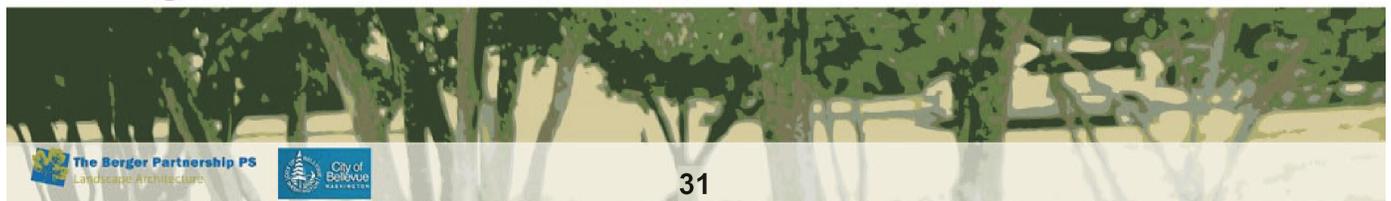
Surrey Downs Park Scheme 2

PLAN SCALE: 1" = 40'



Surrey Downs Park Scheme 3

PLAN SCALE: 1" = 40'





Surrey Downs Park Scheme 4

PLAN SCALE: 1" = 40'



