



**City of Sammamish
Parks and Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting**
December 9, 2009, 6:30 PM
Sammamish City Hall ~ 801-229th Ave SE

MEETING SUMMARY

Commissioners Present: Hank Klein, Pauline Cantor, Mary Doerr, Rena Brady, Judy Petersen, Randy Jackson, John James, Nora Whitemore, Gail Michelman

Commissioners Absent: Larry Crandall

Staff Present: Jessi Richardson, Linda Frkuska, Anjali Myer, Kellye Hilde, Mike Keller, Lynne Handlos, Joanna Puthoff, Dawn Sanders, Janie Marie

Commission and staff met from 5:30 to 6:30 for a holiday potluck.

Call to Order: 6:33 p.m.

Approval of Summary: Approved as amended.

Public Comment: None.

PRO Plan Overview: Jessi presented the overview of changes and additions to the current Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan. As defined by the current plan, there will be additional sections added to the plan including *Arts and Culture* and *Volunteers* which are not addressed in the current plan. Other items such as *Programs* and *Parks*, which were included in the 2004 plan, will be expanded. The Parks Commission and staff will work jointly on the plan update, including participating in the public process, communicating with the council and the other commissions, and reviewing drafts.

Capital Project Updates

Beaver Lake Park Master Plan

Jessi provided a brief overview of the plan and Hank facilitated a discussion with Commissioners. At the conclusion of the discussion, a recommendation to the City Council was drafted. The memo to the council is attached for reference.

Park Commission Liaison Reports

Skate Park – No Report

Farmers Market – No Report

Friends of Sammamish – No Report

Backyard Wildlife Habitat – The majority of Commissioners have certified their homes as backyard wildlife habitats. Work continues to encourage community members to certify their homes with the goal of Sammamish becoming an official Community Wildlife Habitat.

PRO Plan – No Report

Recreation Center – No Report

Other:

Report on individual Commission Meetings

Pauline and Hank have met with each Commissioner over the past few months to learn more about their individual strengths and interests.

Parks Commission Retreat

Commissioners were asked to hold both January 23 and 30 open as possible dates for the retreat. Jessi will follow-up as soon as a date is confirmed.

Klahanie Park Transfer

The transfer of Klahanie Park to Sammamish is still pending. Staff are continuing to work with the County regarding this transfer.

Position Assignments

The following positions numbers were assigned at the last City Council meeting:

Position 1 - Rena Brady

Position 2 - Pauline Cantor

Position 3 - Judy Petersen

Position 4 - Gail Michelman

Position 5 - Nora Whittemore

Position 6 - Randy Jackson

Position 7 - Mary Doerrer

Position 8 - John James

Position 9 - Hank Klein

Larry Crandall will serve as an honorary member of the Commission through the end of his term in 2010.

Appointment of Parks Commission Chair and Vice Chair

Hank and Pauline were nominated to continue on as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively. John motioned and Judy seconded that Hank and Pauline continue in their positions and the motion was passed unanimously.

Calendar:

January 5 – Swearing in New Council Meeting

January 13 – Park Commission Meeting

Adjourn: 9:25 pm



Memorandum

DATE: December 15, 2009

TO: City Council

FROM: Hank Klein, Chair, Parks and Recreation Commission

RE: Beaver Lake Park Master Plan Recommendation

On behalf of the Park Commission, I am pleased to present our recommendations on the Beaver Lake Park Master Plan.

Over the course of several public meetings, the Parks Commission has been presented with a range of ideas and proposals for updating all of the elements of Beaver Lake Park, including plans to upgrade the athletic fields on the west side, the forest and wetlands in the center, and the Lodge and shoreline on the east side. We have examined the plans presented to us by the Berger Partnership, and we have received extensive input from local residents, park neighbors, and sports enthusiasts. We have carefully weighed the impacts of further park development and additional ball field capacity. The end result is a compromise that, while sensitive to adjacent homeowners, also recognizes the needs and interests of the larger Sammamish community.

As a Parks Commission, we unanimously endorse the final preferred alternative presented to us at our regularly scheduled meeting of Wednesday, December 9. We have provided additional comments and recommended changes on the various elements of the plan below.

Lakeside:

Playground:

The proposed playground is currently shown south of the pavilion in a stand of mature trees. This location was originally selected following testimony from park neighbors – they did not support locating the playground near the shared property line north of the beach.

Although we understand the concerns of the neighbors, we are recommending the playground be relocated to the area north of the beach, which will be approximately 50' away from the property line. This location provides a direct line of site from the parking lot and the road, which is a key safety feature and will also serve to minimize vandalism. We understand this location is preferred by the police and our park maintenance staff and support their recommendation on this element of the plan. We also encourage the use of vegetation (i.e. enhancing the vegetative buffer) and any other means to mitigate the disturbance to adjacent private homes. It should also be mentioned that locating the playground north of the beach will minimize tree loss as a result of playground construction. The option currently shown in the plan could result in the loss of 20 or more trees, and this is not supported by the Parks Commission.

Finally, we understand that the type of playground equipment selected for the park will be determined during a future design phase. The Parks Commission feels strongly that the playground equipment selected should be a more “natural play system” featuring climbing boulders and other products that complement the natural feel of Beaver Lake Park.

Additional Restroom:

The Preferred Alternative calls for a new restroom building located near the beach and near the northern property line. The majority of the commission supports the addition of this restroom and feels it will be very beneficial for those using the beach area. Similar to the recommendation on the playground structure, we desire a building that is more “natural” in design, and complements the features of the park (i.e. no cinder blocks or eye sores in general.) In addition, we encourage the use of vegetation to mitigate the visual impact on adjacent private homes.

Swimming Area:

The Commission supports developing a designated swim area as shown in the plan. We understand this is needed particularly during warm weather months when there are inherent conflicts between the fishermen and the swimmers. For future management and policy discussions, we would like to encourage the staff to remove the swim lines during the non-swim season so that the beach may be used in its entirety by the fishermen and others enjoying the shoreline area.

Fishing Area:

The commission generally supports designating a fishing area south of the swimming zone, although we have concerns about whether or not fishermen will actually use the designated zone. Although a fishing platform may be the proper treatment we are not convinced this is a large enough space to accommodate the current fishing demand. We would like staff to consider an expanded platform or a more “hearty” treatment of the beach in this area to support the intense fishing use.

The Berm Between the Lodge and the Pavilion:

Throughout the public process we have heard from both staff and community members regarding the conflict between the Lodge rentals and general park users. The consultants proposed a berm in what is now a generally flat and level portion of lawn between the Lodge and the Pavilion. We most definitely support the concept of creating a “natural separation” between the two uses, but would like to see additional treatments considered such as low-level landscaping and trees where appropriate.

Expansion of Lodge Plaza

The plan calls for expansion of the plaza to the south side of the lodge. The commission is in full support of this recommendation as it will expand and enhance the formalized outdoor areas available to our lodge users.

Parking on the Lodge Side:

We are in full support of the parking lot expansion as shown in the plan.

The West Side:

Athletic Fields:

As you are probably aware, the athletic fields have proven to be the most controversial topic during the public process. We have viewed many different scenarios including a very intensive field configuration, something in the middle, and what we consider to be a compromise solution as is shown in the Preferred Alternative

The commission supports the current field layout, including one full-size rectilinear field with synthetic turf and lights. We also support retaining the three little league fields as shown in the new configuration. We recommend leaving open the possibility of installing synthetic turf on the infields of the three little league baseball fields. This would be for maintenance purposes only and lights would not be installed at these fields. Give the fact that we don't have experience with synthetic turf infields, our recommendation is to consider this option further when this phase of the plan is designed.

Finally, we want to encourage the council and staff to consider additional policies related to use of the lights at this park. We are committed to being good neighbors and there may be opportunities through our future policy discussions to do an even better job. Some suggestions that came out of previous meetings include a "Sunday Sabbath" (no lights on Sunday), a "Dark December" or other non-peak months where the lights are shut off early or perhaps entirely. We believe field capacity can be maximized even with these "good-neighbor" policy considerations.

Off-Leash Dog Area (OLA):

The Parks Commission supports the extension of the OLA, the part of the plan more formally known as "the run." This addition allows dog owners to release their dogs when they get out of their car into an enclosed run. This was designed to help better manage the off-leash dogs running amuck from the parking lot to the existing OLA. Commission members had an extensive debate regarding this topic. Ultimately we support the design feature provided there is a trail built adjacent to the run for those seeking access to the same corridor, but perhaps not desiring to enter a dog run.

The proposed dog run crosses a main north-south trail. We desire to maintain the integrity of this trail, and therefore do not recommend designing the dog run to cross this trail. Instead, we would like gates installed at the terminus of the dog run, whereby the owners would have to escort (on leash or otherwise) their dogs across the trail for access to the larger OLA.

Parking:

At the most recent public meeting we heard concerns from the majority of attendees about the limited number of parking spaces available on the Westside of the park. The addition of a full-size rectilinear field certainly complicates an already difficult parking situation. The current plan adds approximately 25 spaces to the parking lot, but the Commission is concerned that may not be enough. We don't have a solution, except to recommend that staff continue to explore parking options.

We encourage the option of on-street parallel parking to be considered in the future along with additional right-of-way improvements. We note, however, that elimination of trees for this purpose is not supported by the Commission.

Park Accessibility:

A running theme in all of our public meetings was concern about non-motorized access to the park. The Preferred Alternative shows sidewalks along the south side of SE 24th and the east side of 244th Ave. SE. We strongly support improvements of this nature, including installation of a crosswalk at the above intersection. Although a soft-surface trail exists along SE 24th now, it is difficult for people to navigate this stretch with a stroller or wagon. We support installation of a sidewalk, or another treatment that provides a sufficient and functional connection for those coming off the boardwalk and sidewalk on the north side of SE 24th from Discover Elementary. We feel it is very important to formally separate vehicular traffic from non-motorized traffic.

Entryway:

The Commission supports formalization of the entryway at the corner of SE 24th and 244th Ave SE as shown in the plan.

The Woods:

Trail Connections:

For the most part the Preferred Alternative makes use of the existing trails throughout the park. The Commission supports the two new internal crossings as shown in the plan, which will help establish additional internal walking loops. We also support the addition of a “wetland prow” that will provide an elevated view of Laughing Jacobs Creek.

There has been much debate regarding trail surfacing on the main trail of the park, a portion of which is a 15’ wide sewer easement. We have heard many opinions on this issue and recommend the trail be constructed with 8’ wide asphalt and a soft shoulder. The pavement provides access for our park maintenance vehicles and is wheel-friendly for all users. The soft surface shoulder provides an alternative for those that prefer this type of surface (e.g. runners, equestrians etc.)

Community Garden (Pea Patch):

The Commission supports the addition of the community garden.

Conclusion:

That concludes our feedback and recommendation on the Preferred Alternative. Again, we very much appreciate the opportunity to provide you with our recommendations on the Beaver Lake Park Master Plan.