

Board of Park Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
April 14, 2005

***Board of Park Commissioners:***

Present: Kate Pflaumer, Chair  
Angela Belbeck  
Jack Collins  
Terry Holme  
Debbie Jackson

Excused: Joanna Grist  
Amit Ranade

***Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:***

Ken Bounds, Superintendent  
Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Commission Chair Kate Pflaumer called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. **Commissioner Terry Holme moved and Commissioner Debbie Jackson seconded that the minutes the agenda be approved. The vote was taken and the motion passed.**

Newly-appointed Commissioner Ranade will attend the April 28 meeting.

## **Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Bounds reported on the following:

Waterfront Trolley: The Port of Seattle is working with City staff and Burlington Northern to find a solution for the waterfront trolley, which is potentially impacted by both the WSDOT viaduct rebuilding project and Olympic Sculpture Park. When Parks receives the proposal, the Superintendent will bring it to the Commissioners.

Magnuson Park: City Council's Urban Development and Planning Committee, chaired by Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck, is currently considering light pole height limits in Magnuson Park. The proposal would allow the first four fields to be lit with poles up to 85 feet high, taller than the current 30-foot height limit. After that lighting is in place for two years, the City will review impacts and then decide what to do about the other three fields.

The adopted plan calls for seven fields to be lit. After discussion of this proposed change in the Magnuson Park Plan, **Commissioner Collins moved that the Board of Park Commissioners Chair testify before the full City Council on Monday, April 18, on the position the Board previously took on the lights at Magnuson Park. Commissioner Holme seconded. Vote was unanimous.** Kate Pflaumer will attend the meeting at 2:00 pm to testify.

Occidental Park: City Council's Parks, Neighborhoods and Education Committee voted 3-0 to lift the budget proviso on the \$1.2 million for improvements to Occidental Square. The legislation came with the following conditions: the

kiosk will be relocated to Occidental Square until the concession building is built, and Parks/Seattle Department of Transportation will plant two 4" caliper trees in Pioneer Square or south downtown for each one removed within two years of removal. Parks will not begin construction until a Certificate of Approval is granted by the Pioneer Square Preservation Board. The full Council is expected to vote on the legislation soon.

Carol Everson new CFO: Carol Everson, currently the interim Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for Seattle City Light, will join Parks on May 1 as the new CFO. Carol brings to us great experience in budgeting and finance, and incredible skills at an important time in our history.

Longfellow Creek Natural Area Acquisition: Parks recently closed on a 19,000-square-foot (0.44-acre) vacant parcel within the designated Longfellow Creek Green Space at 24<sup>th</sup> Ave SW and SW Myrtle St. The property adjoins an existing 10.4-acre Parks-owned property that extends along both sides of Sylvan Way.

Northgate Civic Center: Absher Construction started work on the library/community center/playfield project on March 21. Both buildings on the site have been demolished and recycled. The contractor is in the process of removing asphalt and concrete and grinding it for reuse under the parking lots. Completion is expected in March 2006.

Luna Park Dedication: Mayor Greg Nickels, along with the community and Parks staff, dedicated the new and improved Luna Park on April 7. The Alki Wildlife Habitat project also presented Seattle Parks with signage showing that the park was recently certified as a National Wildlife Federation habitat site. A crowd of about 100 enjoyed a local rock band called "Luna Park," and enjoyed refreshments. There were many positive comments about the parks' new look and feel.

State Marine Protected Areas in Seattle: On April 7, after two years of effort, the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission formally adopted marine protected status of the intertidal at all six Seattle marine reserves. The benefit of this decision is education through the State fish/shellfish pamphlet, consistency of messages to potential harvesters from both City and State, and enforcement when harvesting of the reserves occur — a State misdemeanor. Fish and Wildlife Commissioners had high praise for the role the Aquarium played in working with State government on securing these conservation areas and in educating the public about the marine reserve beaches.

Board of Park Commissioners held a public hearing on the six marine reserves on July 10, 2003, and voted unanimously to recommend support of the proposal

Southwest Pool Reopens: Southwest Pool reopened April 4 following an eight-month closure period during renovations at the community center and pool. The swimming public was welcomed back to the facility with coffee, snacks, banners, flowers decorations, and smiling, helpful staff members. The pool's new look includes new colorful banners hanging from the natatorium ceiling, fresh blue and white paint, and new lobby and pool furniture which encourages neighbors and swimmers to sit and visit. A larger event will happen in May in collaboration with the community center reopening.

## **Upcoming Events**

April 16, Kubota Garden Dedication: Parks will join the Kubota Garden Foundation and community members to dedicate the completion of Pro Parks Levy-funded improvements at the park, including three new ADA pathways that create better accessibility for people with physical disabilities, a new entryway experience, restrooms, and infrastructure that support the garden's health and maintainability. The dedication is Saturday, April 16, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. Councilmember David Della will speak.

May 22, 6th Avenue NW Pocket Park: The 6th Avenue NW Pocket Park community will celebrate the completion of this project with a ribbon cutting and dedication on Sunday, May 22, at 1:00 p.m. Project funding is comprised of Neighborhood Matching Fund grants, Pro Parks Levy money and community donations. It features a large lawn with

plantings and a pathway and includes several art pieces, including tiled columns and sidewalk paving stones. The project is complete and people are enthusiastically using the park.

### **Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience**

The Chair explained that this portion of the agenda is reserved for topics that have not had, or are not scheduled for, a public hearing. Speakers are limited to three minutes each and will be timed. The Board's usual process is for 15 minutes of testimony to be heard at this time, with additional testimony heard after the regular agenda and just before Board of Park Commissioner's business. No one signed up to testify.

### **Briefing: Waterfront Project**

John Rahaim, Department of Planning and Development Planning Division Director, Guillermo Romano, Department of Planning and Development's Director of City Design, and Kevin Stoops, Seattle Parks Major Projects and Planning Manager, briefed the Board on the Central Waterfront Project. Mr. Rahaim and Mr. Romano gave a verbal briefing on the Central Waterfront Master Plan, while Mr. Stoops focused on the Plan's possible impacts to Seattle Parks' property. The Board received both a written and verbal briefing on the Pier 62/63 Piling Replacement project and Seattle Parks amendments to the Central Waterfront Master Plan.

#### **Written Briefing**

**Requested Board Action:** The purpose of this briefing is to update the Board on the status of the Pier 62/63 Piling Replacement project and to provide alternative design concepts for a renovated Pier 62/63 open space. Also, the Department is requested to transmit a companion set of amendments to the Central Waterfront Master Plan for Council's consideration. The design concepts should derive from work underway in 2004 by the Department of Planning and Development on waterfront and viaduct/seawall planning.

**Background:** The entire piling system supporting Pier 62/63, which has been the home of the Summer Nights on the Pier concert series since 1991 and other major public events, is deteriorated and public use has been restricted. The City Council approved \$500,000 in funding from the Cumulative Reserve Subfund in the 2005 Budget for planning and preliminary design of the Pier 62/63 Replacement project. The 2005-2010 CIP anticipates funding the construction phase, expected to cost \$12-14 million, with Councilmanic debt issued in 2006.

The Council concurred with Mayor Nickel's desire to coordinate planning for the pier replacement with the Central Waterfront planning process and, in a budget Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI), requested Parks to work with the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) in order to coordinate planning for the pier replacement with Central Waterfront planning work already underway.

This expanded planning process, to be funded with the appropriated Pier 62/63 project budget, now includes the public park spaces between Pier 57 and the Port's Bell Harbor marina at Pier 64, and the potential upland open space that will be created atop the SR-99 Alaskan Way Tunnel from the vicinity of the Seattle Aquarium to the Pike Place Market.

**Proposed Planning Process:** Parks proposes a two-step process. First, working with a client group comprised of representatives from several City Departments (DPR, DPD, SDOT OED, DON, and DOF), we will undertake a feasibility study to look at the public park spaces on the Central Waterfront, assessing public use, urban design, potential habitat restoration, and relation to other projects, and make recommendations to inform the design of Pier 62/63. Second, with the Central Waterfront planning group previously convened by DPD as our advisory committee, we will undertake preliminary design of the Pier 62/63 replacement based on the results of the feasibility study. Assuming additional monies are appropriated for 2006, we will proceed with final design and the permitting process.

We are now ready to move forward with the study and will immediately proceed with selection of a consultant team to perform such work. Later this year, we will select the team that will actually design the Pier 62/63 replacement, which will be based on the results of the feasibility study.

**Related Issues: Pier 62/63 Design Funding** – The expanded planning process will reduce funding that DPR anticipated directing to design work in 2006. The funding is expected to be sufficient to complete schematic design of a preferred option by December 2005. The Executive anticipates including a funding request to complete the design and permitting of the Pier 62/63 replacement project in the Mayor’s Proposed 2006 Budget.

**Scope of Pier 62/63 Design Options** – The \$12-14 million cost estimate included in the 2005-2010 CIP reflects an in-kind replacement of the existing structure. It is possible that the planning process could result in pier replacement options that call for a new configuration with associated mitigation work and other work at Waterfront Park that could result in far higher costs. Parks will develop at least one option that is within the \$13.5 million construction budget proposed in the 2005-2010 CIP.

**Upcoming Decisions/Timeline:** The Department plans to come back to brief the City Council’s Parks Neighborhood and Education Committee in August 2005 after the proposed feasibility study is completed. Other key actions and expected completion dates related to the Pier 62/63 project are noted in the table below.

Action	Date
Select feasibility study consultant	Immediately
Brief Council on a preliminary response to the Pier 62/63 SLI including the proposed planning process	April 20, 2005
Complete feasibility study	July 2005
Develop and conduct public review of preliminary design options	Late July 2005
Brief Mayor and Council on Pier 62/63 design concepts and preferred option	Mid- August 2005
Include funding for additional project design and permitting in the Mayor’s Proposed 2006 Budget. Submit related budget legislation to amend the Central Waterfront Master Plan.	September 2005
Select design consultant	September 2005
Complete schematic design	December 2005
Complete design development and permit application process	March 2006
Complete construction documents	December 2006
Advertise, bid, and award project	Early 2007
Complete construction; re-open Pier 62/63	June 2008

**Additional Information**

The Department’s contact person for this project is Kevin Stoops; he can be reached by e-mail at [kevin.stoops@seattle.gov](mailto:kevin.stoops@seattle.gov), or by phone at 684-7053.

**Verbal Briefing/Board Questions & Answers**

Mr. Rahaim stated that both the Alaskan Way Viaduct and the waterfront seawall are nearing the end of their life. (To view the detailed plan and drawings, please see [http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Central\\_Waterfront/index.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Central_Waterfront/index.asp).) Mr. Rahaim and Mr. Romona displayed a number of large schematic drawings of the Waterfront Project and described, in detail, this project. They pointed out where the Alaskan Way Viaduct could go underground and the location where it would come aboveground and pointed out the seawall.

This planning process has been underway for two years and will go to City Council this fall. Mr. Rahaim stated that this is a rare opportunity for the City to re-design its' front door to the water. The Mayor has given strong directions to move ahead with the planning. Their charge is "what are the other opportunities besides ensuring a transportation route?" They described the public process that has taken place, which included many meetings and a two-day charrette with 300 people attending. Remarkable ideas came out of the charrette. The project is very complex, with many layers. A strong theme is how to better connect the waterfront to the downtown area.

Chair Pflaumer asked how much of the seawall is at risk. Mr. Rahaim answered that the central area of the seawall is the oldest; however, it is worthwhile to replace the entire seawall during this project. Commissioner Collins asked if the decision has been made to replace the current elevated Viaduct with a tunnel. Mr. Rahaim answered that the City and State are co-leads in this project and they have chosen a 6-lane tunnel as the preferred alternative. However, they are still looking at the option of replacing the Viaduct in-kind, as this would save \$1 billion. Commissioner Holme asked if the plans include open space vs. built development on top of the tunnel and Mr. Rahaim stated that the it potentially be both, but the intent is for pedestrian use.

Next, Mr. Stoops gave a verbal briefing on the project to replace Piers 62/63. He described Parks' other property along the waterfront, including Piers 57 and 58 (Waterfront Park), and Pier 59, (Aquarium.) The Summer Nights at the Pier" concert series was previously held on Piers 62/63.

He reviewed information in the written briefing and stated that Parks performed a structural study on Piers 62/63 about a year ago. The recommendation from that study was to stop all public events and replace the two piers, and Parks subsequently moved the 2005 concert series to South Lake Union Park. Now Parks is looking at how this project fits into the larger Waterfront Project. The design possibilities resulting from a lid over the tunneled viaduct can create major new park spaces downtown. Design consultants are currently looking at both the short-term and long-term uses of the spaces and must work at a very fast pace, as their findings must be submitted to City Council by late August.

Commissioner Collins asked what part the Port of Seattle is playing in the Waterfront Plan. Mr. Stoops answered that the Port owns Bell Harbour, as well as Piers 48 and 60. The Washington State Department of Natural Resources owns much of the harbor and the City leases from them.

Commissioner Belbeck asked Mr. Rahaim to describe the selection process for members of the charrette teams referred to earlier in the briefing. He answered that the Department of Planning and Development put out a call for interested participants and 300 people responded and participated, including five from other countries. This call was sent out by e-mail, posted on the Department's web site, and discussed at informal presentations. Deputy Superintendent Brooks commented that Commissioner Belbeck is the Park Board's representative to the Central Waterfront Committee and Mr. Rahaim stated that the committee will consist of 40 members and begin meeting soon.

Commissioner Belbeck asked if the intent is for the "Summer Nights at the Pier Concerts" to return to Piers 62/63 and Mr. Stoops answered yes. Commissioner Holme asked how long the performances might be held at South Lake Union, and whether other sites are possibilities. The Superintendent answered that the plan is to hold them at South Lake Union for 1-2 years. One Reel produces the concerts and has looked at other sites. However, the choices are very limited, as they want the concerts next to the water and in a central part of the city.

Commissioner Jackson asked how critical is replacement of both the seawall and the Viaduct and how do the two projects fit together. Mr. Rahaim answered that the Viaduct team of the City and State are now finalizing the Environmental Impact Statement for a fall release and will focus on the Viaduct, which is considered the most important. Construction is slated to begin on the Viaduct in 2008 and will take 7-10 years to complete. To accomplish the Viaduct replacement, the current structure must be demolished, utilities must be moved, and many logistics, including lid elements, carefully planned during the engineering design. If the Viaduct is not torn down until the end

of the tunnel building, it would extend the project an additional two years. The seawall replacement project would begin several years after the Viaduct project begins.

Commissioner Holme voiced concerns about how the Aquarium will fare during this project. The Superintendent stated that a plan for the Aquarium during this project is a big issue for Parks.

The Board thanked Mr. Rahaim, Mr. Ramono, and Mr. Stoops for the briefing.

### **Board of Park Commissioners' Business**

- **Seward Park VMP**: The Board discussed the March 24 briefing it heard on the Seward Park Vegetation Management Plan and subsequent events since that time. Earlier in the week, Commissioner Holme sent information regarding a series of signs observed by his family that were posted in Seward Park over the weekend. These signs described 86 trees Parks intends to cut and urged park visitors to contact the Board and Superintendent. After discussion, it was agreed that public perception is that Parks' arborists want to cut the trees. Parks will do additional public outreach to assure the public that the 86 trees are being monitored and only 26 are designated for removal. The Board will monitor the situation and determine later if a public hearing is needed.
- **Retreat Minutes**: Commissioner Collins moved, and Commissioner Holme seconded, approval of the February 2, 2005 retreat minutes. The vote was unanimous in favor.
- **Cascade Park Collanade**: Chair Pflaumer referred to a letter the Board received regarding the rainwater collection system at Cascade Park. The letter voiced concerns that the system might be removed by Parks. The Superintendent stated that the determination has been made for the system to remain.
- **Central Tour**: Susan Golub, Parks strategic advisor, has planned a May 21 tour of Central Parks for the Board. She asked if the Board would like to re-schedule for May 14 and begin the tour with the ribbon cutting at Homer Harris Park. After discussion, it was decided to leave the tour for May 21 and some Board members will attend the May 14 celebration.
- **Parks Organization**: Commissioner Collins asked for the Board to meet with Parks Department Division heads and to also have a briefing on the current structure of the Department. Superintendent Bounds commented that Eric Friedli, Enterprise Division Director, is scheduled to brief the Board on that new Division at the April 28 meeting. After discussion, it was agreed that the Commissioners will be invited to Parks Executive Team (ET) meeting, as all Directors attend these.
- **Committee Reports**: Commissioners next gave updates on the various committees on which they serve as representatives of the Park Board. The committees include Parks Naming Committee (Commissioner Jackson); Restore Our Waters (Chair Pflaumer); Seattle Art Museum (Chair Pflaumer); Waterfront Committee (Commissioner Belbeck will soon begin working on this); Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (Commissioner Collins); and Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee (Commissioner Holme).

### **New/Old Business**

- ❖ **Invitation to meet with Seattle Design Commission**: Seattle Design Commission staff invited the Park Board Commissioners to a "meet and greet" with the Seattle Design Commission. After discussing the invitation, the Commissioners requested that a more effective meeting would be two Design Commissioners, two Park Board Commissioners, and two Historic Preservation Commissioners, as these three agencies all give advice and recommendations to the Parks Department on various projects and issues. Parks staff will take this request back to the Design Commission.
- ❖ **Lower Woodland Skate Park**: The Chair referred to a recent letter sent to the Commissioners from Kate Martin requesting a move of the skatepark site at Lower Woodland Park from the Department's location adjacent to the athletic fields at Lower Woodland to a new location described as the Aurora triangle. In the discussion it was noted that conversion of the Aurora triangle meadow to active recreation use was not in the best interests of the park, and the Board agreed with the Departments decision to co-locate the skatepark with the other active uses at Lower Woodland. Staff person Susan Golub (in attendance for the Central Waterfront

Planning briefing) informed the Board that the Skateboard Park Advisory Committee was in the process of evaluating both the Department's site and the Aurora triangle site and planned to conclude their process in May. Discussion concluded and **Commissioner Collins moved that the Board of Park Commissioners supports the earlier decision that the appropriate skatepark site is near the chip site, as recommended by Parks staff. Commissioner Holme seconded. The vote was unanimous in favor.**

- ❖ Colman Playfield Project: Commissioner Holme asked to revisit the Department's process it used in the recent Colman Playfield project briefing. (See <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/ParkBoard/minutes/2005/03-10-05.pdf>) He believes the Board should have known about the agreement the Department was making with a special interest group earlier in the process and he also suggested that a set of "trigger points" be established to determine at what point a project is brought to the Board. He did not think the special interest group represented the Rain King community. He recommended that, in the future, if a special interest group wants to do a project in a park, the Department should bring the request to the Board early in process. The Superintendent agreed and stated that staff had treated this project like other Neighborhood Matching Fund project, which usually do consist of a community group wanting to do a project in their community. Commissioner Holme believes that the proposed removal of the relatively new basketball court was a "trigger point." He believes the special interest group used their influence with Sonics to pay for a new court to replace one in relatively good shape, when the new court could possibly have gone to a needier site. The Chair agreed that this is an important issue.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

Kate Pflaumer, Chair  
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE \_\_\_\_\_