



## Department of Parks and Recreation

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
June 28, 2007

### ***Board of Park Commissioners:***

Present:

Neal Adams  
John Barber  
Terry Holme  
Jackie Ramels  
Amit Ranade, Chair

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

Susan Golub, Strategic Analyst  
Sandy Brooks, Park Board Coordinator

Commissioner Ranade called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He welcomed the newest member to the Board, Neal Adams, who is one of City Council's three appointees.

### **Commissioner Holme moved, and Commissioner Adams seconded, approval of the agenda. Motion carried.**

Commissioner Ranade noted that a public hearing on the Dexter Pit project had been scheduled for this meeting and was re-scheduled this week to the July 26 meeting. If anyone in the audience wishes to speak tonight on this topic, the Board will hear their testimony. Commissioner Holme asked about a future agenda item that has now been removed from that agenda. The Board discussed his concerns during New/Old Business.

### **Commissioner Ramels moved, and Commissioner Holme seconded, approval of the May 10 minutes, as amended. Motion carried. The Acknowledgment of Correspondence from June 14-28 was approved.**

Commissioners had several corrections to the June 14 minutes. Commissioner Ramels sent several corrections on the afternoon of June 14 which other Commissioners hadn't yet reviewed. Commissioners made several other corrections during the meeting. The Coordinator was asked to incorporate these corrections and send the revised version for a final review for approval at the June 28 meeting. Commissioner Barber asked that he be allowed to add additional language to the minutes to explain his position on the Wallingford Playground/Hamilton Middle School project proposal. [This request was discussed and agreed to under new business. Commissioner Barber will send a letter to the Coordinator to attach to the revised minutes.]

Future review process of minutes and corrections: Commissioners currently receive a draft version of the minutes prior to their next meeting. The Board generally reviews and approves the minutes at the next meeting. [They are then posted to the Board's web page the following morning for public access.]

Commissioners review the minutes and sometimes e-mail suggested corrections to the Coordinator. Frequently these changes reach the Coordinator late afternoon of the meeting day, leaving little time for the other Commissioners to review the proposed changes. It was agreed that Commissioners would send any corrections to the Coordinator by the Monday night following their receipt of the minutes. The Coordinator will incorporate the corrections and send a new draft version to the Commissioners for review the next day (Tuesday). Commissioners will review the draft, give any final corrections at the following meeting, and the minutes will be approved at that meeting.

Commissioners asked whether the additional information referred to in testimony from Jim Anderson during Oral Testimony at the June 14 meeting has been received. This information was in relation to the Loyal Heights Playfield project and the audit of Parks' Public Involvement Policy. The Coordinator will contact Mr. Anderson for this information.

## **Superintendent's Report**

Interim Deputy Superintendent B.J. Brooks was graduating tonight from the Leadership Tomorrow program and was chosen as this year's valedictorian. Each year 72 participants are chosen for this program that "prepares, challenges and engages emerging and existing leaders through leadership development for the benefit of the Puget Sound region. The organization's programs enlighten, inspire and transform participants, who come from a diverse array of professions and communities, by convening productive conversations around critical issues that impact the region. Participants in Leadership Tomorrow expand their leadership skills while gaining access to a vast array of perspectives, resources and mentors." For more information on Leadership Tomorrow, please see <http://www.leadershiptomorrowseattle.com/aboutus.html>.

Ms. Golub, representing the Superintendent, reported on the following items. For more information on Seattle Parks and Recreation, please visit the web pages at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/>.

Lower Woodland Skateboard Park Update: A lawsuit was filed to stop Parks from building a skatepark at Lower Woodland Park. Parks prevailed with the Hearing Examiner last year, but the appellants appealed the Hearing Examiner's decision to King County Superior Court. Parks prevailed again last month during a hearing in front of King County Superior Court. The appellants have since appealed the court's most recent decision, further delaying construction of the skatepark. There will be a preliminary hearing in the near future regarding the injunction/appeal bond. A court date at the Court of Appeals could be as far as a year away. Parks is unable to move forward with the project until the injunction/appeal bond hearing is set.

Olympic Sculpture Park Pocket Beach is Growing: On June 15 Aquarium educators completed the second annual intertidal survey of the pocket beach marine habitat beach created in 2006. Eleven species of animals and good algal coverage were recorded in 2006, with the current 2007 survey showing 23 species with continued algal coverage. This is good positive growth for this marine habitat. For more information on Olympic Sculpture Park and its pocket beach, see [http://www.seattleartmuseum.org/pressRoom/PDF/OSP\\_Overview.pdf](http://www.seattleartmuseum.org/pressRoom/PDF/OSP_Overview.pdf).

Greenlake Celebrates Silver Medalists: Big congratulations to the Green Lake Junior Varsity Boys for finishing second place at the U.S. Rowing National Championships in Cincinnati this past weekend.

Aquarium Has Grand Reopening! After the long-awaited dedication ceremony at 8:30 a.m. on June 22, the public flowed through the new entrance, into the Puget Sound Great Hall, and gaped in awe at the new Window on Washington Waters exhibit. And, to the visitors' great delight, a couple of divers talked to them from inside the 120,000 gallon tank! Admissions over the weekend were well above the highest daily attendance since the Aquarium opened in 1977, with more than 5,000 visitors on each weekend day! For more information on Seattle Aquarium, see <http://www.seattleaquarium.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?&pid=183&srcid=-2>.

Seattle Parks Director to Retire: Woody Wilkinson, Seattle Parks' Director of Facilities Maintenance, is retiring from Parks on July 10 after working for the department for 12 years. His career with the City started in 1965, and he has had a variety of roles: staff assistant to the Mayor; lead budget analyst; division head in the Department of Community Development; Director of the Office of Management and Budget; Director of the Office of Policy Planning; and Deputy Mayor, before coming to Parks.

Beaches Open: All nine life guarded beaches opened on Saturday, June 23, fully staffed. There is a nation-wide shortage of lifeguards impacting beaches all across the country, including Seattle. Ethnic diversity in the life guarding staff at Seattle Parks' beaches is excellent with 33% of the leadership staff being people of color which is in line with the Mayors Race and Social Justice Initiative. For more information on the swim beaches, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Aquatics/beach.htm>.

Day Camp Registration: Day Camp saw 875 kids registered on the first day. Each camp has a wide variety of activities including games, arts and crafts, exercise and many others.

Teen Flag Football League: In partnership with the Police Athletic League the Signature Teen Programs organized a summer flag football league for teens. Recruitment is targeted at teens participating in programs at the Teen Centers. The Police Athletic League will sponsor the league and provide equipment, T-Shirts, and referees.

Amy Yee Tennis Center: For the fourth consecutive year, the Amy Yee Tennis Center partnered with the Summit Seekers organization to offer a free Invitational Camp to 40 children 10-15 years of age. The week long camp targeted low income youth from South Central Seattle and offered an introduction to tennis. Participants received their own tennis racquet, a t-shirt, and other fun prizes. For more information on Amy Yee Tennis Center, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Athletics/Tennisct.htm>.

Youth Summer Programs Commence at Langston Hughes: On Monday, rehearsals began at Langston Hughes Cultural Arts Center for the annual Teen Summer Musical. This year, 80 youth will receive expert instruction in theatre, music and dance, culminating in a production of "Cinderella: A Love Story with the Sound of Motown." For more information on Langston Hughes Cultural Arts Center, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Centers/langston.htm>. On Wednesday, ART in the Park commenced. This program provides neighborhood youth with a free drop-in arts program at both Judkins and Pratt Parks. The program aims to serve approximately 500 local youth. For more information on these parks, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkspaces/judkins.htm> and <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkspaces/prattpar.htm>.

Pro Parks Green Spaces Acquisitions: Harrison Ridge Green Space. Parks has signed a Purchase and Sale Agreement for the acquisition of a .19-acre parcel in the City's Harrison Ridge Green Space. The property has been targeted for acquisition by the City since the early 1990's because it is critical to completing the Harrison Ridge Green Space. For more information on the Pro Parks Levy, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/proparks/>.

### **Upcoming Events**

Northgate Community Center: Northgate CC will be celebrating its first birthday with a spectacular party on Thursday, July 12, with Mayor Nickels joining the festivities. The celebration begins at 6:30 p.m. and includes music, food and fun. For more information on Northgate Community Center, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/centers/Northgate.htm>.

Dahl Playfield: Grand Opening ceremonies are scheduled for Saturday, June 30, at 11:45 a.m. For more information on Dahl Playfield, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkspaces/dahl.htm>.

## **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. Two people testified. A very brief summary of their testimony is included.

Irene Wall: She is a member of the Phinney Ridge Neighborhood and president of the Phinney Ridge Community Council. She came before the Board with an urgent request regarding the Woodland Park and Woodland Park Zoological Gardens. As the Board is aware, management of this City-owned park and zoo has been temporarily given to the Woodland Park Zoological Society (WPZS), which is moving ahead with plans to build a large steel and concrete parking garage at the zoo. Recently, five City Councilmembers wrote WPZS urging that the garage not be built. However, the Zoo Society is moving ahead and getting permits. In addition to the garage, a new west entry, second zoo store, commercial banquet hall, and large building are planned, which means the loss of 2 city blocks of open space at the park. Ms. Wall stated that the Board of Park Commissioners was not silent when citizens were encroaching on park land and asked for their intervention to prevent this major encroachment. The garage is a terrible idea and Ms. Wall told the Commissioners that the former Woodland Park Zoo director David Hancocks strongly opposed it, along with hundreds of citizens citywide. Ms. Wall stated that 40% of those driving to the zoo now park on the nearby streets and will continue to do so after the garage is built. This means millions of dollars of city funds will be spent on zoo garage debt service instead of paying for needed parks project. WPZS should use shuttles and off-site parking, rather than building a massive garage for the few days per year. She asked that the Park Board please stand up for Woodland park and asked Zoo Society leaders to withdraw the garage proposal.

Gary Gaffner: He stated that he is not paid to present comments before the Board of Park Commissioners, as was claimed recently by a citizen. The Park Board often doesn't receive credit for its good work and he acknowledged the Board's efforts.

He recently attended the opening celebration of Ella Bailey Park and it was obvious that Magnolia residents love the park. Interim Superintendent Brooks stayed for two hours after the ceremonies to talk with citizens. This was much appreciated by the community.

## **Briefing: Dexter Pit Project**

Patrick Donahue, Seattle Parks' project planner, presented a briefing on the Dexter Pit Project. Commissioners received a written briefing in their agenda packet, included in these minutes. Tonight Mr. Donahue reviewed the briefing paper and answered questions.

### *Written Briefing*

#### **PARK BOARD ACTION REQUIRED**

The intent of this briefing is to provide the Board with information about the Dexter Pit project. No Board action is required.

#### **BACKGROUND**

##### Genesis of the Project:

##### The Queen Anne Neighborhood Plan states:

Transfer ownership of the Dexter Pit property to Seattle Parks. Fund a Master Plan and develop. Intent: to ensure adequate parks and open space. Dexter Pit is in City ownership. Surrounded by multifamily and elderly housing, a great opportunity to create exercise area and p-patch plot and paths for walking with pool/habitat at bottom.

##### The Pro Parks Levy CIP states:

This project develops City-owned property into a neighborhood park. The scope of work for this project is to be developed through a community process, working within the budget (\$745,185) and other non-levy fund sources that become available.

### The Pro Parks Levy Art Plan:

This plan was written for the 2000 Pro Parks Levy and outlines the background, vision and goals for the Levy art projects. The Plan is available at: [www.seattle.gov/Arts/publications/publicart/default.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/Arts/publications/publicart/default.asp). The Dexter Pit project is the final project outlined in the Plan. The Public Art Plan was reviewed by the Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee in April 2002 and by the Board of Park Commissioners in May 2002. The Public Art Advisory Committee reviewed the Pro Parks Art Plan in January, 2002 and an update in April, 2003.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The distinguishing feature of this project is the art and having an artist co-lead the design process. Several goals were developed by the Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs for the project:

- Create a park that is both an imaginative urban park environment and one that exhibits a complete aesthetic and conceptual approach to the site;
- Create a park that presents a unique intellectual, emotional, and physical/sensory experience that is meaningful and available to park users; and
- Create a park that will truly attract both people who live nearby and members of the larger Seattle community.

The artist, Andy Cao, was selected by a committee empanelled by the Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs. He is working with a Seattle landscape architecture firm which is the contractual lead and is responsible for construction documents and construction administration. The artist was provided background material including neighborhood plan recommendations; Parks design standards and review, budget and site conditions.

Project Web Site <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/proparks/projects/dexterpit.htm>

In response to the goals mentioned above, the proposed design includes:

- **Art** – The proposal calls for the placement of 12 “rising out of the wetland” water drops of various sizes to a maximum diameter of 36 inches and height of 12 feet. The blue stainless steel armatures are wrapped/covered with stainless steel mesh. Blue LED lighting will mark the “droplets” at night. On June 19, 2007 the Public Art Advisory Committee of the Arts Commission approved this proposed project.
- **Plantings** - The schematic plan shows the construction of a simple organic landscape using native plantings which enhance and restore the existing Class 4 wetland and adjacent buffer zone. Due to budget constraints, the bulk of this site will remain as is with blackberries and other existing non-native plants rising up slope above the proposed developed area of the park.
- **Paths and Open Space** – The design calls for the construction of an ADA accessible path constructed of crushed basalt or granite. Log benches will be installed at several locations within the park to allow for viewing of the art.

### **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

Two public meetings have been held during the spring of 2007 to seek input on the park design, the art concept, and proposed installation. After the first public meeting the project was reevaluated as the originally proposed art was not a workable concept given the limited project budget and the short life span of the chosen materials. The second public meeting was held recently and the revised park design with the "Water Droplet" concept for the art was presented to the community. It was well received and has the overall support of the community.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> and final public meeting presenting this design will be scheduled for late July or early August to share the final design development.

### **ISSUES**

The issue in the community has been the art and its placement/location within the park, and the fact that the project started with the artist leading the design process. The project is now being led by Parks in collaboration with the artist and the landscape architecture firm.

### **FUNDING**

The Pro Parks Levy provides \$745,185 for park development. This is a relatively small budget for such a large site.

## **TIMELINE**

This project is currently set to move from 100% schematic design into design development, construction documents and permits. The project schedule shows the project being publicly bid in the late 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2008, with completion by the end of 2008.

## **Attachments**

100% Schematic Design w/ Art

## ***Board Discussion***

[This project was scheduled for a briefing and public hearing at tonight's meeting. When it was determined that further community notification should be done, the public hearing was rescheduled to the July 26 meeting.]

Mr. Donahue introduced himself, showed a Powerpoint presentation, and reviewed the information in the written briefing paper (above.) The presentation included aerial views and maps of the project. Mr. Donahue stated that the artist's first conception of the project was not well received in the community and was not affordable. That first conception was abandoned and the current idea was developed.

Commissioners asked several questions, which have been grouped by subject:

### *Design:*

Commissioner Barber asked if the Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs support this new design. Mr. Donahue answered yes and they plan to testify at the July 26 public hearing.

Commissioner Ramels asked if the park site was previously used to store any hazardous materials. Mr. Donahue answered no, the site is environmentally clean.

Commissioner Holme referred to the gambion walls and asked if there will be a maintenance buffer zone between the wall and the nearby blackberry thicket. Mr. Donahue answered that this is a definite challenge. The artist wants plants to grow over the wall. The landscape artist wants plants kept back from the wall and the district gardener wants the blackberry briars kept back from the park. He commented that the wall is not intended for people to sit on.

### *Wetlands/Bioswale:*

Commissioner Adams referred to the wetland bioswale and asked if surface water will be directed to the wetland area. Mr. Donahue answered that it will be but the intent isn't to turn the area into a pond (as it previously was.)

Commissioner Ramels asked if a study has been done to determine how the wetland went dry. Mr. Donahue answered that such studies are costly and have not been made. However, it is definite that the area was once a wetland that is now mostly dry.

Commissioner Barber asked if a geotech hydrologist study was done. Mr. Donahue answered that a hydrologist looked at the site and recommended use of a bioinfiltration system.

Commissioner Holme asked if staff have considered unintended consequences of this project. The park has a wetland focus and could be totally dry in 10 years. Has enough study been done up front to avoid this? Mr. Donahue answered that Parks can't stop the nearby development which can make changes in the hydrology of the area; however, it will try to keep the area as a wetland #4. He doesn't believe that the Department can introduce water to keep the area as a wetland but will check with the Army Corp of Engineers on this and report back at the July 26 meeting.

### *Budget:*

Commissioner Barber asked about funding for future maintenance of the park. Mr. Donahue answered that there is a small amount budgeted for this: \$13,000 in 2008. Graffiti removal is the greatest concern at this site.



Commissioner Ramels asked if the \$750,000 budget is a modest one and Mr. Donahue answered yes.

Public outreach/controversy:

Commissioner Ranade asked who in the community has been notified of this project. Mr. Donahue answered that immediate neighbors in the condos were at the first public meeting. Approximately 15 people attended. He has sent e-mails to those people, and is working with the Uptown Alliance and Queen Anne Community Council.

Commissioner Ramels asked for additional information on the artist selection process. Mr. Donahue answered that this is a Pro Parks Levy art plan and is promoted by the Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs, which selected the artist. Unfortunately, the first meeting went awry as the project called for an “artist led” project. The project was halted and the focus changed to one of collaboration.

Commissioner Holme believes there was more controversy than has been relayed to the Board of Park Commissioners. He is on the Pro Parks Oversight Levy Committee which received negative feedback from the community. It is unusual for Pro Parks Levy projects to be controversial and he believes that the project being led by the artist, rather than Parks staff, caused the controversy. He hopes this was a learning project for the department on art projects in parks and that in the future it will define its role up front. Mr. Donahue commented that the original planner resigned and he was assigned to the project. He has worked with the Queen Anne Community Council and others to resolve the controversy. He is unsure how the community outreach was done prior to his working on the project. Commissioner Ramels asked if the community was unhappy with the design or the artist. Commissioner Holme answered that it was the lack of communication with the community. The Parks Department took a long time to step into the lead and that left uncertainty in the neighborhood.

Commissioner Holme commented that a July 26 public hearing has been scheduled by the Board of Park Commissioners to acknowledge the controversy. He recommended that staff bring in facilitators when projects go awry. Mr. Donahue answered that he would be one of the first to ask for a mediator, when that step is needed

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Donahue for the briefing. On July 26, he will present an update briefing to the Board to be followed by a public hearing, discussion, and recommendation.

**Briefing: Seattle School District Surplused Property**

Donald Harris, Seattle Parks Property Manager, Patti Petesch, Seattle Parks and Youth Programming Manager, and Terry Dunning, Seattle Parks Major Transactions Manager, briefed the Board on Seattle School District Surplused Property. In early 2007, the Board requested this briefing. A written briefing was sent in the Board’s agenda packet and included in these minutes.

*Written Briefing*

**Requested Board Action**

The information presented is a briefing only. No action will be requested of the Park Board at this time.

**Project Description and Background**

The Department of Parks and Recreation is currently a participant on a team of city departments including: Finance, Neighborhoods, Housing, and Planning and Development, whose task it is to make recommendations to the Mayor on a framework for making decisions about the reuse of the surplused school properties.

On June 6, 2007, the Seattle School District declared five of their properties “non-essential (surplus)” to District needs. These five properties, the master tenants within the building, and the neighborhoods in which they are located are as follows:

SCHOOL	MASTER TENANT	NEIGHBORHOOD
Allen	Phinney Neighborhood Association (PNA)	Phinney Ridge

Crown Hill	Small Faces Child Development Center	Crown Hill
Fauntleroy	Fauntleroy Children’s Center	Fauntleroy
University Heights	University Heights Center for the Community	University District
Webster	Nordic Heritage Museum	Sunset Hill/Ballard

School District staff recently sent a letter to the master tenants of each of these properties offering them the option to purchase or long-term lease the sites at market value, as determined by an appraisal. Each tenant that responds affirmatively will be allowed a year to reach an agreement with the District. The School District has also offered the same option to Parks for the open space areas at the Crown Hill, Fauntleroy, and Webster properties.

**City process**

As part of the 2007-08 budget process, the City adopted Resolution 30923 directing staff to begin discussions with the School District concerning surplus schools. The City has contracted with the Cascade Land Conservancy and will be contracting with a real estate consultant to engage the master tenants and communities surrounding the Crown Hill, Fauntleroy and Webster schools. The consultants will look at viable options for the feasibility of purchasing these sites. The City recently supported the University Heights Center for the Community through the Neighborhood Matching Fund to conduct a similar process.

In addition, as part of the 2007-08 budget process the City reserved the Pro Parks Levy Opportunity funds for land acquisition at University Heights. The Council also agreed to consider a 2008 bond sale to support acquisition of University Heights and the Allen School as part of the budget. While a bond issuance is included in the 2008 Endorsed Budget, it is non-legally binding, and Council would need to take a future vote to authorize issuance of the bonds.

**Status**

The department has preliminarily evaluated these five school properties both from the perspective of “service levels” .... For community centers

- ‘desirable’ (a community center shall be located within one mile of every Seattle household...or 1 full service center to serve a residential population of 15,000 – 20,000 people)
- ‘acceptable’ (a community center should be provided within 1-1/2 miles of every Seattle household)

By these guidelines only the Allen site would fill a gap in ‘desired’ service area for community centers.

As for filling an ‘open space gap’, based on our 2006 Gap Report Allen would fill a very small gap in the tail of the Greenwood-Phinney Urban Village. University Heights would start to fill a very large gap in the University District Urban Village.

The department has a neighborhood park with a lease that runs to 2020 at the Webster school site that we will work to retain and acquire a fee ownership.

Parks has planned a Pro Parks Levy project for the open space on the south end of the Crown Hill school site. The project design was for a little league/t-ball and U9 soccer field and neighborhood park elements. It is likely that a recommendation will be forthcoming from the Pro Park Levy Oversight Committee to reallocate this funding for the acquisition of the property, if necessary to preserve it.

The department does not have any currently identified interest in the Fauntleroy site as it is adjacent to the existing Fauntleroy and Kilbourne parks.

***Verbal Briefing & Board Discussion***

Mr. Harris introduced himself and the other two presenters. Mr. Harris’ focus is on policy perspective, Mr. Dunning deals with Seattle Parks’ real estate issues, and Ms. Petesch handles the Department’s joint use agreement with Seattle Public



Schools (SPS.) There are currently 35 school/park relationships (joint use agreements) and the agreements are complex and varied.

Mr. Harris next reviewed information in the written briefing.

Seattle Public Schools has recently listed the five properties named above on their surplused property list. Mr. Harris gave additional information on the five sites and stated that Seattle Parks is most interested in the open space at three sites: Crown Hill, University Heights, and Webster. Small Faces Daycare is mobilizing to acquire the building at Crown Hill. The Phinney Neighborhood Association is doing very well at the Allen facility.

Commissioner Ranade asked if Parks is considering developing parking plans for University Heights. Mr. Harris answered no, that Parks will work with the community on the development plans. There is a very vibrant farmer's market (University Farmer's Market) that operates at this site. A daunting task will be how to continue this use and use the property as park space. The University Heights Center is a historic building and would be a challenge to use as a community center. The community currently uses it for meeting spaces.

Commissioner Adams asked about the City's Department of Finance (DOF) role as lead negotiator with Seattle Public Schools. Mr. Harris stated that DOF is the lead in the analytical and financial process and is working closely with Parks, Housing, and Department of Neighborhoods. The outcome of this effort will next go to the Mayor. Seattle Parks staff meet monthly with Seattle Public School staff and has a very active role as a primary player in these negotiations.

Commissioner Barber asked for an analysis of the City's interest in each of these properties, one by one. Mr. Harris answered that he could only speak to Parks' interest at this time.

Commissioner Holme commented that he understands Parks' reluctance to assume ownership of any of the buildings at these sites. The track record has been many difficulties maintaining these older buildings. He referred to the drawing of the Crown Hill property and asked about the open space at the fence line of Small Faces Daycare. Is the daycare interested in having this property for its school operations? Mr. Harris answered that, under a joint use agreement, Small Faces would use the property during its operating hours and Parks would use it during the remaining hours. Commissioner Holme urged caution when this property is purchased, so it is clear whether Parks owns the area that would be jointly used.

Commissioner Holme is a member of the Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee. At its June 25 meeting, the committee showed very strong support of the Crown Hill community effort. It voted to keep Pro Parks' funds behind this effort, with only one member abstaining. Mr. Harris commented that when SPS properties become available the community looks to the Parks Department to help utilize the sites for the community's benefit. Ms. Petesch identified a couple more surplus properties that SPS is now using for other purposes: E. C. Hughes and Columbia. Commissioner Holme commented that the first wave of the surplused properties have Pro Parks Levy Oversight funds to assist with leverage. The process could go on for years and he urged Parks to work closely with SPS on these properties. He is concerned that the Crown Hill process began in 2007 and there is only a one year window of opportunity. Mr. Dunning clarified that the first year is for the community to express interest. If it does so, the next step is to submit a plan for acquisition.

Commissioner Adams voiced concerns about Parks' relationship with the community during this process. What options is Parks looking at in working with these communities? He recommended that Parks be very clear in determining how it will work with both the community and SPS. He would like further analysis on the Department's process. Mr. Harris answered that this is a good point and is policy direction that must come from the Superintendent. In addition, the Department may not be looking at these five sites in isolation; there are many other issues to be considered.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Harris, Ms. Petesch, and Mr. Dunning for the briefing.

## **Old/New Business**

### **Community Issues**

Wallingford Vote Clarification: At the Board's June 14, a motion to not allow a lot boundary change for the Wallingford Playground/Hamilton Middle School passed by a 2-1 vote. Commissioner Ranade stated that after the vote, he re-read portions of Robert's Rules of Order and recalled that the chair may vote to break tie votes or to create a tie that would defeat a pending motion. He asked that the record show that he would have voted against the motion, which would have created a tie and defeated the motion to *reject* the boundary lot change. He stated that the testimony the Board heard or read was split almost equally in support of or opposition to the lot adjustment. Usually, projects that come to the Board are being driven by Seattle Parks and include a Project Advisory Team (PAT.) The PAT is made up by citizens and Parks staff. This project was driven by Seattle Public Schools (SPS) and unfortunately a PAT was not used.

Commissioner Ranade stressed that the Board is an advisory body to the Superintendent, City Council, and Mayor. Part of the Board's role is to look at a project from a parks perspective. In this project, the merits included: Parks has a 27' strip of land covered in asphalt that it would trade to Seattle Public Schools. The sunken garden would be restored to a condition at least equal to its current state. The playfield drainage would have been improved, access to restrooms (not currently available) would become available, the community could access the gym after school hours, and the environment would have benefit from the project through reduced greenhouse gas emissions. He supports the lot boundary adjustment as he believes it was an advantageous proposal for the park, school, and environment. State law requires that when park land is taken for another use, a matching amount of land must be given back to the park system. In this case, SPS would have been asked to give back land in the Wallingford community. He is not asking for the vote to be reopened, only to get his opinion on the record. He does not believe a re-vote is necessary given the Park Board's advisory role. He only wanted to get his opinion on the record for the Superintendent, Council, and Mayor's information.

Commissioner Ranade had written the other Park Board members an e-mail soon after the meeting. This correspondence included his findings on whether he could have voted on the project and that he would have voted to make a tie and defeat the motion. According to the Open Meeting Policy, all of the Board's deliberations should be done in front of the public and a quorum of the Commissioners should not discuss an issue without the public's knowledge. Commissioner Ranade wanted the public record to reflect that he wrote to the other Commissioners to explain the proper procedure and to alert them that he would make a statement at this meeting.

Commissioner Holme commented that he is uncomfortable that Commissioner Barber wrote a response arguing against Commissioner Ranade's findings. He felt that Commissioner Ranade's e-mail was concerned with the mechanics of how the Board operates, while Commissioner Barber's reply to the Board was arguing the substance of the project. Commissioner Holme stated that he does not agree with some of Commissioner Barber's statements in the correspondence.

Commissioner Barber stated that he wrote the e-mail to better explain why he voted as he did. He finds it difficult to listen to a discussion and immediately articulate, in a meeting that has already run over its allotted time, why he is voting a certain way. He asked if there should be some way for Commissioners to better explain their votes and asked that any future correspondence, like what he sent the other Commissioners, be included in the minutes of the meeting where the vote was taken. Commissioner Ramels commented that she had never seen that type of attachments to minutes. She also commented that she doesn't think a vote of 2-1 carries as much weight as if all four Commissioners had voted.

After further discussion, the Commissioners agreed that Commissioner Barber's letter could be attached to the June 14 minutes. A determination was not made as to whether this is a new policy for the Board.

Woodland Park Zoo Society: Commissioner Barber referred to Irene Wall's testimony during the Oral Communications and asked the following questions: What is the Zoo Society's obligation to the Park Board? What is the Park Board's role and how does it monitor the performance of the Zoo Society and is there true oversight? Does the Zoo Society discipline itself? How is meaningful oversight of a non-profit like the Zoo Society performed? He believes the City Council has sent the Zoo Society a strong message about holding off on building the garage, yet it is continuing the project.

Ms. Golub answered that she looked at the Zoo's annual report recently and it accounted for funds spent from the Pro Parks Levy. Commissioner Holme recommended that the Commissioners read the quarterly and annual reports that the Zoo Society sends to the Park Board and let the Society know if the Park Board has concerns. The Zoo's Deputy Director will brief the Board at its August 9 meeting. The Board could ask whether any of the Master Use Permits issued to the Zoo are in excess of its Master Plan. He pointed out that City Council is three years into the garage process and has voted in favor of the project on several occasions. Now in the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, the Council's vote has shifted. The Zoo garage has moved beyond the Park Board some time ago and is now at the City Council level.

Commissioner Barber commented that the reports are coming from the Zoo Society and the Board should have a third party to monitor it. The Park Board must rely on the Zoo Society for its information. Commissioner Holme commented that it is not the Park Board's role to be the auditor of the Woodland Park Zoo Society. The Board's role is to give citizens a place to come to when they aren't getting answers from Seattle Parks and the City.

Pro Parks Levy Sunsetting: Commissioner Holme has concerns with impending changes of the sunseting of the Pro Parks Levy and whether maintenance funding is available after the levy's end. He asked who in Seattle Parks would know the answer to this and requested a briefing to the Park Board. He believes it is the role of the Board to birdog and anticipate this type of development. Ms. Golub answered that during the development of the Department's Strategic Business Plan there will be presentations and public hearings, with the Pro Parks Levy addressed in the process. Seattle Parks Budget Director Carol Everson is the staff person to contact with questions.

Scheduling Facilities to For-profit Groups: Commissioner Ramels commented that she has asked about volleyball tournaments and other events at Alki Beach. She is president of the Alki Community Council and recently watched one of the tournaments, which appeared to be very well run. She inquired about clubs, organizations, and individuals who charge participation fees for events taking place on the beach. She also referred to exercise leaders who use Parks facilities (the beach) to hold classes for which they charge a fee. She asked whether Parks monitors events of this type and suggested that it might be useful to reconsider fees charged for profit-making ventures on Parks properties. Commissioner Holme stated that there are others who use the parks in a for-profit way and mentioned paid dog walkers. Commissioner Ranade mentioned the private softball leagues that use Parks' property and make a profit. Ms. Golub answered that this could be addressed in the Strategic Business Plan.

Board's Process to Select Seventh Member: Commissioner Holme is chair of the Board's "Committee to Select a Seventh Member", which also includes Commissioner Barber. In January, City Council passed a resolution on the Board's membership, requiring it to perform a search for its seventh member. This is a new process for the Board. Five of the seven positions are currently filled, with the addition of Commissioner Adams joining the Board at tonight's meeting. The Mayor and his staff are working to fill the sixth position. Once that person joins the Board, discussions will begin on the best way to fill the seventh position. Commissioner Holme stressed that the Board should look at the Board's diversity and ensure that the city is geographically well represented by Park Board members.

Park Board Committees: Park Board members are asked to serve on several committees or boards, including the Seattle Parks Foundation. New members will be canvassed as to their interest in these positions.

Future Agenda Items: Commissioner Holme stated that the flooding last fall in Madison Valley was the source of several newspaper articles and a very serious, large-scale project is being discussed. The neighborhood thinks the City is dragging its feet on this project. Commissioner Holme commented that the Madison Valley Southwest Drainage Project has the potential for Seattle Public Utilities' use of park land during the drainage project. He urged that Parks help expedite this project and not delay it. He questioned why a briefing to the Board had been listed on the Board's "Future Agenda" list, and suddenly it dropped to the pending list. The public is concerned about this. He asked that the Park Board be given at least four weeks notice before an item is moved from an agenda.

[The Board regularly receives the "Future Agenda" list in its agenda packet. It includes tentative agenda items for the remainder of 2007.] The Coordinator explained that this is an internal document used only by the Park Board and Parks'

staff for planning purposes and has frequent additions and revisions. This spring, she received a list of agenda items from Interim Deputy Superintendent Williams and added them to meeting agenda dates as “placeholders.” The Madison Valley Southwest Drainage Project was one of these. It was not ready to come before the Board at the meeting date she assigned to it and it was moved to the “pending” list to await a new date. A notation will be added to the top of the document that it is an internal planning document only and not intended for distribution.

Change Park Board Meeting Time: Commissioner Holme suggested that the Board consider changing its meeting time from its current 6:00-8:00 pm to its former meeting time of 7:00-9:00 pm. He believes that the 6:00 pm start time is more difficult for citizens who wish to attend the meeting to testify. Commissioners Holme and Ramels favored a start time of 7:00 pm; Commissioners Adams and Barber favored a 6:30 pm start time. Commissioner Ranade suggested this be a topic at the Board’s next retreat and the Commissioners agreed.

Retreat: Once all seven Park Board positions are filled, the retreat will be scheduled for sometime in early 2008.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

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

Jackie Ramels, Acting Chair  
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE \_\_\_\_\_