

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
June 14, 2018

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<http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/watchVideos.asp?program=Parks>

Board of Park Commissioners

Present:

Andréa Akita, Vice Chair
Dennis Cook
Evan Hundley
William Lowe, Chair
Kelly McCaffrey
Rachel Anne Williams

Excused:

Tom Byers
Jessica Farmer
Marlon Herrera

Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff

Holly Miller, Interim Deputy Superintendent
Rachel Acosta, Board Coordinator

The meeting is held at 100 Dexter Avenue North. Commissioner Lowe calls the meeting to order at 6:30pm. The Board introduces themselves.

Public Comment

Pete DeLauney – Represents 5 community councils – They are supportive of SR520 project. However, there is no mitigation money going to Portage Bay. They are hopeful SPR will support opening discussion with U.S. Fish and Wildlife about the lily pads. This is a viable recreation area but due to the lily pads it is unusable.

Carl Stixrod – Refers to the packet he distributed. There is 23-acres of water in Portage Bay. There is space for for paddleboards and kayaks. A Master Plan was developed by SPR and community in 2006; none of which was incorporated in WSDOT planning for SR520. Without treatment of lily pads, and without mitigation, there will be a massive loss of recreation.

Jonathan Mark – Waterfront Park – He has been to three meetings at City Council regarding the Downtown Improvement District; he requests the Board recheck the Waterfront Plan to see if it fits today's vision of Seattle's parks system.

Superintendent's Report

Presented by Holly Miller, Interim Deputy Superintendent, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Woodland Park – SPR has received numerous complaints about the RV encampments at Woodland Park. In response to the neighborhood, SPR will install gates on the entrances and exits to keep the RV's out.

Public safety concerns – SPR is meeting proactively with the Southwest and Southeast precinct captains of the Seattle Police Department to talk through potential problem areas and develop plans to develop good public access and activation.

Martha Washington Park – A 17-year old was recently shot and killed at the park. SPR held a community meeting with the Seattle Police Department to discuss safety concerns. 30 residents attended and came up with a list of ideas; requested increased SPD presence and response times. SPD gave them contact information and encouraged them to contact when bad behaviors happen. SPR will do some vegetation pruning, add lights and picnic tables. Community will establish a block watch program. SPR is employing the same tactics at Alki where a 22-year old was shot.

Commissioner Lowe suggests SPD should change their shift times; people plan illicit activities based on when the police are around.

Investigating Spanish American war cannons at Woodland Park – They are contaminated with lead base paint. They are supposed to be removed on Monday. They will be transferred to a war museum in Chehalis who will clean them up and display them. It would cost the city \$100,000 to clean and keep them. There will be a plaque for the site.

Mayor's youth summer plan – There are opportunities for kids to be involved in employment, camps and other activities.

Meeting with NAACP – SPR leadership enlisted employees to help to create an alternative dispute resolution. SPR is using it very actively and encouraging supervisors to use it. NAACP will also encourage the use. Asking managers to have open door conversations with their employees. Trying to change management behavior towards dispute resolution and problem solving. SPR is holding a race and social justice training for all staff this summer.

Letter regarding City Hall Park – Interim Superintendent Williams wrote a letter to King County Representative Dembowski, Judge Whalen and Councilmember Bagshaw

regarding safety concerns at City Hall Park. Many people gather there. A juror was recently shot there. SPR has done many design changes to the park. One of the elements suggested included reorienting King County Courthouse to open into the park. Remove trees. Need to look for major funding for park redesign and restoration. The maintenance of the area has an impact. The Board appreciates the SPR staff who maintain the park. The Commissioners ask SPR to find a balance of keeping the greenspace but pruning for better sightlines and more daylight.

She provides the Board with a copy of the May communication report which demonstrates the number of ways SPR communicates with the public.

July for golf consultant follow up presentation

Partnership Spotlight: Woodland Park Zoo

Alejandro Grajal, Executive Director, Woodland Park Zoo

The Zoo is a green oasis in the middle of the city.

Woodland park zoo by the numbers:

- 34 million people reached by social media
- 300+ animals
- Top 12 zoos in the country
- 2.2 million acres of critical habitats and species protected locally and globally
- 1.35 million guests and largest membership base of Seattle area museum and cultural institutions
- 37,500 member households
- 92 acres of beautiful wildlife

New Strategic Plan - "Our Vision"

- Inspire people to embrace and act for wildlife conservation
- Provide extraordinary experiences with animals
- Lead by example with animal care of the highest quality

Place to inspire people to embrace and act for wildlife conservation - Major tenets of Woodland Park Zoon and known globally for this.

Community input for the strategic plan -

- Reached out to the community
- Directly engaged 6,000 people in online surveys, focus groups and one-on-one interviews
- Included focused conversations with:
 - community leaders,
 - elected officials
 - regional and national thought leaders
 - members of diverse and underserved communities

Extraordinary experiences

New exhibit – Assam Rhino Reserve

- Layered interpretation for different abilities
- Focuses on wildlife trafficking

Virtual reality pilot coming soon.

Strengthened commitment to access and inclusion – Events for different groups:

- hosting athletes and families of special Olympics
- special program for vets and military
- Children experiencing homelessness

Training WPZ staff on diversity and inclusion.

Workg with NW ADA to make the zoo more accessible for all.

Extraordinary Experiences

- Evening Zoo launch this summer;
- 100th anniversary Carousel celebration;
- New programs for increased affordability – Membership and Tickets. The Zoo will double the amount of free and reduced price tickets.
- Increased behind the scenes visits with City, County, State and Federal Elected Officials

Woodland Park Zoo has top line accreditation and certification for their animal care from American Humane and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. Hosting AZA conference this fall – largest conference in the world for zoos and aquariums.

Creating a conservation movement –

- Focus on anti-wildlife trafficking messages and actions throughout zoo and online
- Robust field conservation projects including Tree Kangaroo Conservation Project and Living Northwest regional efforts;
- Ambassador Animals programs providing up-close experiences for guests

Maintenance projects never end –

- Northern Trail boardwalk maintenance
- Parking lot repaving for access
- Assam Rhino Reserve exhibit opening and refresh
- African Village thatch roofs replacement
- Sensory Garden opening soon – this is in partnership with SPR
- Day/Night exhibit fire update
- New food vendor RFP – top 12 food vendors are bidding for the contract

Eliminated single use bottles and plastic; upgrading compost to double zoo doo.

Growth is going according to plan. 1.4 million visitors last year. Layering experiences with evening and zoo events. Zoo Lights event is most popular in the city.

Increasing reach to prioritize access to those with barriers.

Thanks the park district and SPR for their support.

Many people don't have the opportunity to attend so Woodland Park Zoo is working hard to think creatively to get people to the Zoo.

Have 3 volunteer programs – Two year-long and one only during the summer; it is very competitive. It is a great program for high school kids in the zoo. The internship program is unpaid and technical. Alejandro would like to develop a program to provide paid internships for youth that could serve as entry level job pipelines into tech positions.

Briefing: Your Voice, Your Choice

Amy Nguyen, Community Programs Strategic Advisor, Department of Neighborhoods

Kraig Cook, Program Coordinator, Department of Neighborhoods

\$3million program –

Timeline - January open call for park and street improvements – they received over 1000 submissions. They go through a community prioritization process. Participated in 32 meetings across the city. Now it's time to vote!

Community driven – ballot based on City Council districts. Last year, the voting leaned towards transportation projects and DON wants the Park Board to spread the word. 33 projects were transportation. There is \$2million to split between City Council districts. \$1 million towards an equity focus areas allowing for increased resources to those communities. They will be going into schools for voting next week.

Community members know what parks need, Amy and Kraig are here to ask the board to spread the word about the voting.

The information is translated into many different languages.

The capital projects funded through this grant are smaller allowing for more immediate implementation. Each project could cost up to \$90,000.

Capital funding is Real Estate Excise Tax and operational funding is through the General Fund.

Kraig and Amy discuss the challenges of doing all the outreach and getting people involved and voting. The Commissioners encourage them to look into the Community

Learning Centers, to find kids who need to do community service and volunteer opportunities.

Presentation: Matrix of Issues regarding SECO proposal

Max Jacobs, Property and Acquisition Services Manager, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Written Briefing

MEMORANDUM

Date: June 14, 2018
To: Rachel Acosta
From: Max Jacobs
Subject: Board Briefing: South Lake Union Fast Passenger Ferry Issues Matrix

Requested Board Action

This is an informational briefing for the Board of Park Commissioners on next steps.

Project or Policy Description and Background

The Board was previously briefed by representatives of SECO Development, Inc., a commercial real estate developer interested in establishing passenger ferry access between its Southport Office Campus project, at the south end of Lake Washington, and downtown Seattle. SECO proposes to use Lake Union Park as a landing site for a ferry service. In this briefing, Parks and Recreation Real Estate staff will outline some of the issues that will need to be considered when evaluating this proposal.

Attached in Exhibit A is a graphic depicting SECO’s proposed passenger ferry route from its Southport Campus to South Lake Union. Details have not been developed, but the proposal would involve using dock space along the north end of Lake Union Park for ferry docking, passenger loading and unloading and other pedestrian through-access, and possibly ticketing facilities. Due to the Navy’s deed restrictions, state grant covenants and other constraints limiting the allowable commercial uses of much of the Lake Union Park property, the most likely location for the passenger ferry dock facility would be in the westernmost boat landing north of the MOHAI building, as depicted in Exhibit B.

Evaluation of the proposal needs to consider SPR’s policy requiring that park land be preserved and used for public park and recreation purposes. Placing a facility or use on park land therefore must be evaluated through the lens of whether such project serves park and recreation uses. It should be noted, however, that Lake Union Park was subject to a significant master planning effort, involving extensive public outreach that was updated in 2000, per Council Resolution 30206. The updated Master Plan states that “A pedestrian ferry, water taxi and/or tour boat landing may be accommodated at the foot of the Terry Ave Promenade.” (The westernmost landing described above.) Nevertheless, a ferry service operating in Lake Union Park poses significant issues, including those outlined below, and the fundamental question of what Parks and Recreation goals are served by the proposed project.

Public Involvement Process

There have not yet been public meetings or other community outreach on this proposal. Previously there was significant public involvement as part of the master planning process.

Issues for Discussion

The following issues will need to be considered as we evaluate the passenger ferry proposal. Exhibit B is a map depicting the areas discussed below.

General Real Estate Issues: Creating a commercial passenger ferry facility in the Park would involve a real estate transaction of some kind (a permit, license, lease, concession or other), which requires determining whether and how much compensation or rent should be paid to the City in exchange for using City-owned land and facilities. Ordinarily, a private user of public real estate would be required to pay market rent in cash and/or services.

I-42: Under Initiative 42, Seattle's park land is to be used only for park and recreation purposes. Transfers, which may include leases, or changes of use, for non-park and recreation purposes can be allowed only if Council determines after a public hearing that there is no reasonable alternative. (In some cases, replacement property must be provided – although that may not be applicable here.) SECO probably will have to show what non-SPR alternatives it considered (for example, neighboring private property). The King County Water Taxi operates out of Seacrest Park, which began as a temporary arrangement and there is no sign they are close to finding a permanent site.

Navy Deed Restrictions: The City acquired the Lake Union property from the United States Navy. The deed conveying the property to the City noted that the transfer of the property was for public use.

RCO Grant Covenants: As the Board is aware, many Seattle Parks properties were acquired or developed using grant funds provided by the State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). RCO grants are provided on conditions specific to the type of grant, so properties acquired or developed with RCO grants are encumbered with permanent covenants that establish the allowable recreational uses for that property. For example, many RCO grant covenants specify that a property must be used for outdoor recreation, or certain types of water access. The Lake Union Park complex is encumbered by a number of RCO grants. As depicted in the map at Exhibit B, the west beach is covered by a series of outdoor recreation grants that prohibit development of indoor facilities and limit boat use to hand-launch. The central waterway, including the western dock and the dock along the northern edge of the lawn, is encumbered by the hand-launch boat covenant, restricting uses to primarily small craft such as kayaks. Because of the RCO covenants, none of these areas could be used to site a motorized passenger ferry terminal or docking facility.

Center for Wooden Boats Lease and Operations: The east side of Lake Union Park accommodates the Center for Wooden Boats (CWB) facility, which includes wooden docks for its fleet of small sailboats and other hand-launched vessels used in its educational and other programming. Because of CWB's agreement to use and occupy this portion of the Park, these areas could not be used for passenger ferry docking without modifying the CWB agreement and significantly changing its programs. It also should be noted that CWB's presence in Lake Union Park was a key element of the Master Plan, which envisioned creating a vibrant, highly-accessible program of small-scale boat use. The CWB educational and recreational boats enter and exit Lake Union through the channel along the east side of the MOHAI building.

Wharf Management Agreement: In addition to operating its educational and recreational boat programs in the two easternmost slips of the Historic Ships Wharf, CWB manages permitting of the Wharf's westernmost landing and of the north and west bulkheads to allow for various uses. This arrangement was developed for practical purposes: SPR had no staff available to manage the moorage operation while CWB was present on site. Under the Management Agreement, CWB retains the moorage fees collected, reporting profits and losses quarterly, with the understanding that when profits exceed losses, SPR will receive 10% of the fees. This arrangement provides income to CWB, helping it fund its overall programming and management of the wharf, bulkheads, and boat pond. Changes to the way the docks are managed would involve changing the Wharf Management Agreement.

Other Operators' Requests: In addition to the SECO Development proposal, other groups have asked to use Lake Union Park as a passenger ferry or water taxi docking site. Consideration would have to be given to whether only one or multiple operators are selected and how such selection would occur.

DNR Waterway Permit: The City's use of Waterway 3, the inlet west of the main park peninsula, is subject to a waterway use permit from State Department of Natural Resources (DNR), which requires that the waterway be used for public recreational waterway access.

DNR Aquatic Lease: Parks has many leases with DNR to provide public access to various waterways owned by the state. The City's leases with DNR are at no cost to the City, provided the City uses the area in question for free public recreation. This is the general arrangement at most of the City's DNR leases. By contrast, where a DNR water access area is used for commercial purposes DNR charges market rent.

The water along the Historic Ships Wharf is within a DNR no-cost (recreational) lease. Unlike the RCO grant-encumbered portions of the Park, commercial uses are not prohibited in this area. However, if the City permits a commercial use DNR would require the City to pay rent, which would have to be covered by the passenger ferry operator. Therefore, moorage fees that currently go to fund CWB's operation would be re-directed. This change would have to be discussed with CWB.

SPR staff has had preliminary discussions with DNR and understands DNR likely would agree to amending the lease. Based on DNR's current workload, negotiating and obtaining approval for that amendment would take 12 months or more.

Historic Ships: The boat slips along the Historic Ships Wharf are within the DNR leased area. Currently these slips are occupied by historic ships, which are owned or maintained by community groups or historical organizations. Because they have been available for public tours, they have generally been viewed as being part of the overall Park facility and not considered commercial in nature. SPR is exploring long-term options regarding some of these slips, to ensure they are benefitting the Park and its users. Making any changes to the existing historic ships moorage would involve a significant amount of outreach and planning.

MOHAI Lease and Operations: Under a long-term lease with the City, the Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI) occupies the historic naval building at the northeast corner of the Park. MOHAI's program and public benefits assumes use of portions of the west side of the building exterior for access and events. While MOHAI cannot exclude members of the public from walking around the exterior of its building, MOHAI's lease anticipates that the Museum can expect that the foot traffic immediately outside its building comes from those visiting the Park or the Museum. A

passenger ferry facility would involve possibly large numbers of passengers entering and leaving the area for the transportation purpose of entering or leaving downtown. These passengers would be crossing Lake Union Park and walking close to or through MOHAI's operations. As a result of the transportation-based foot traffic close to the MOHAI building, signage, barriers or other measures may have to be considered to reduce or mitigate disruption to MOHAI and its programs. MOHAI should be included in any discussions regarding adding a passenger ferry facility.

Engineering and Safety: In addition to the policy and legal questions above, the passenger ferry proposal would require an engineering study to determine what types of structural upgrades (or new construction) would be required to accommodate the proposed use. The fast ferry SECO describes in its Southport Campus marketing materials is a 149-passenger catamaran. We do not currently have detail on the size, weight or other specifications of this vessel.

Traffic and Parking: Operating a passenger ferry out of Lake Union Park, depending on usage, will involve potentially large numbers of people traveling through the Park. Some of them may park cars at or near the Park parking lot, which could displace those coming to visit the Park, MOHAI or CWB. Part of reviewing this proposal should include a traffic study.

Ticketing Infrastructure and Ancillary Facilities: It would have to be understood whether the passenger ferry operator would need to install ticketing kiosks or other support facilities or equipment.

Comfort Stations: Ferry passengers would likely need a public restroom facility that could exceed the capacity of the comfort station currently designed for Park users. Expanding a comfort station to accommodate ferry passengers could present additional challenges regarding non-parks use of park land.

Equity and Public Benefit: Developing and operating a private ferry service on SPR land involves considering how it would serve all communities, including those who have historically been underserved. The City would want to ensure that access to the ferry service was affordable, or that there were programs or other features to make this resource available to a broad range of the communities we serve. If the project were to advance, in addition to the rent/compensation analysis noted above, the transaction would have to articulate the additional public benefits provided by the ferry service.

Citizen Concerns/Opposition: No public outreach has yet been conducted, so there are no specific community concerns to report. SPR would anticipate a significant number of community members objecting to this proposed use under the argument that it is not a park and recreation use. Community members that are very protective of parks may be concerned that the proposal is more of a transportation facility and/or a commercial use.

Support. The passenger ferry proposal has already gained attention and early interest because it is exciting and because it suggests alternative and possibly energy-saving modes of commuting into and out of downtown Seattle from other parts of the region. With high community awareness of the challenge of affordable housing, the idea of creating a new commuting mode may offer an option for additional people to work in Seattle while living well south of the city.

Park Board Questions: SPR would like the Board's thoughts on what is important to you as SPR and the City further vet this proposal. If this proposal is to be fully considered, a list of needed analysis and community outreach action items should be developed.

Environmental Sustainability

Many details of this proposal are not yet known, including the engineering required to renovate or build a new dock that could accommodate the proposed passenger ferry vessel. Also not known is whether frequent passenger ferry trips into and out of Lake Union and through Lake Washington would impact the environment. It is possible that this project would require substantial environmental impact analysis.

Budget

Presumably the capital costs to develop a passenger ferry facility would be borne by the private operator, not the City. The ongoing operation may create maintenance or other staff cost increases that would have to be understood before permitting the facility.

Schedule

SECO Development's marketing materials suggest a desired 2020 start for its passenger ferry service. Other than this, we do not currently have schedule detail. The issues above would have to be addressed as part of developing a potential timeline.

Additional Information

Attachments

Exhibit A: Map of Proposed Passenger Ferry Route

Exhibit B: Map of Lake Union Park

Exhibit A

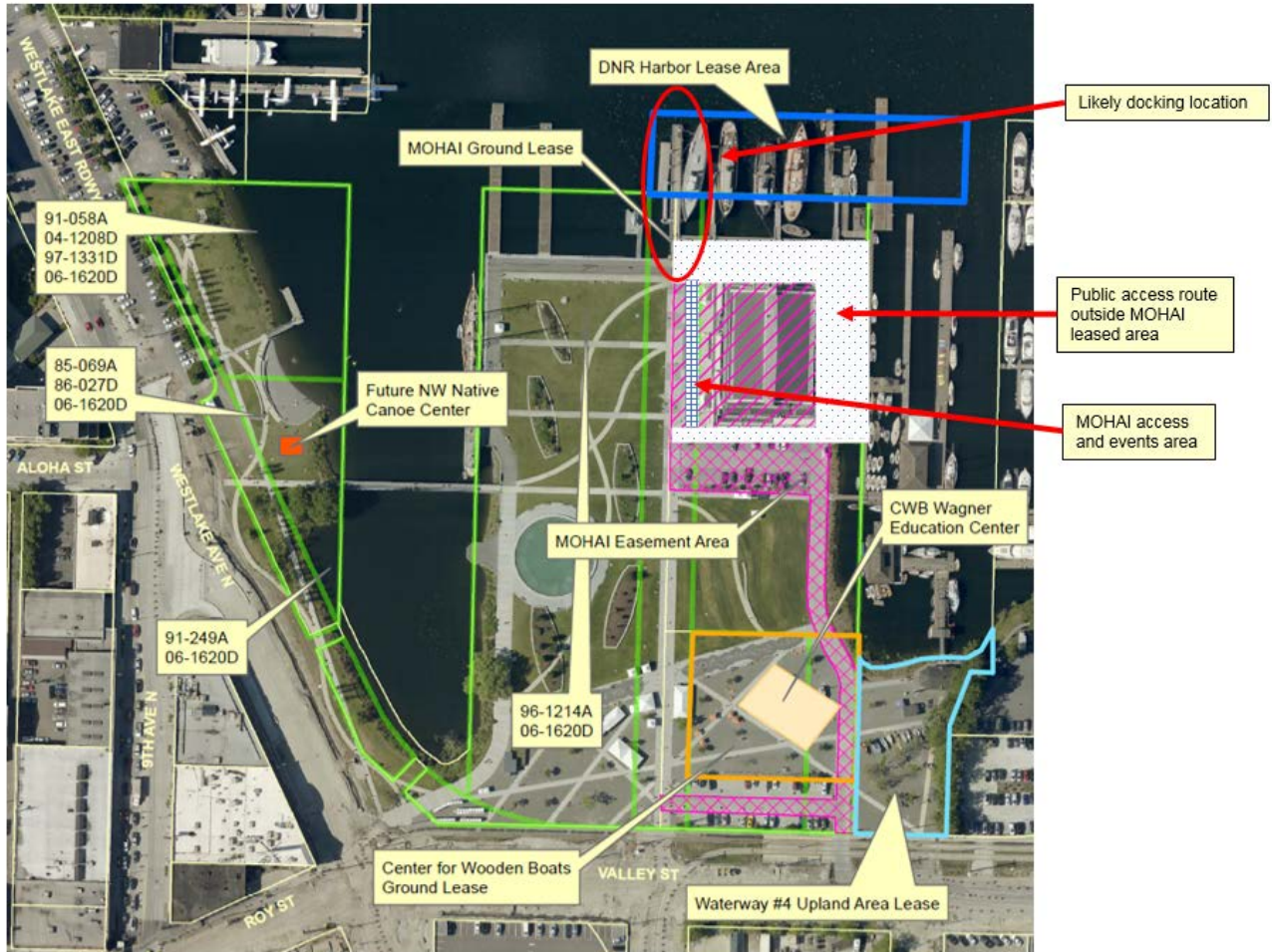
Proposed Route

Southport Water Taxi



Exhibit B

Lake Union Park



Presentation and Discussion

office and development project at so end of lk wa in renton

Southport –

Issues to review to vet the proposal –

Lake Union Park – Existing uses and encumbrances – many parks are bought with grants and that comes with strings attached;

RCO funding has covenants – permanent restrictions about how parks can be used.

Init 42 – SPR land be used for park and rec uses; commercial or transportation may not be a park and rec use; council could supersede it;

Entire park was navy facility – navy deed says it has to be for public purposes;

MOHAI and Center for Wooden Boats – leases and major role in park functioning for the public;

Historic ships on the North end; and north end is under DNR lease – amend lease to include commercial use - ; cwbc manages the wharf

Engineering questions; environmental impacts; traffic and parking questions; what other infrastructure would be required?

Many agrmts have a pub benefit requirements? Required to provide public benefits

There would be public outreach and discussions with mayor and council.

Focus on use not the nature of the entity; in a few years the co. would hand it over to king county metro;

There would need to be a traffic study;

Spr is not taking the position on it; analyzing the issues to have a threshold of ideas;

Spr really likes creative ideas and want to be good stewards of park land. Balance the needs of the city with the cool new innovative ideas.

There are private owners adjacent to lake union park. Did they approach them?

Old/New Business

Moorages – update at next meeting?

>>>Exec cmte – finalize the letter and add a matrix;

Tuesday joint meeting – Andrea and Evan will be out.

Send updated calendar for summer.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourns at 8:33pm.

APPROVED: _____ DATE _____

William Lowe, Chair
Board of Park Commissioners