

Minutes of the
City of Gig Harbor
Friends of the Parks Commission
July 5, 2006
5:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:

Ken Malich called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Roll was taken.

PRESENT: Commissioners Jacquie Goodwill, Peter Hampl, Ken Malich, and Michael Perrow. Nick Tarabochia was excused. City Council Member Paul Conan, City staff David Brereton, Kristin Udem and Terri Reed.

Ken Malich asked Walt Smith to speak on what was discussed at the last Friends of the Parks meeting in regards to the Gig Harbor Peninsula Historical Society's presentation.

Ken Malich mentioned that the motion made at the last meeting "to endorse the concept of a parks partnership between the Gig Harbor Peninsula Historical Society and the City of Gig Harbor for purposes of a joint development of public access trails along the museum property and Scofield Tidelands Park, to include also the triangular Gig Harbor Peninsula Historical Society parcel along Donkey Creek" was made without discussing the money aspect on this acquisition as far as City payment or Historical Society payment.

Walt Smith answered that he was going before the City Council with this proposal on July 10, 2006. Ken restated that the idea of money exchanging hands wasn't discussed with the Friends of the Parks Commission. Walt Smith answered that was correct. Ken said that the minutes mention that Jennifer Kilmer talked about payment but an amount was not discussed. Walt Smith answered that he wasn't aware that the Commission was in the budgetary process of going through the City. The Historical Society has been discussing the concept with the City for about 18 months. Walt Smith said that they went through the budget hearings with the City last year where funds were discussed but there has been no approval by the City. Ken mentioned that the City Council could ask them to do more at a later date. Dave Brereton answered that the Committee has already given their support to the Council, Mark Hoppen and the Mayor and down the road they could be asked for additional input.

Peter Hampl asked what the Historical Society is envisioning for the easement as far as a monetary amount. Walt Smith answered that they are asking for the appraised value of the property which is \$930,000. He feels that the parking would be a great benefit to the City. Peter confirmed that the payment is not just for the easement but the entire plan which includes partial use of the parking stalls, Parcel D, the easement, trail and the daylighting of Donkey Creek.

Peter Hampl asked for clarification that they aren't asking for a lump sum payment. Walt Smith confirmed that they are proposing payment over five years, \$50,000-2006, \$150,000-2007, \$200,000-2008, \$200,000-2009, and the balance in 2010.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The Commission members read the minutes of the June 7, 2006 meeting.

MOTION: Move to approve the June 7, 2006 meeting minutes as presented, with clarification incorporated.
Hampl / Goodwill - unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

Donkey Creek Viewing Platform – David Freeman

Ken Malich asked for an explanation of the project. Dave Freeman was present as a Rotary Club representative. Dave explained that Rotary has committed to building infrastructure and improvements in the City of Gig Harbor. What they are proposing is a viewing platform for Donkey Creek to allow the public a way to access and watch salmon spawn. The platform will give Rotarians a chance to do a hands-on project and put something back into the community. They are also proposing to install a 200 foot boardwalk. They have discussed two options for placement of the platform with the City. Site A is actually located on Historical Society property, so they have been advised to move the platform over so that it is on City park property. Site B is the plan that they will come forward with for permits through the City.

Ken Malich asked if they ever considered putting a bridge across the creek for better viewing. Walt answered that the platform goes pretty far out for better visibility and that they hadn't thought about a bridge. The platform will have cable railing and be ADA accessible.

Ken Malich asked about penetrating wetlands with the posts. Kristin Udem explained that the decking, including the footings, cannot be located in the wetlands but is allowable in the buffer. Viewing platforms and trails are allowed within the buffer just not in the wetland itself. Ken asked if a bridge would be allowed. Kristin said that she would have to look into it.

Peter Hampl mentioned the condition of the bottom of the creek and asked if the fish ladder has been abandoned by the fishing groups. Dave Brereton will check with the groups and see if they are still interested in maintaining this.

Jacquie Goodwill brought up the idea of a walkway that surrounds the park. Dave Freeman says that they want to start building in August so they need to get approval to start. They are working on getting approval for the walkway so that it isn't in conflict with the wetlands. Kristin Udem explained that according to the critical areas ordinance, the pathways or trails have to be perpendicular to the stream.

MOTION: Move to accept the proposal of the Gig Harbor Rotary Club to construct a viewing platform on Site B in Donkey Creek Park along with an ADA-acceptable walkway made of Tek wood.

HAMPL / Perrow – three voted in favor, Ken Malich voted against the motion.

Crescent Creek Proposal

Marian Berejekian, project manager for the Friends of Pierce County, explained that they had approached the City in October of last year asking if they could do something about the erosion in the park along the left stream bank. They want to be environmentally friendly, encouraging people off the bank and onto the decks. They would discourage this by placing rootwad cedar balls in the erosion areas. This is called soft armoring and educational signs would be included. There would be two observation decks.

The Friends of Pierce County group has received a \$36,000 grant from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and \$15,000 from Starbucks for the project. They will need a total of about \$90,000. They are hoping that the City will be able to help with the balance.

Kristin Udem explained that they are going through the shoreline permitting process and Marian is working with Fish and Wildlife, which is a requirement when doing in-water work. Marian added that they would be putting about 400 plants in also and this part could be approved quickly.

Friends of Pierce County would like to get approval for the additional \$39,000 in the 2007 budget. They are going to move forward with the amount of money they have available now and work with contractors that might be willing to take payment in 2007.

Ken Malich asked about people being able to get to the creek. One of the ideas to keep people from causing more erosion is to put in a split rail fence. Ken asked about a rock wall or concrete to keep erosion from going into the stream. Jacquie mentioned a time when she was at the park when many children were playing near the stream and it turned the bank into a mess. Marian explained that they are trying to protect the bank and still allow people to have a view of the creek. Ken would rather see re-building what was originally at the location with a railing. Marian explained that if fill is used then it becomes an Army Corp of Engineers permit, which is usually about a year out.

MOTION: Move to encourage the Crescent Creek Restoration project as outlined by Friends of Pierce County.

Discussion included Ken Malich saying that he would like to rebuild the rock wall and restore it historically and not put in a viewing platform. Peter Hampl answered that Gig Harbor has grown tremendously and that there are too many people to support this historical restoration.

Hampl / Perrow – three voted in favor, Ken Malich voted against the motion.

Westside Park

Dave Brereton gave an update on the grant that was submitted for Westside Park. He mentioned some of the features that were added to the proposal. He said we should find out by the end of the month how the grant rated. Dave explained that the grant is going forward with the conceptual of having these improvements done. If we decide to make changes to the plan submitted we may take a risk of losing funding.

Ken Malich asked what we could do this year as far as development. Dave answered that we could possibly hire a consultant to begin design of the park. He explained that it is going to be tricky to design because of elevation changes and it will need an engineer and consultant to design the construction drawings. Dave mentioned getting a consultant on board as soon as we know about the funding.

Michael Perrow said that he would like to see a tennis court and a half-court basketball court similar to Crescent Creek incorporated into the plan.

MOTION: Move to enthusiastically encourage the City to hire a design consultant to design Westside Park.

Goodwill / Perrow – three voted in favor, Hampl voted against the motion.

NEW BUSINESS:

Dog Parks

Jacque Goodwill explained that Wilkinson Farm Park has become an unofficial place where people with dogs go to run them off-leash and have adopted this park for this purpose. Jacquie would like to clarify which City parks are dog-friendly and maybe it would be a good idea to identify one park as an off-leash designated park.

Dave Brereton mentioned that we have provided some information for designating a park as off-leash. We currently have an ordinance that prohibits dogs being left off-leash anywhere within the City limits.

Carol Cain, 6019 49th Street NW, representing the Gig Harbor Kennel Club, spoke asking for permission to hold dog classes in Gig Harbor parks since they can no longer use school facilities in the area. Dave Brereton advised her to go through the Special Events process at the City by contacting Laurelyn in Administration.

Candy Plumlee, 10002 58th Street NW, said that they are trying to get a group together to ask the County to establish a dog park west of the Narrows. They are looking for an

area larger than Wilkinson Park but wanted to come to our meeting to show support for having an off-leash area designated in Gig Harbor.

Peter Hampl is opposed to using Wilkinson Park as a dog park and would personally like to see Westside Park used for this purpose. He mentioned that if Westside Park was used as a dog park that there would have to be a way to keep them out of the wetland and buffer. He thinks that Wilkinson Park has some historical significance to the community. Jacquie said that the portion used for dogs in Wilkinson is not the historical part. Jacquie would like to figure out the costs and process involved in making a part of Wilkinson a dog park and would like to know how we are going to enforce dogs being off-leash if there isn't a park designated as one.

Michael Perrow said that this is a long term issue and that maybe the City and the County could work together on a solution. He thinks that Westside Park should be used as a neighborhood park.

Lee Desta, 7425 Hill Avenue, spoke about her experience with dog parks and is a volunteer in Ollala at Bandix Park, which is 28 acres. She has also worked on putting dog parks together.

Jacquie Goodwill thanked everyone for their input and said that this was just the beginning of dialogue to discuss dog parks and asked the volunteer group for their help. Jacquie said that discussion also needs to be held with PenMet.

The dog park interest group mentioned that they are going to be having a public dog park discussion meeting at 6:30 p.m. on July 19th at the Library.

MOTION: Move to start dialogue with PenMet regarding the issue of an off-leash dog park on the Gig Harbor peninsula.

Hampl / Goodwill - unanimously approved.

Peter Hampl will set up a meeting with PenMet and the Commission members to talk about off-leash dog parks.

City Park Update

Dave Brereton explained the summary to bring all the Commission members up to speed on what is going on currently at all City parks. Michael asked about Adam Tallman Park. Dave Brereton answered that the trails around it are ours by easement but will verify this.

Peter Hampl asked about Eddon Boat Park and the status of the house. Dave explained that at this time it is going to be saved and won't be demolished. It may be turned into bathrooms, meeting rooms and a community kitchen.

Peter Hampl asked about the status of the inventory of the Wilkinson barn. Dave said that we are waiting on the grant to do the inventory of the contents.

Michael Perrow mentioned his previous email about a crosswalk to cross Vernhardson Street. Dave Brereton will talk to Steve Misuriak about this issue.

Michael Perrow asked about the status of the water fountain at the Crescent Creek shelter. Dave Brereton will look into the status.

Parks Appreciation Day

Dave Brereton explained that the County and PenMet put on a program this year that included one of our parks. We provided supervisors and tools and worked jointly with PenMet. This was the first year that the event was organized over here. Peter would like to plan for this next year and have the Commission members present at the parks. The date of the 2007 Parks Appreciation Day is April 21st. Jacquie would like to contact someone from Starbucks about partnering for this event. Peter will come back next month with more information and contact Eric Guenther at PenMet.

Parks Budget

Dave Brereton explained that he just received the 2007 budget packet. He has the month of July to complete this. He needs a list of any improvements or additions the members would like to see at the parks next year. Dave has to have the requests completed by July 21st. Peter asked about the current budget. Dave suggested going on line and pulling up the 2006 budget and the Commission members meeting to come up with a list.


Peter Hampl commended the parks workers and the great condition of the parks and restrooms and would like to pass along the Commission's appreciation.

Jacquie Goodwill asked Dave for his list of parks priorities. Dave will talk to his staff and forward a short list.

ADJOURN:

MOTION: Move to adjourn at 7:25 p.m.
– Hampl /Goodwill– unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,


Terri Reed