

Minutes of the
City of Gig Harbor
Friends of the Parks Commission
June 7, 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. City Staff David Brereton, Mark Hoppen, Dan Lilley, Lita Dawn Stanton, John Vodopich and Terri Reed. Eddon Boat Ad Hoc Committee Member John McMillan. Citizens Jennifer Kilmer, Walt Smith and John Holmaas.

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

MOTION: Move to approve the March 7, 2006 meeting minutes as presented. Malich/Goodwill – unanimously approved.

Ken mentioned that he didn't see the meeting notice in this week's Gateway newspaper.

NEW BUSINESS:

Presentation from Gig Harbor Peninsula Historical Society – Walt Smith, Jennifer Kilmer

Walt Smith introduced Jennifer Kilmer. He explained that they were in attendance to provide an overview of what the Historical Society is attempting to accomplish in conjunction with working with the City and to answer any questions.

Ken Malich asked if they have had prior meetings with the City Council. Jennifer answered that they have met with the City Council, Mark Hoppen and the Parks Committee. Jennifer talked about how long they have been working on this proposal and provided Resolution 647. This resolution was passed by the City Council in April of 2005. This resolution discussed working with the Historical Society to move forward on looking at the vision for the "Beach Basket" corner.

Jennifer said that they worked very closely with Terry Lee from Pierce County Council to try and make the Scofield purchase happen. She explained the tidelands purchase was made by Pierce County for the property which is adjacent to the property that they purchased for the new Harbor History Museum. She feels like they have a good vision for what that area could look like.

Jennifer showed the conceptual site map and explained that they would like to make this a real community access in partnership with the City. They would like to see some walking paths to get down to the water. She said they would also like to see some opportunities to learn more about the history and the ecology of Gig Harbor with interpretive points. She said that the Scofield tideland is the location of the original Native American village in Gig Harbor. She also mentioned that the site of the museum is also the location of the Austin Mill, which would provide an opportunity to talk about the history of timber in our area. There is also an estuary, so there could be an ecology interpretation point with scopes.

Jennifer explained that the second thing they are proposing to the City is providing some space through their property to daylight Donkey Creek. She explained the details of a report that was prepared in 2002. This report showed how the Donkey Creek corner could be turned into a much larger community park. She would like to put on the table to provide an easement to the City of Gig Harbor through the back and along the side of their property to enable the daylighting of Donkey Creek. She feels that this would need to be achieved through some grant funding and feels that partnerships do better when looking at grants.

Walt Smith talked about their visit to the Kresge Foundation in Detroit that made it evident that they like to leverage their money. He said that Kresge likes to see cooperative efforts. Walt said that they are seeking to raise more private funds than public funds. Walt outlined the parcels involved and their locations.

Peter asked about the total area owned by the Historical Society and if they plan to tear anything down. Walt answered that the two buildings would be pulled together with a breezeway and they also want to move the boat down by the water.

Ken asked if they are looking for a merger of the properties or if they are they asking for a partnership with the City. Jennifer answered that the trails would be a common thing with perpetual easements and that they plan to keep the brick building that has the kayak shop in it and the Door Store. They don't have any current plan to tear them down. They do represent room for expansion in the future for the museum. They don't have any expectation of tearing those down in the next five to ten years. She said that the Society would provide the interpretive materials and the City would perform more the parks function of creating and maintaining the walking paths. Peter asked if the City would maintain the paths on the Historical Society's property. Jennifer said that they would be providing the easement so at that point the City would have purchased an easement through the property. She said that they hope that the City would maintain the paths.

Peter asked if the concept of a roundabout at this location would be feasible. Dave Brereton said that it would not be feasible. Mark Hoppen also mentioned that it wasn't practical to do a roundabout at this location. Ken expressed concern about the many practical problems of the Creek. Jennifer explained that there could either be a culvert underneath the road, a bridge over the road, or it could be re-routed on Austin Street.

Ken asked what they would like to Commission to recommend. Walt answered that they would like a mutual easement with the City and the City to purchase the additional property on the Donkey Creek side. He would like the Commission to recommend a cooperative agreement. Jacquie Goodwill asked if the City owns the Scofield tidelands. Jennifer explained that Pierce County purchased the land under the conservation futures program. Pierce County gave the museum the option of leasing for \$1 a year or to give the property to the City. They decided to give it to the City because they felt it should be in public hands.

Jennifer mentioned that they want payment for the easement but not in one lump sum. They are looking for a commitment to have the partnership.

Dan Lilley commented about his concern for natural buffers being restored and brought back. He gave an example of Crescent Creek which has no buffer and he feels that it has been trampled by the public. Jennifer commented that it would be moving toward being more environmentally friendly by opening up the Creek and she said that they are supportive of the conservation of the property. Walt Smith thinks that controlled pathways would help. Peter Hampl mentioned that a split cedar rail fence could be used.

Ken Malich said that people want a place in Gig Harbor where they can actually touch the water. Peter Hampl mentioned that the Eddon Boat Park is planned to have water access. Dan Lilley asked about the wetlands ordinance and a buffer.

MOTION: Move to enthusiastically endorse the resolution that was passed by the Council regarding easement for the creek and enhancing the area as presented by the Historical Society.
Perrow / Goodwill
The motion was withdrawn.

MOTION: Motion 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.
Goodwill / Perrow - unanimously approved.

Blue Star Memorial Highway Program

Dave Brereton explained that a citizen group would like to put a Blue Star Highway Memorial at Donkey Creek Park. They would like to install a plaque on a stone that is about 9 by 11 inches. Jacquie and Michael mentioned that they have seen these markers all over the United States. Dave explained that the group would pay for the marker and the City would place it for them. Dave said that the marker would be put in the planter area by the bathroom so that people could view it easily.

MOTION: Motion to endorse the proposal for the Blue Star Memorial Highway marker.
Perrow / Goodwill – unanimously approved. Peter Hampl abstained.

Donkey Creek Viewing Platform

This item was tabled until the July meeting. Dave Freeman will be invited to the meeting to explain the details of the proposal.

Crescent Creek

This item was tabled until the July meeting. The Friends of Pierce County will be invited to the meeting to explain their proposal. John Vodopich mentioned that the organization has received a \$15,000 Starbucks grant. Peter Hampl asked Dan Lilley what he would like to see for a natural buffer. Dan answered that he would plant ground cover, shrubs and trees as thick as possible. The proposal provides restoration of the bank, restoration of the plantings and reduces access to the creek.

GRANT PROPOSALS OVERVIEW

Lita Dawn Stanton presented an overview of the five parks grants that have been filed on behalf of the City. She explained that in order to file the grants, they required conceptualls but the plans will be flexible if they are funded. The proposals would then come back to the Parks Commission for discussion.

Wilkinson Farm Homestead

Lita Dawn explained that this is a Certified Local Government grant. The grant proposal is for \$8,935 for a historic structures report on the barn. There is no match for the grant. Specifically, it is for upgrades for public access into the barn. Lita Dawn showed views of the site and parcel map, the dairy barn, the wetlands and a conceptual that was done previously. Lita Dawn said that we should know next month whether the grant is successful.

Eddon Boat Park

Lita Dawn said that this is a State grant for aquatic lands acquisition in the amount of \$1 million. There is a 50% match, which has already been met with the 2004 bond to purchase the site. She showed some views of the site.

Eddon Boatyard Restoration Project

This is a separate grant request through the State Heritage Capital Projects Fund, specifically for preservation projects. This is another \$1 million grant for the boat building structure for public access. This grant is under review now and we should know by the end of July whether or not the grant has succeeded. This is a 2 to 1 grant. This has also been met by the 2004 bond. Lita Dawn showed some views of the site.

There has been a historic structures report done on the boat building. They came back saying that even though the brick building has no value in and of itself, its association with the boat building that was a family owned and operated facility is huge. This report was presented to the Council so that they could understand the implications of demolishing the house. The house could be used for bathrooms and meeting space.

Westside Neighborhood Park

This is a local parks development grant for \$296,000. This is 2007 funding with a 50% match. This amount would have to be budgeted as a capital improvement item. Ken asked if there was anything in the budget now for this park. Dave Brereton answered that in the 2006 budget, there is \$50,000 for preliminary work on the park. The City would be asked to put \$363,569 in the 2007 budget. The total cost to develop the park would be \$659,659. Lita Dawn showed some views and a conceptual of the site.

Scofield Estuary Park

This grant is a water access grant with a 50% match, which has already been met through the Pierce County conservation futures because they gifted the property to the City. The grant request is for \$1.4 million. Water access grants have a requirement for getting down to the water. Lita Dawn showed views of the site location and a conceptual for the plans.

Lita Dawn made a request of the Commission to recommend to Council that the brick house is worth preserving for all the reasons that were listed and ask them to preserve it. Jacquie Goodwill asked staff if the bathrooms were required and if that is how the brick building would be used. John Vodopich answered that what we learned from the Historic Structures report is that once you start making changes to the boatyard building itself, the structural changes are so disruptive and costly that it isn't feasible to try and maintain the historic structure. Peter Hampl asked about uses for the brick house. John explained that there has been talk about a community kitchen, a public gathering spot and that Alan Anderson has proposed to use the building for his kayak program.

MOTION: Motion to endorse the salvage and adaptive re-use of the adjacent home at the Eddon Boatyard Park, for use in creation of public facilities that further enhance use of the park.
Hampl / Goodwill – unanimously approved

Ken Malich said that they would create a short formal letter to the Council, attaching the minutes with their discussion saying that they recommend two of the motions made tonight.

Michael Perrow stated that he is uncomfortable about the Westside Park plan and would like to know the timeline. Michael would like to see added to the proposal a tennis court and basketball court. Ken Malich said that he also had some items that he would like to see in the design. This will be discussed at the July meeting.

Lita Dawn Stanton explained that we should know if we are still in the running for the grant by the end of July. She said that she has until July 3rd to adjust the entries of the grant. Dave Brereton mentioned that we need to hire a consultant to design the park and have another neighborhood meeting to show the conceptual proposal and look at how the funds could be used. The Commission members were asked to send a list of any changes they would like to see in the Westside Park proposal to Dave by June 14, 2006.

Peter Hampf brought up the subject of having a dog park. Jacquie Goodwill mentioned that she would like to talk about making a portion of the Wilkinson Park a dog park at the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for July 5, 2006 at 5:30 p.m. Agenda items will include:


- Dog park-Wilkinson
- Westside Park
- Report on all other Parks
- Park Appreciation Day (Earth Day)
- Budget
- Donkey Creek Viewing Platform
- Crescent Creek proposal

Ken Malich would like to see the Friends of the Parks meetings noticed in the Gateway newspaper.

ADJOURN:

- MOTION:** Move to adjourn at 7:30 p.m.
– Goodwill/Hampf/Malich/Perrow– unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,


Terri Reed