

OUTLINE MINUTES
Joint Work Session:
City Council / Parks Commission

Date: October 3, 2007 Time: 5:30 PM Location: Conference Rooms A&B Scribe: Ian Ward

Members Present:

Mayor: Chuck Hunter

City Council: Bob Dick, Paul Kadzik, Steven Ekberg and Jim Franich.

Parks Commission: Michael Perrow, Jacquie Goodwill, Nick Tarabochia, Peter Hampl and Ken Malich.

Staff Present:

City Staff: Rob Karlinsey, Dave Brereton, Molly Towslee, Marco Malich, Terri Reed and Ian Ward.

Call to Order at 5:37 PM Jacquie Goodwill

TOPIC

DISCUSSION / ACTION

**Gig Harbor Parks
Projects**

Mayor Hunter – Offered an overview of the City's park projects for the 2008 year and the progress being made with respect to each of parks.

Eddon Boat Yard – The cleanup process is difficult and staff is working hard to get the process moving. The State is reviewing the park plan and permits will hopefully be ready to go come November.

Jerisich/Skansie Park – is an important piece of real estate. The park connects the city to the water.

Maritime Pier – Is a worth while goal for the community but we need to take a good hard look at where we place the pier.

The Mayor stated that he would like to designate a Preservation and Planning team to work with City Staff on the vision for Skansie Park.

Dog Park

Michael Perrow – Discussed Wilkerson Farm and how it has become an unofficial off leash dog park which is not the original intent of the park.

Mr. Perrow stated that he has been discussing the need for a designated dog park with PenMet and that there is a possibility for a park to be created somewhere along the Cushman Trail.

Peter Hampl – Expressed being appalled at the amount of dog feces that has been left at Wilkerson Farm. He discussed the condition at the park. The Wilkerson Farm Park has turned into an off leash dog park.

Peter Hampl – PenMet has apparently been working with Commissioner Lee to get a 17 acre piece of property under the power lines. He expressed that he has been opposed to the city getting into the dog park business. He stated that a decent dog park requires 17 to 20 acres.

Mr. Hampl also stated that the park has become a hangout for the High School kids after school. He reported that there was even a fight there last week.

Councilman Franich stated that he expects or would like to think that that would be an isolated incident.

Mr. Hampl responded saying that kids have been smoking in the park on a daily basis which, being that they are underage, is against the law. He stated that he would like for the city and the police to be patrolling the park on a more regular basis.

Jacquie Goodwill – Supported the notion that any dog park needs to be of substantial in size. She stressed the need for visual contact between owners and their dogs within the park and that the city's current parks are not designed or designated for this use.

Group discussion – Discussion turned to how to fix the problem. Councilman Franich asked how many signs are up at the parks reminding people of the rules and informing them that the city provides scoop bags for dogs. Jacquie Goodwill suggested that the city begin enforcement of the dog leash laws, with a warning citation period followed by ticket citations. She stressed that the parks are not meant to be used as off leash areas and that this needs to be addressed.

Peter Hampl suggested that the city work with PenMet to facilitate the creation of a Dog Park in Pierce County along the Cushman Trail. Councilman Ekberg, Councilman Dick and Mayor Hunter expressed support for this idea.

Ken Malich asked whether or not the city has staff members that are responsible for patrolling the parks.

Dave Brereton stated that at this time staff have not been assigned to the task of patrolling the parks.

Jacque Goodwill – stated that Parks Commission intends to begin addressing this issue by notifying citizens that the City's parks are not designed or designated as dog parks. The Parks Commission will be working with City staff and the police department to tackle this issue in the coming months.

Smoking Ban in Parks

Jacque Goodwill – Introduction

Ken Malich – Stated that he is against banning smoking in the City's parks. Mr. Malich reported having not seen many if any people smoking in the parks or sidewalks at City events. He said that he could see a possible need for a smoking ban at the City's Skate Park, but beyond that, was not in favor of such a ban in parks.

Michael Perrow – Reported that the Parks Commission voted 4-1 to ban smoking in all City parks. He also stated that if you ban smoking in one park kids will simply move to another. He laid out the reasons behind their decision to support a smoking ban in City parks.

Peter Hampf – supported Mr. Perrow's position stating that Puyallup's Parks Director was very positive with regard to the smoking ban in all parks within the City of Puyallup. The smoking ban in the City's parks has apparently lead to a measurable drop in litter.

Mr. Perrow expressed his disappointment that the Council hasn't passed the smoking ban ordinance which was presented to them.

Councilman Ekberg stated that he was not at the July council meeting which addressed this issue. He stated that he is in favor of a smoking ban in all parks and would support such a measure when the ordinance returns to council.

Councilman Dick stated that his issue with the proposed ordinance was not that it banned smoking but that it tried to regulate all lighted materials. He also stated that he thought that the presented ordinance was not artfully written and that he would rather that the ordinance just deal with the smoking aspect of the ban.

Ken Malich – Stated that it is possible to discourage smoking but not ban it all together.

Jacquie Goodwill – Responded saying that the City should have the backbone to take this issue on and that if the city wants to do this it should.

Jacquie Goodwill stated that the Commission recognizes that this is a contentious issue and that it deals with personal freedoms.

Nick Tarabochia – Stated that it was not an easy decision but that the Parks Commission decided 4-1 to support a ban on smoking in parks.

Councilman Dick stated that he is not opposed to banning smoking but that he thought that the ordinance that was drafted on the subject was not written particularly well and that the ban on all lighted materials complicated the issue. He asked whether or not there was any legal issue with banning smoking.

Rob Karlinsey stated that the only legal issue with the original ordinance was that City Attorney, Carol Morris, thought it better to not have fireworks included in the ordinance but rather to deal with fireworks in a separate ordinance.

Mayor Hunter asked why the ordinance was not drafted to only ban smoking.

Ian Ward stated that Puyallup included its smoking ban with a lighted materials ban because of the political nature of such an ordinance. The City of Puyallup determined that it would have fewer challenges where the ordinance drafted to ban lighted materials.

Councilman Dick stated that he was not opposed to the lighted materials ban, but that he thought that the drafting of the ordinance needed to be improved before passing in order to clarify when, where and how barbeques and grills would be allowed. The ordinance needed to be tightened to say what was intended.

Rob Karlinsey reported that staff was directed to come back with three ordinances for council consideration;

- Smoking Ban Ordinance in the Skate Park.
- Smoking Ban Ordinance in the all Play Areas.
- Smoking Ban Ordinance for all Parks with Smoking Areas Designated by the Director of Operations.

Councilman Franich stated that he was the one that suggested having the flexibility for the Director of Operations to designate smoking areas. He reiterated his position that smokers have the right to smoke in parks. He pointed out that alcohol is not banned in parks (only in the Skate Park) and that if we are trying to set a good example, then we should ban alcohol as well as smoking. He stated that he did not support bans on alcohol or smoking in City Parks. He stated that he understands that some people are bothered by smoking but added that smoking has not been a measurable problem in the parks or at City events. He stated that he would not support this ordinance in any way, shape or form.

Jacque Goodwill asked Councilman Franich about underage smoking.

Councilman Franich replied that that is a legal issue.

Jacque Goodwill stated that enforcement is much easier when there is no smoking aloud period.

Councilman Franich replied that he saw that it would make some sense to ban smoking in the Skate Park all together and that he saw that as a compromise.

Jacque Goodwill continued by saying that Grandview Forest Park which is located next to City Hall is a risk of fire since smokers on cigarettes and drugs often use the park to smoke. She likened the park to a tinderbox saying that at some point there will likely be a fire if nothing is done.

Councilman Franich responded saying that there hasn't been a fire up to this point and that banning smoking in the park is not going to stop everyone from smoking in the park or remove the threat of fire completely.

Michael Perrow added that by using the same logic, having speed limits does not stop people from speeding and so therefore there is no point to speed limits.

Councilman Franich stated that he would base it on public safety.

Councilman Dick asked if the issue needed to be discussed further. He stated that council would be revisiting the subject and that the disagreements concerning the ordinance would not be resolved at this meeting. He continued by saying that council would decide what if any ordinance should be passes at an upcoming council meeting.

Jacquie Goodwill asked for clarification as to what ordinances would be considered and whether or not a ban on smoking in all city parks would be considered.

Councilman Ekberg stated that a ban on smoking in all parks was still an option and that he would support or amend the ordinance to ban smoking in all parks.

Security Safety on Cushman Trail

Michael Perrow reported an incident that had occurred previously where there was a partially man drinking and making rude comments. He stated that he had no way of reporting the incident until he made it out of the park and to a phone. He applauds the police response and how they handled the call. He went on, however, to state that there is a concern about emergency response and security on the trail, especially now that the trail will be expanded. He suggested possible safety improvements, including emergency call boxes much like the ones that can be found on college campuses. He stated that police accessibility to the trail is also a concern.

Mayor Hunter confirmed that this is an important issue of concern especially on the new stretch from Wilkerson Farm to Borgen Boulevard.

Councilman Dick asked that the Commission research other cities and government entities and how they handle security concerns on their bike trails, through both urban and rural areas.

Nick Tarabochia stated that there are examples of long bike trails in Alaska and suggested inquiring as to the security measures on these trails.

Councilman Ekberg stated that Rails to Trails might be a good resource for research.

Nick Tarabochia suggested that it would be a good idea to create a better system of trail markers to increase safety and making it easier for trail users to identify where they are at any given time.

Councilman Dick stated that the trail currently has markers at mile and kilometer lengths.

Michael Perrow responded saying that the current markings really aren't all that helpful when trying to communicate with a 911 operator who is located in Tacoma.

Parks Commission agreed to research the issue.

Dave Brereton stated that now was an excellent time to be looking at this, as the City and the County are entering the design phase of the Cushman Trail Expansion Project.

Councilman Dick stated that design is an important element to addressing safety issues and that safety should be considered within the design process.

Skansie / Jerisich Park **Rob Karlinsey** stated that he placed this on the agenda and that he wanted the Council to hear the Parks Commission's recommendation on the use of the Skansie Brother's House as a visitor's center articulated.

Michael Perrow stated that the Commission recommended that a comprehensive plan for the park be the drive rather than making improvements piece by piece.

Mayor Hunter reiterated his desire for a task force to look at the site and that he was pleased that the Parks Commission was in favor of this approach to the Skansie Park Plan.

Nick Tarabockia reported that the Fisherman's Club voted and desires to establish Fisherman Family Memorial Plaques at the park. Suggested that Lita Dawn be utilized in this task with respect to design and that the individual Fisherman Families have a role in their individual family plaques.

Mayor Hunter stated that the plaques could be placed on a railing around the Fisherman's Memorial.

Councilman Franich stated that he remembers that there was some reason why the Fisherman's Memorial was not encircled by a railing.

**2008 Parks
Commission Work Plan**

Rob Karlinsey started by stating that Council has asked that the City look at its Park Impact Fees. Also updates to the Parks, Recreations and Open Space Plan which needs to be updated to change Park Impact Fees.

Other projects:

- A name for Westside Park.
- Park CIP Implementation.
- Skansie / Jerisich Park Plan
- Eddon House use recommendation.
- Coordination with the Arts Commission for art in parks.

Councilman Ekberg asked how much contact the Parks Commission has with the PenMet. He asked if they keep regular contact with each other.

Michael Perrow stated that he and Mr. Hampl have a fairly good relationship with PenMet and have cooperated in the past with them.

Peter Hampl added that for the 2008 agenda, the Parks Commission has their annual Parks Appreciation Day on April 19th. He stated that it was successful last year but that they needed to do a better job of advertising the event. He commended the Mormon group which came out to help with the projects in 2007 and hoped to see involvement from the community at large this year.

Councilman Dick asked about furthering the City's partnerships with PenMet and holding the County accountable for their park responsibilities on the peninsula.

Rob Karlinsey stated that this was an area that the City was exploring and that the partnership should be both ways. He also gave examples of partnership opportunities.

Councilman Franich stated that the partnership needs to be equitable and that in his view the City has been getting the short end of the stick.

Mayor Hunter stated that he would like to see the City and PenMet work together in the development of the Gig Harbor North Park in the coming year.

Jacquie Goodwill reiterated the topics being discussed and added them to the list of Parks Commission's 2008 work plan.

- Park Appreciation Day 2008
- Develop a working and equitable partnership with PenMet and the County.
- Work to develop the park at Gig Harbor North.

Councilman Dick stressed that the County still has responsibilities for peninsula residents and that they should be held accountable for those responsibilities and not allowed to pass them on to PenMet and the City.

Rob Karlinsey and Dave Brereton stated that the County will be contributing millions to the Cushman Trail extension. The County will also be helping with land for the Boy's and Girl's Club and paying for a Senior Center Coordinator.

Councilman Dick stated that the County's contribution to the trail was excellent but reiterated the fact that the County still has a role to play and should not be absent from further park developments on the peninsula.

Ken Malich asked that when the agenda is created in the future that the person adding an item to the agenda sign off on it with a brief explanation of the subject matter so that members of the Commission can conduct better background and research on the subject.

Adjourn @ 6:45 PM

Michael Perrow / Peter Hampl