



## City of Sammamish

### PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

#### MEETING SUMMARY

**January 26, 2004 Meeting – 6:30 P.M.**  
**Sammamish Plateau Water & Sewer District Headquarters**  
**Next meeting February 23, 2004**

#### **PRESENT:**

Manager Jeff Watling, Park Planner Hope Gibson, Paul Brodeur, David Lee, Lynn Rehn, John Rossi, Patrick Schlight, and Tom Schloetter.

Cornell Amaya, Robert Armstead, Chris Leyerle, and Joyce McCallum were absent and excused.

#### **CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman John Rossi called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM. The minutes from the November 2003 meeting were approved.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Former PAB member Scott Hamilton urged the Commission to exercise diligence in reviewing the Trails, Bikeways and Paths Plan (TBP Plan) to ensure that all trails are identified, and to pay particular attention to the public process. He also made the following suggestions for improving parks visibility:

- Invite the Issaquah Alps Club to build trails in Evans Creek Preserve
- Open a temporary dog off-leash area in the Evans Creek Preserve
- Use Email and other methods to identify undiscovered user groups
- Coordinate a “Taste of Sammamish” and invite local restaurants to participate

Bente Pasko of the TBP Committee requested the opportunity to add comments during Commission discussion of the TBP Plan.

Charles McCullum commented that East Sammamish Park is being overwhelmed with people taking advantage of the 4 dumpsters placed there for the temporary collection of debris resulting from recent storms. He also requested that city crews delay the use of loud maintenance equipment such as leaf blowers, which currently begin around 7:00 AM. He also inquired about the progress of plans to connect the Hazel Wolf Preserve with Beaver Lake. Park Manager Jeff Watling explained that the City is currently working with the Cascade Land Conservancy on the project, which is still in the planning stage.

Scott Haas commented that with the long actualization time of major park projects, he would like to see the Commission start planning for the community center.

Mary Doerr and Marianne Wilkins expressed concern regarding a Commission member publicly endorsing political candidates during the last election. Jeff explained that the founding Commissioners were not required to sign the same non-endorsement agreement, but in the interest of apolitical propriety, all Commissioners would sign the agreement.

## **ONGOING BUSINESS:**

### ***a) Trails, Bikeways & Paths Plan (TBP Plan)***

The first draft of the TBP Plan was presented to the Commission for review. TBP Committee member Bente Pasko raised the following issues:

- In light of recent discoveries of City code restrictions concerning trail development in wetlands and wetland buffers, how will this issue affect the TBP Plan, which identifies a significant percentage of trails in this category?
- Some existing trails are subject to the generosity and good will of property owners. What measures can be taken to ensure that changes in ownership or future development will allow the preservation of public trail usage?
- Urged Commission to utilize City Planner Evan Maxim as a resource in reviewing the TBP Plan.
- A number of tables in the TBP draft document are incorrect and need to be updated.

Jeff reported that the City Council is already engaged in addressing the issue of aligning the City's code with future planning efforts. He also agreed that the issue of trail easements requires further thought, and remarked that as with any planning document, the TBP Plan needs to be supported by regulatory and service-level commitment.

Pat suggested including trails inventory from Section 36 because of its proximity to the City. Jeff reported that King County Parks considers Section 36 to be officially undeveloped, and existing trails to be renegade trails, and therefore the City should refrain from identifying or publishing these trails.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

Commissioners will review the TBP draft and forward questions and comments to Jeff and Hope. Copies of the TBP draft will be sent to absent Commissioners. In-depth discussion is planned for the next Commission meeting, and Staff will begin planning a public review/comment process.

### ***b) Sammamish Commons***

Jeff reported that Staff is working on the master plan, including the initiation of a SEPA review, which is a condition of master plan adoption. Consultants are proceeding with design incorporating the use of the 2 existing houses in the lower part of the Commons. Although there are no concrete plans for future development of the structures, there is an idea to use them as temporary office space for City staff.

John commented that this was a significant concept change coming very late in the planning process, which requires re-visiting the park design at a stage where the Commission would have little opportunity for input. All Commissioners expressed a strong desire to understand the rationale behind this late decision, since there are no concrete plans for future use or apparent financial benefits. More importantly, the Commission feels that keeping the structures does not make sense in terms of the overall design vision for the park.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

John will pursue the topic with City Manager Ben Yacizi, and Commissioners will contact Council members on an individual basis to express the Commission's views.

### ***c) Lake Washington School District – Eastlake High***

Jeff reported that the city has engaged Sparling to conduct a lighting analysis for the proposed joint-use field. Parks Staff is drafting informational letters to neighbors, and

work is continuing with the school district in developing the Interlocal Agreement and the Eastlake HS addendum. A major concern from the district perspective is that the proposed field upgrade will prompt requests from other schools for facility upgrades.

Pat reported that the Council showed great enthusiasm for this project, but wanted to weigh the issues considering the scope of the financial investment. Jeff concurred that although the Council considers this a high priority, it is still at a planning level, with no appropriation of funding at this time. Therefore, there is no possibility of piggybacking the field resurfacing with the football stadium resurfacing planned for this summer.

Hank Klein of the East Lake Baseball Boosters commented that he has already talked with some of the neighbors about the plans for lighting the field, and has received mostly positive feedback. He also informed the Commission that it is not possible to schedule 2 baseball games during the planned usage time between 6:00 PM and 10:00 PM. Therefore, the more costly lighting for baseball would be superfluous. Hank also noted that if the width of the planned soccer field were reduced from 60 yards to 50 yards, the space could accommodate 2 soccer fields instead of one.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### ***a) 2004 Commission Goals***

An open discussion about goals for the year raised numerous questions:

- How do we transform short-term ideas into actionable projects, and specifically how do we handle their execution in light of resource constraints?
- Do we want to give greater focus to short-term solutions in order to show results to boost community awareness?
- How and when do we begin to plan for a Parks bond?
- How can the Commission work more closely with the City Council?
- How can the Commission enhance the visibility of its efforts, and how can we do a better job in connecting with the community and understanding the needs of city residents?
- What user group(s) should we invite to the next Commission meeting?

### **NEXT STEPS:**

After spirited brainstorming, the following goals and action items were identified:

- The Commission and Staff will take steps to conduct public outreach in the form of surveys, polls and studies to determine usage and needs. This will be made an agenda item for the February meeting.
- Commission and Staff set a target of having a “field trip” involving the community in 4 city parks this year. Further discussion and refinement are to be an agenda item for the February meeting.
- Commissioners will “adopt” one or two Council members to form more intimate working relationships.
- After the official formation of the City Council Parks & Recreation Committee, the Commission will explore options such as scheduled sessions with the P&R Committee, or assigning a Commissioner to attend Committee meetings (as per the PAB/Planning Committee model).
- Continue to keep “many irons in the fire” due to the long gestation periods of parks projects, however, strive to prioritize action items to drive toward “ribbon-cutting” results.
- Jeff will create a list of user groups for the Commission, and will invite area baseball leagues to the next Commission meeting. Pat requested that the

Commission probe this user group for deeper information such as field usage and requirements, and rating of facilities. Commissioners should think about specific questions for this user group for the February meeting.

- John will query the City Council about planning for a Parks bond.

### **MANAGER'S REPORT:**

#### ***a) Council Retreat Summary***

Jeff reported that Parks & Recreation was identified as a high priority item by the City Council at their recent retreat, as evidenced by the creation of a Parks & Recreations Committee. Council members are anxious to work more closely with the Commission.

The adoption of the Parks & Recreation Plan and the TBP Plan are near range priorities for the Council, as is a resolution to the Ebright Creek Park situation. The Council has a keen interest in engaging the Commission on policy issues as pertaining to Parks, and hopes to use the re-planning of Ebright Creek in 2004 to develop a process template for future planning efforts. The specifics of the Ebright Creek process is still to be determined, but will assuredly involve a review and refinement of the public process.

Jeff also reported that discussions were held regarding aligning community expectations with existing staff and resource capabilities.

#### ***b) Pine Lake Park***

Hope reported that Pine Lake Park was officially closed in late January to begin construction for Phase I re-development, which includes sewer connection, addition of a basketball court, and upgrades to the sports field, parking lot, and restroom facilities. The park is scheduled to re-open by mid-May. The Sammamish Little League has been contacted regarding the park closure.

#### ***c) Addition to Commission Meeting Minutes Distribution List***

Melanie Anderson (manderson@ci.sammamish.wa.us) should be added to the meeting minutes distribution list.

### **ADJOURN:**

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 PM.