

Minutes  
2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy Oversight Committee  
September 29, 2009

**Committee Members Present:** Doug Dunham, Chair, Cindi Barker, Bill Brosseau, Don Harper, Terry Holme, Shanon Kearney, Cheryl Klinker, Matt Mega, Joyce Moty, Beth Purcell, Pete Spalding

**Staff:** Superintendent Tim Gallagher, Gerry Asp, Susanne Friedman, Susan Golub, Kellee Jones, Chip Nevins, Rick Nishi, Terry Roche, Michael Shiosaki, Kevin Stoops

**Committee Business** The meeting agenda was approved, as were the minutes, as amended, from the August 24, 2009 meeting.

**Public Comments**  
There were none.

**Development Project Update**

Michael Shiosaki, Deputy Director of the Planning and Development Division, presented an update on 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy development projects. The first completed project of the Levy is the **65<sup>th</sup> Street Entry project at Magnuson Park**. Mr. Shiosaki thanked project manager Andy Sheffer for his hard work.

Four playground projects are under construction and will be completed this fall:

- Atlantic Street;
- Bayview;
- Bhy Kracke; and
- Brighton.

The Capitol Hill project at **16<sup>th</sup> and Howell** will have a ground-breaking Saturday, October 3. **Queen Anne Boulevard** is under construction. Design meetings will get underway soon for the new park located in Ballard at **9<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW**, and twelve additional playground projects have or will soon begin design. The **Hubble Homestead Park** in Northgate had a groundbreaking September 26. Renovations to **Lower Woodland athletic fields #2 and #7** are almost complete, with field # 2 currently open for play on the new synthetic surface.

Rick Nishi, the Levy Development Projects Manager, reported on the **Seattle Children's Playgarden** project at Colman Park. This project has funding from several sources, including the Parks and Green Spaces Levy. The project is 35% complete, and is awaiting additional funds before it can be finished. The amount needed to complete the project is unknown at this time.

\$30,000 was added to the budget for **Counterbalance Park**, a Pro Parks Levy project. There have been problems with the LED lighting, a major feature of the park, and a claim has been filed with the electrical supplier. Design specifications for **Thomas C. Wales Park** are almost complete and the advertisement for bids will go out in October.

Pete Spalding thanked Michael Shiosaki, Rick Nishi, and Parks Resource Manager Cheryl Fraser for the tour that was provided to the Committee on Saturday, September 26. Pete found the tour very informative and appreciated the staff effort and dedication.

### **Pro Parks Opportunity Fund Balance**

Kevin Stoops, Director of Parks Planning and Development Division, presented information on the remaining balance in the Pro Parks Levy Opportunity Fund. There is \$1.2 million in excess earnings that reside in the Fund; at the August Oversight Committee meeting, the Committee recommended spending \$500,000 of this for the Delridge skatepark. From a conservative accounting perspective, \$720,000 remains in the Pro Parks Opportunity Fund.

Parks is proposing spending a portion of the remaining Opportunity Fund on two projects: Dakota Place Park -- \$400,000: This project in West Seattle is the site of a former City Light substation, and the Pro Parks project included development of the land and work on the building. Funding came from the Levy Opportunity Fund with an additional \$120,000 raised by the Hiawatha Advisory Council. The funding was not sufficient to complete work on the building so that it could be used. Additional money is needed for seismic work, flooring, walls and cabinets.

Meadowbrook Playfield -- \$320,000: The Pro Parks Levy funded redevelopment of fields #2 and #3 at Meadowbrook. Field #1, the 90-foot diamond baseball field, was not redeveloped. The field is in poor condition with bad drainage, fences and backstop. The proposal is to spend \$320,000 for a new backstop, wing fences, new sod, grading and improved irrigation.

Doug Dunham noted that there is strong support for the Dakota Place project from the Hiawatha community and asked why the project took so long. Mr. Stoops responded that the park development is complete. The building redevelopment has lagged for several reasons, primarily the lack of funding to complete the restoration, for while the Pro Parks Levy described the project as renovate the building and create a park, there was not enough money to do both. Once the building is completed, it will operate as a satellite to the relatively small Hiawatha Community Center providing classes and rental space.

Matt Mega asked whether the renovation OF drainage and irrigation at the Meadowbrook field would have an impact on nearby Thonrton Creek. Mr. Stoops noted the drainage would stay essentially as is, with re-grading and the removal of thatch improving, but not significantly altering the drainage. Don Harper asked whether the Junction Plaza project, which has not started, is under consideration for Pro Parks Opportunity Fund money. Mr. Stoops responded that existing funding for the project is sufficient to develop the original design which will include a stage area, plantings, irrigation, pavers, grass and lighting.

Responding to questions about what other Pro Parks projects might need additional funding, Mr. Stoops responded that other projects have aspects that were scaled back. These projects include Martin Luther King, Jr. Park where the overall master plan was scaled back to meet the project budget; and the Brighton Science Park. The current Parks Levy project to rebuild the play area will have a dinosaur theme and maybe a geology wall, adding elements to the original Science Park concept. Also the Crown Hill project has double funding (Pro Parks and 2008 Parks Levy), so there is a cushion if more funding is needed for projects that have not started.

**Motion:** Pete Spalding moved, and Cindi Barker seconded the following motion: Spend \$720,000 of Pro Parks Opportunity Fund money for Dakota Place Park and Meadowbrook Playfield. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Acquisition Program Update**

Donald Harris provided the Committee with an update on the Levy Acquisition Program. Properties purchased along **Thornton Creek** have made significant progress towards the goal of continuous ownership along the Creek. In **Lake City** at 125<sup>th</sup> and Lake City Way an offer has been made on property adjacent to a Seattle Housing Authority project. A new offer has been made in the **Duwamish Head** on property the department has been interested in since the mid-1990s. Along **Admiral** a recent acquisition closed the gap on a missing piece in the greenbelt. Also along Admiral there have been some open space property transfers from the City's Fleets and Facilities Department to Parks. In **Capitol Hill** an offer was made for property at Federal and Republican, a good location in the middle of the Capitol Hill urban village.

Chip Nevins briefed the Committee on the criteria the acquisition staff are using to identify properties to purchase. (Attachment 1) Twenty urban villages and two single family neighborhoods (Beach Drive and Wedgwood) are listed as targets for the Neighborhood Park category in the Levy, but no specific sites are identified. Mr. Nevins is meeting with community groups in all of the neighborhoods and will be holding additional public meetings.

Responding to a question from Ms. Barker, Donald Harris noted that Morgan Junction is still on the list of target neighborhoods because the Pro Parks purchase, the once-proposed monorail station site, was less than 10,000 square feet, so did not officially fill the open space gap in that neighborhood. Ms. Barker noted that the program may end up buying property in between Morgan Junction and Junction Plaza and serve both neighborhoods, as it may be difficult to find property in either of the two urban villages. She also noted the Neighborhood Planning surveys asked about park needs and can help with the property identification process.

Shanon Kearney asked what progress was being made regarding acquisition on First Hill. Donald Harris said staff have identified two linked sites between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> near St. Mark's Cathedral that would create space similar to the Spanish Steps, and a flat parcel on 8<sup>th</sup>. Staff is working with the property owner and will have an additional public meeting.

### **Opportunity Fund Criteria**

Michael Shiosaki briefed the Committee on the proposed criteria for the Opportunity Fund. (Attachment 2) A subcommittee of the Oversight Committee has met twice to develop the draft proposal. The idea is to have three rounds of the Opportunity Fund: 2010 -- \$7 million; 2013 -- \$8 million and 2015/16 if there are surplus funds. One of the considerations for this breakdown is the fact that the Levy does not include any development money for new park acquisitions, so perhaps the Opportunity Fund can be used for new park development. (The Pro Parks Levy had named acquisition projects with associated named development projects – the new Levy does not.) Included in the criteria are a minimum of \$200,000 for development projects and a maximum of \$750,000 for acquisition projects.

A suggestion was made to change Basic Criteria #2 from “should” to “must.” **By consensus** the Committee agreed to change the language to must, so the criterion would read: Projects must be on property that is accessible to the general public.

Mr. Shiosaki noted that the Secondary criteria will include weighting numbers that will be helpful for the Committee in the prioritization of projects. The criterion to “meet immediate safety or health need” suggested by the City Council is not recommended by the subcommittee. It was noted that the Council Resolution listed Opportunity Fund criteria *for consideration* by the Oversight Committee – they are not required.

Beth Purcell asked whether, with the proposed criteria, a minimum amount would be allocated to each of the six quadrants of the city. Mr. Stoops responded that geographical equity would be the responsibility of the staff and the Committee in making the recommendations. The goal of geographic equity could be included in the announcement of the Opportunity Fund, but not listed as a criterion.

There was a discussion regarding the first of the Secondary Criteria : Does the project address a park, recreation or open space deficiency as outlined in Parks 2006 Open Space Gap Analysis? It was noted that addressing an open space deficiency defined by the Gap Analysis is different from the addressing a need in an “underserved community.” Staff noted that the difficulty of defining underserved led to the Gap Analysis reference.

**By consensus**, the Committee agreed to revise Secondary Criteria #1 to read: Does the project address a park, recreation or open space deficiency as outlined in Parks 2006 Open Space Gap Analysis or is in an underserved area?

There was a discussion regarding the \$7 million allotted to the first round and \$8 million for the second. **By Consensus**, the Committee agreed to this breakdown. Regarding the maximum award of \$750,000 for development projects, some members thought the language should more clearly state that the awards could be less, especially as many of the Pro Parks projects received lower amounts. **By consensus**, the Committee agreed to change the language for the acquisition award of \$1.5 million from “a maximum of” to “up to.”

Mr. Shiosaki explained that at the next subcommittee meeting, points would be assigned to the Secondary Criteria. It was emphasized that the points would be used as a guideline to help staff and the Committee rank projects, but that they are strict yes/no objective questions. The Committee will be reviewing all of the project applications; none will be screened out by staff. After refining the draft criteria at the October subcommittee meetings, the full Committee will reconsider the criteria at the October 26 meeting. There will be a public hearing on the criteria in November [since scheduled for November 9]. Formal adoption of the criteria will occur at the November 23 Oversight Committee meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

## ATTACHMENT 1

### PLAN FOR THE ACQUISITION OF NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

**Neighborhood Park Acquisitions (Levy designates \$24 million):** “This subcategory includes the acquisition of properties in areas that have been identified in the Parks and Recreation 2006 Development Plan and Gap Analysis as being deficient relative to the City's comprehensive plan goals. It is anticipated that the acquisition funding provided by the levy will be supplemented by funding from other sources. However, funding may still prove to be insufficient to complete acquisitions in all of the locations listed below.”

The 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy identifies 20 areas for acquisition:

12th Avenue Urban Village,  
Ballard Urban Village,  
Belltown Urban Village,  
Bitter Lake Urban Village,  
Capitol Hill Urban Village,  
Int'l District Urban Village,  
Commercial Core Urban Village,  
Denny Triangle Urban Village,  
First Hill Urban Village,  
Fremont Urban Village,  
Greenwood-Phinney Urban Village,  
Lake City Urban Village,  
Morgan Junction Urban Village,  
North Rainier Urban Village, Ravenna Urban Village,  
University Urban Village,  
West Seattle Junction Urban Village,  
Westwood-Highland Urban Village,  
Wedgwood Neighborhood  
Beach Drive area

### **Neighborhood Park Priorities:**

It is the goal of the acquisition program to acquire property in as many of the areas as possible, but that will depend on the cost of the property and the amount of supplemental funding we can attain. Given that the Levy states that there may not be enough funding to acquire property in all 20 areas, we have developed priorities based on **Need** (population & total amount of useable open space), **Equity** (acquisition funding received from the pro-parks levy program including supplemental funds) and **Opportunity** (Areas seeing the impact of phase one of Sound Transit).

### **Acquisition Process:**

The 5-step process for selecting appropriate park sites is as follows:

1. Gaining familiarity with project area: Through a review of the neighborhood plans, discussions with community members and the review and consolidation of information gathered during the 2000 Pro-Parks Levy, Park staff will gain an understanding of the challenges and opportunities of the project areas.
2. Outreach to community groups: Park staff will present the 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy Neighborhood Park Acquisition Program to the project areas' community groups and solicit ideas for potential park sites
3. Public meeting: Parks staff will convene a public meeting to gather further input on site selection and gain consensus on priorities.
4. Parks and Green Space Levy Citizen Oversight Committee: Park staff will review community priorities with the levy oversight committee.
5. Contingent acquisition of site: After the public meeting, Park staff attempt to acquire priority site pending Mayor and City Council approval.

### **Suggested Site Identification and Evaluation Criteria\***

- Site location within or adjoining the Urban Village
- Minimum area = approximately 10,000 square feet (about 1/4 acre)
- Frontage on key pedestrian routes
- Flat terrain or gentle slope to facilitate ADA accessibility and uses such as short-term sitting and picnics, as well as to minimize site development costs
- Sun orientation and avoidance of shading from existing or future Midrise buildings (i.e., location on SW or SE corner of block preferred)
- Location adjoining existing and/or immediate future uses that will generate appropriate park uses and provide "eyes on the street" to deter inappropriate uses – both for as much of the day as possible
- Willing sellers
- "Underutilized" sites without existing uses or structures that contribute significantly to property value or to demolition costs; (i.e., vacant properties, parking lots or properties with "tear-down" buildings)
- Properties with no or minimal relocation costs; i.e., vacant properties or those with fewer tenants
- Absence of development permit activity or development very early in process
- Minimal remediation costs for hazardous materials

\* *Criteria developed by Parks staff and used in the 2000 Pro-Parks Levy.*

**ATTACHMENT 2**  
**DRAFT September 29, 2009**

**2008 PARKS and GREEN SPACES LEVY**  
**Opportunity Fund Draft Criteria – Subcommittee & Staff proposal**

*Would you like to see a new park built or an old park improved? Would you like Seattle Parks and Recreation to buy property for a new park or open space in your Seattle neighborhood? The first round of the Parks & Green Spaces Levy Opportunity Fund is open for your applications.*

**\$7 million is available in this first funding cycle for Park Development and Acquisition Projects evaluated according to the criteria below through an application and selection process.**

*In general, priority will be given to projects that meet the Basic Criteria listed below. In addition to the Basic Criteria, projects will be evaluated by a set of Secondary Criteria and the respective point system established by the Parks & Green Spaces Oversight Committee. Only projects that result in a site acquisition or a completed development project will be considered for funding.*

*Project Proposal Letters due February 1, 2010*  
*Full Project Applications due April 1, 2010*

**Basic Criteria**

1. Project has been subject to a public review process or is consistent with an approved plan, such as: a neighborhood plan, a watershed plan, a vegetation management plan, Parks 2006 Open Space Gap Analysis or Parks master plan, etc.
2. Project should be on property that is accessible to the general public.  
*(this criteria does not apply to acquisition projects).*
3. Project should demonstrate a reduction or minimal increase in maintenance and operation costs for the City. *(this criteria does not apply to acquisition projects).*
4. Project should demonstrate a high degree of neighborhood involvement and support, or demonstrated need.
5. Project should be of a sufficient size (for acquisition projects, approximately 10,000 sq') and of a nature to produce tangible parks, recreation or open space benefits. For development projects, the minimum project award is \$200,000 and the maximum award is \$750,000. For acquisition projects, the maximum project award is \$1,500,000.

**Secondary Criteria**

1. Does the project address a park, recreation or open space deficiency as outlined in Parks 2006 Open Space Gap Analysis? *(X points)*
2. Is the project in an area experiencing growth, particularly an urban village or urban center?  
*Priority will be given to those projects that are within a hub urban village boundary that is deficient in open space. (X points)*
3. Is the project a unique opportunity that will be lost if action is not taken now? *(X points)*

4. Does the project contribute to solving major challenges facing our community, such as climate change, the health of our waterways, or growth management? *(X points)*
5. Does the project leverage other resources from other public agencies, or funding from public, private or philanthropic partners? *(X points)*
6. Does the project demonstrate new and creative methods to meet the community's needs for parks and green spaces (Green Infrastructure)? *(X points)* *Green infrastructure is the physical environment within and between our cities, towns and villages. It is a network of multi-functional open spaces, including formal parks, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, waterways, street trees and open countryside. It comprises all environmental resources, and thus a green infrastructure approach also contributes towards sustainable resource management. (Source: [www.greeninfrastructure.eu](http://www.greeninfrastructure.eu))*