

Minutes
Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee
February 26, 2007

Committee Members Present: Russ Brubaker, Chair, Doug Dunham, Chair-elect, Neal Adams, Alan Alabastro, Gwen Colwell, Juan Garcia, Don Harper, Cheryl Klinker, Alec Stephens

Staff: Ken Bounds, Superintendent; B.J. Brooks, Deputy Superintendent; Erin Devoto; Susan Golub; Donald Harris

Committee Business: The meeting agenda was approved, as were the minutes from the January 22, 2007 meeting.

The Committee unanimously elected Doug Dunham as the new Chair of the Committee.

Public Comments:

Catherine Weatbrook spoke regarding the Pro Parks Levy project proposed for Crown Hill School. She is active with the Northwest Little League Board and with Small Faces, the organization which currently leases the school. Ms. Weatbrook stated that there is a huge community group that wants the Crown Hill project to move forward. She believes the School District wants to hear from the Pro Parks Levy Oversight Committee to know the Committee's views. Small Faces wants to stay in the building and the community is supportive. She would like to see creative financing to acquire the property from the District if it is to become surplus and noted that soccer and little league organizations would help raise money. She asked what would happen if the project continued beyond the life of the Levy.

Don Harper asked whether there was a controversy surrounding the Small Faces lease for the property. Ms. Weatbrook responded that the School District wanted fair market rent which may not be reasonable for Small Faces. The Small Faces lease expires in 6 months and there has been no commitment from the District for a longer lease.

Superintendent Bounds noted that Parks has been communicating with the Seattle Public Schools Superintendent about the project, and that the focus of the discussion with the District has been to urge them to make a decision. Responding to a question from Terry Holme, Superintendent Bounds stated that the time pressure is increasing because Parks wants to bring the question of reallocating the funds to the Oversight Committee in time for a potential re-programming project to be completed by the end of the Levy in December 2008. He also noted that the funding is for a development project, and that there is not funding in the Levy to acquire the property. If we can't do the project at Crown Hill, that project will have to be abandoned and the funding reallocated.

Ryan McFarland, a Crown Hill resident, also spoke in favor of proceeding with the Crown Hill School project. He asked for more time to work out the issues with the School District before the Crown Hill funds are reallocated to another project.

Doug Dunham suggested the Committee write a letter to the School District conveying the Committee's concerns regarding the delay in determining the future of the Crown Hill property and stating the Committee's preference for the project to proceed. The Committee agreed to this suggestion. *[Note: the letter sent by the Committee to the School District is attached to these minutes.]*

Development Project Update: Erin Devoto, Director of the Planning and Development Division, presented an update on development projects.

Projects that were completed in 2006 include:

- Greg Davis Park: a \$1.3 million project in Delridge that also includes Brandon Mini-Park and Cottage Grove Park;
- John C. Little, Sr. Park: a \$550, 000 project in SE Seattle that included a picnic shelter and play area;
- West Seattle Stadium: which received a new track and javelin/discus throwing area; Ms. Devoto noted that people have been stealing aluminum edging from around the track;
- Columbia Park: on Rainier Avenue which included pedestrian amenities, benches and solar powered blue lights;
- Montlake Community Center: a \$3.2 million project which added a multi-purpose room, restrooms and plaza; Parks is applying for LEEDS environmental certification for this project due to the considerable sustainable features that were included;
- Van Asselt Play Area: improvements were made to the heavily used play area adjacent to the Van Asselt Community Center, funded by the Pro Parks Levy Opportunity Fund, Community Center Levy and a grant from the Starbucks Corporation;
- Northlake Park: this is a street-end improvement at 7th and Northlake that was done in partnership with Seattle Public Utilities;
- Pinehurst Pocket Park: Acquisition of this project at 125th and Roosevelt was funded by the Levy Opportunity Fund; the development, which included a play area, and paths was funded by the Opportunity Fund and the Neighborhood Matching Fund;
- Chief Sealth Trail: A \$5 million in-kind contribution (dirt from Sound Transit) extended the Trail beyond what had been expected; the end point is near Kubota Gardens;
- Belltown/Lower Queen Anne Connection: Half of the Levy funding for this project went towards the Olympic Sculpture Park which was recently opened; the other half is allocated for the Thomas Street Overpass. Seattle Department of Transportation is the lead for this project which is currently in the design stage.
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Projects expected to be completed in 2007 include:

- Dexter Pit;
- Amy Yee Tennis Center;
- Brighton Science Park; and
- Haller Lake Street-end.

Ms. Devoto reported that the Laurelhurst Community Center project has been delayed about three months and there is a need to increase funding for the project by \$86,000. The money will come from the Levy fund balance. The delay was caused by unforeseen conditions in an old, historic building; the conditions included dry rot and higher than expected utility costs, and costs associated with joining the old building to the new. In addition, the concrete strike in winter 2006 contributed to the delay. The project is now on track and will be completed in late March.

The Audubon Society project at Seward Park went out to bid in December and the bids were opened in January. Ms. Devoto reported that only one bid was received and it was \$180,000 over the estimate. That bidder is claiming the bid was an error and is seeking to withdraw the bid. Parks is working with Audubon to redo the scope of the project, perhaps removing some elements, and will go back out to bid in March. Audubon is planning more fundraising for the project as well.

Doug Dunham asked Ms. Devoto what the elements are of the 2007 Amy Yee Tennis Center project. Ms. Devoto stated she would report back to the Committee with this information. *[Note: the Opportunity Fund money will be used to re-surface the existing two outdoor courts and the community is raising money to build two new outdoor courts.]*

Committee Business: Joyce Moty was nominated to be the Vice-chair of the Committee. Because Joyce was not at the meeting, the Committee decided to wait until the next meeting to vote. Regarding membership, Ms. Golub noted that Ms. Moty and Ms. Klinker would be re-nominated by Councilmember Della, and that Mr. Dunham was under consideration for re-nomination by Mayor Nickels. Councilmember Della and Mayor Nickels each have one position to fill.

This was the last meeting for Superintendent Bounds, as he is retiring after over thirty years of service to the City. Several Committee members thanked Mr. Bounds for his contributions to the City and to Parks. His leadership in developing the Levy was especially noted.

The meeting was adjourned and the Committee celebrated Mr. Bounds.