

TUMWATER PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

MINUTES OF HYBRID MEETING

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CONVENE: 7:01 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Erin Carrier and Commissioners Mike Culley, Shane Harrington, Bill Kallappa II, and Joe Munro.

Excused Absence: Commissioners Amy Hargrove and Joel Hecker,

Staff: Parks and Recreation Director Chuck Denney, Recreation Manager Todd Anderson, Parks and Facilities Manager Stan Osborn, and Capital Projects Manager Don Carney.

Bob Droll, Landscape Architect, and Ann Dinthongsai, Associate, RWD Landscape Architects.

CHANGES TO AGENDA: An update on the hiring of the new City Administrator was added to the agenda.

**APPROVAL OF
MINUTES:
FEBRUARY 15, 2023
MEETING:**

MOTION: **Commissioner Kallappa moved, seconded by Commissioner Culley, to approve the February 15, 2023 minutes as published. Motion carried unanimously.**

PUBLIC COMMENT: **Martha Grimm, 1541 77th Trail SE, Tumwater,** said she forwarded an email earlier in the day on the proposal to construct a new park entrance near her property on the cul-de-sac off 77th Trail SE. As a responsible member of the community, she believes it is important to prioritize the safety of residents. The placement of the proposed entrance poses a significant risk to the well-being of the community. If such an entrance or a footpath through the easement is opened, the increased foot traffic and vehicular congestion associated with the park could result in a variety of safety issues, such as accidents, collisions, and encounters with strangers who may pose a risk to the neighborhood. Children living along 77th Trail SE play safely on the road knowing that there is no through traffic or other outlets. Additionally, the noise and commotion associated with the park entrance could lead to a host of quality of life issues negatively affecting the peaceful environment the community has worked hard to maintain. Given those serious concerns, she urged the Commission to plan the park entrance and exits at the front and sides of the park. The alternative sites would allow for the safe and responsible enjoyment of the park while minimizing the potential risks to residents. As a member of the community, everyone shares the responsibility to promote policies and practices that safeguard the well-being of families and neighbors. She believes it is possible to work together to find a solution that serves the best interests of everyone.

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At the request of Commissioner Culley, Ms. Grimm described the locations of the preferred park entrances.

Chair Carrier advised that no decisions have been determined in terms of a connection with the cul-de-sac.

Director Denney added that the plan does not include an entrance or exit on 77th Trail as the street is a private street. The area will house a future storm pond with plantings for screening.

TRAILS END PARK MASTER PLANNING:

Director Denney reported the first planning and design meeting was held in May of 2022. On March 29, 2023, local residents were invited to the second park planning meeting. The meeting was well attended. Staff compiled the comments and the consultant team developed a proposed master plan for review by the Commission. The intent is to receive input and address questions. At this time, costs will not be reviewed because the park is large and will be expensive to develop exceeding the budget included in the Metropolitan Park District at this time.

Ms. Dinthongsai reported on the results of the March 29, 2023 public meeting. Between 30 to 50 community members participated. Many comments were provided and by the end of the meeting it was possible to identify the community's favorite alternative. Park Commissioners presented the design concepts very effectively during the meeting, as well as answering questions from community members. Votes for Concept A totaled 8, Concept B received 19 votes, and Concept C received 22 votes. Concept C is the favorite of the three design concepts. The community submitted many comment cards and sticky notes. Overall, favorite program elements included pickleball, basketball, pump track, and the equestrian theme surrounding the history of Trails End. Many comments supported the trails. Other comments noted the number of dog users who visit parks. Many individuals liked the pump track with other comments offered on safety and ensuring the park was at a neighborhood scale to avoid drawing the larger community.

Following the review of all comments, a matrix was created with Concepts A, B, and C to compare different programming elements. Sizes of some of the programming elements were quantified, such as the size for the playground and length of the trail, etc. An additional column was included for the preferred master plan based on themes emerging from the comments. Another matrix was developed of program elements.

Ms. Dinthongsai said the program matrix describes design elements included in each concept. All program elements were listed across all the concepts with considerations weighted for each element, such as whether the element was of an appropriate scale for a neighborhood park, the size of the

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element, safety factor of the element, and whether the element was a good fit for the park. Throughout the exercise, program elements to include were identified as well as elements not to include. One example is the splash pad, which would be a substantial draw to the park with visitors traveling from outside the area to use the splash pad. For those reasons, in addition to the cost of installation, a splash pad was not included in the preferred master plan. Another element not included is disc golf despite the popularity by the community, as it was determined the element would create an issue of safety because of other elements included in the park.

Mr. Droll described his efforts to include disc golf in the master plan but because the sport utilizes different discs of different weights it created safety concerns should someone be hit by a disc. Disc golf located in other communities is typically in a community park with sufficient room to reduce risks where the fairway is buffered to ensure errant discs do not hit park users. Safety is the top priority in park design.

Ms. Dinthongsai reviewed the last part of the matrix pertaining to functional relationships. Several principles used in design include accessibility to ensure all users have access to all program elements, safety factors, such as crime prevention through environmental design, visibility of the park from streets, and providing several access points from streets, as well as layout or orientation of program elements and how they relate to the site.

Ms. Dinthongsai reviewed the preferred master plan alternative of Option C favored by the public and based on conversations with the Commission. The option includes:

- Parking along Trails End Drive
- Buffers and bioswale to the north and a bioswale area in the south area
- Preservation of the Garry oak tree
- No public access to the kettle or to 77th Trail SE
- Park core is located along the western side near Trails End Drive
- A 6,000 square-foot playground comparable to other City neighborhood parks
- A 1,500 square-foot fitness station providing another layer of recreation in the park
- A 1,500 square-foot pump track for bicycling recreation (reduced in size and designed for beginners)
- A basketball circle as an alternative to a full court enabling two hoops without the addition of a full-size basketball court
- An ADA pickleball court
- A large picnic shelter with six tables and a small picnic shelter with two tables

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- Trails were maximized with a loop around the entire perimeter with other trail segments interconnecting as well as a trail segment to the Garry oak tree with benches
- Space for interpretive art to include a welcoming arch at the entrance to help brand and identify the neighborhood park
- Other interpretive sites on the history of Trails End Arena
- Installation of artwork
- Two overlook locations along the edge of the kettle
- An open lawn space adjacent to the park core with other areas planted as prairies or meadows with mounds ranging two to four feet in height similar to the Mima Mounds

The community commented positively about existing flowering trees along 79th Avenue. Construction of the park will likely require the removal of the trees because of frontage improvements to add sidewalks along Trails End Drive and 79th Avenue. Cherry trees are included along both streets. Other trees planted in the park will be Garry oak trees. The layout of the preferred alternative is oriented to the kettle as a backdrop to afford views. The placement of all program elements is based on visibility from anywhere within the park.

Ms. Dinthongsai reviewed details of the trail system within the park. The trail system includes several loops of various lengths ranging from 1/10th of a mile to half a mile.

Mr. Droll advised that the six-foot wide trail system would be of paved asphalt except for trails within the park core, which will be indigenous concrete.

In response to questions about bioretention facilities, Mr. Droll explained that the design has not been determined. Public works employees are working with consultants to design the facilities. At this time, the type of stormwater facility has not been defined pending additional stormwater analysis.

Commissioner Munro said he prefers ponds because they tend to attract wildlife. Director Denney said standing water in a park with children creates a safety issue and would require fencing, which is not recommended.

Commissioner Culley shared that a number of residents commented about the operations and maintenance facility parking area, which is represented larger in the preferred master plan. Mr. Droll said the initial concept reflected a specific color of the parking lot on the left side and future expansion on the right side. Square footage for parking has not been altered. He acknowledged that the representation of the parking was somewhat confusing in the design concept. The master plan will not reflect the area as

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future expansion but as parking to avoid confusion. Commissioner Culley said many residents questioned why parking was not located across the street.

Director Denney advised that the facility and its associated parking is a design decision by the Transportation and Engineering Department. The property is jointly shared between the park and the City's new facility that was purchased from the City's general fund. Including parking near the facility does not affect the City's ability to provide a recreational facility. Operational needs require approximately six acres on the west side of the property. Rather than shifting the uses, more park property was designated by placing the facilities and parking in its current location. He acknowledged that some residents do not like the option.

Commissioner Culley added that some residents indicated they contacted the City Council and that the Council promised parking would be moved across the street. Director Denney acknowledged that some of the residents have been very vocal about their preferences. Staff forwarded those comments to the Transportation and Engineering Department.

Ms. Dinthongsai reported the master plan design also includes a three-rail wood fence around the perimeter along Trails End Drive, along the border of the facility's future parking area, along 79th Avenue, and halfway along Arab Drive. The fencing will be approximately 3 to 4-feet tall constructed of wood with a rustic character.

Ms. Dinthongsai reviewed the image boards. Based on sticker dots and comments, residents liked the Trails End Area theme and the Equestrian theme as well as the Nature play and Contemporary play structures. Based on the feedback, the two themes were merged with the preferred theme for the park as the Nature Agrarian/Equestrian theme. The design reflects barn-like or tree house-type structures constructed of wood with green and earth colors incorporating climbing boulders, rope, and timber to add to the nature character. The picnic shelter will feature a weather vane, open lawn, and several furnishings, such as benches, pet stations, picnic tables, bike racks, trails, and interpretive signs with Mima Mound inspired prairie and equestrian art.

Mr. Droll queried members on their preferred selection of programming elements if the project was to be phased. Initially, all utilities and earthwork would be completed prior to installation of any programming elements. The first phase would also include shaping the vertical grade. Other elements can be added in phases after all earthwork and grading has been completed.

Director Denney said there is a desire to complete the entire park as one construction project as phasing components of the park would likely

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increase the cost of the project. The Commission's direction will serve as a recommendation to the City Council.

Commissioner Munro said that information conveyed by many residents indicated the park was already funded but that there were some uncertainties pertaining to the location of the maintenance and operations facility. Director Denney said misinformation was conveyed throughout the neighborhood in addition to other misinformation. The City allocated \$1 million for the park; however, because of the size of the park and inflation costs, the budget of \$1 million will be insufficient. It is possible to present options to the City Council, such as funding from other sources within the City's budget. The City Council could approve allocating funds from the general fund to the Capital Facilities Plan for the park project, or the Metropolitan Park District Board could reallocate funds from other projects.

Mr. Droll added that the City could also apply for grants from the State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) for local parks and land and water conservation; however, the grants require a match and can be competitive.

Discussion ensued on the City's capacity to apply for grants. Chair Carrier recommended exploring grant options to determine if a grant(s) is worth the time and effort to apply.

Mr. Droll explained the phasing option beginning with installation of all utilities, grading of the entire site, and installation of the restroom and the trails. The next phase could include installation of the playground, basketball court, and the pickleball court. Other programming elements could be added through phasing.

Director Denney requested feedback on the preferred master plan option.

Chair Carrier supported the proposed trail system and the way the pickleball court is placed although she did not realize the fence would be a three-rail fence rather than a chain link fence to keep balls out of the parking lot.

Mr. Droll noted the fence is subject to discussion as Manager Carney indicated the fence around the parking lot would be a chain link fence for security. A chain link fence is preferable because of the difficulty of controlling public access to the parking lot.

Commissioner Culley commented that only one pickleball court would be insufficient based on community demand. Director Denney noted the cost of one pickleball court is approximately \$90,000. Commissioner Culley suggested that if only one court is possible, spacing could be afforded for a future second court. Mr. Droll pointed out possible locations available in the park to accommodate a second pickleball court.

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Chair Carrier inquired about limiting trees to only two species (Cherry and Garry oak). Mr. Droll responded that Garry oak is prominent and is a native tree. Buffer trees would be Douglas fir trees in addition to adding flowering cherry trees.

Commissioner Munro asked whether any work is scheduled in the kettle in terms of modifying the landscape or clearing. Mr. Droll said actions in the kettle include invasive species removal and restoration planting of seedlings. The focus is removal of invasive species and maintaining the kettle.

Commissioner Harrington asked whether the concrete over the gravel area surrounding the Garry oak tree would serve as an impediment to the tree's root system. Mr. Droll said the concrete is the consistency of gravel and it would be important to excavate the area and remove all gravel and reuse the concrete to create the mounds. The tree would not be exposed to concrete aggregate. The City would achieve savings of \$10 to \$20 per cubic yard by not hauling debris and soil offsite.

Mr. Droll responded to questions about the type of grass and plants. At this time, the seed mix has not been determined other than mixes are available in Oregon that are primarily native. The grass will need to be mowed several times a year despite not being irrigated. The scope of work includes generating a maintenance plan by phase listing all applicable tasks, frequency, and amount of time to complete the tasks.

Chair Carrier asked whether the larger picnic shelter would be subject to reservation. Director Denney said the department does not reserve picnic shelter in neighborhood parks.

Commissioner Munro asked about the next community meeting to present the master plan. Director Denney said he anticipates a meeting in May.

Mr. Droll added that the Commission is invited to participate because the format will be similar to the March meeting. Three posters of the preferred plan will be displayed along with theme boards. The format will consist of a general discussion rather than voting on preferences. Commissioners recommended considering responses to questions concerning a dog park, the O&M parking area, and park maintenance.

Ms. Dinthongsai invited Commissioners to contact staff and Mr. Droll with any additional suggested changes to the proposed master plan.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Director Denney reported the City Council approved the Commission's recommendation for naming the park at The Preserve as "Kindred Park." However, two Councilmembers opposed the name with the outcome resulting in a 4 to 2 vote in favor of the Commission's name

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recommendation. Staff plans to begin the naming process for the Trails End area park much earlier to ensure the name is selected prior to completing the park.

Five finalists were selected for interview for the City Administrator position. Two separate panels interviewed the finalists. Panelists included department directors, school district representatives, local chamber representatives, business, and union representatives. A meet and greet with the public was held the previous evening with the finalists. Mayor Sullivan met with Councilmembers individually to receive their feedback on the candidates. Mayor Sullivan selects the candidate and was planning to render a decision either later in the evening or within the next several days.

In response to questions on the progress of the Brewmaster's House, Director Denney advised that all materials in the house have been removed and are being stored. All wallpaper was removed inside the house. Staff is scheduled to meet with the City's insurance adjuster and contractor to assess damage and cost for repairs. The Historic Preservation Commission is scheduled to tour the house during its meeting on Thursday, April 20, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. He invited Commissioners to attend.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next meeting is scheduled on May 17, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT:

With there being no further business, Chair Carrier adjourned the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow

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