

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS OF FALL CITY METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT
OF KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON
HELD JUNE 22, 2010

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Fall City Metropolitan Park District (FCMPD) of King County, Washington, was held June 22, 2010, at the Fall City King County Library, 33415 42nd Place SE, Fall City, Washington, at 7:00 p.m. Commissioners Harris, Moderow, Schneider, and Wilkins were present. Commissioner Petterson was absent and her absence was excused.

Also present were several members of the public (approximately forty) and Terri Divers.

1. Call to Order.

Commissioner Harris acted as Chairman of the meeting and business was conducted as follows. He stated that Commissioner Moderow has volunteered to take minutes of this meeting. Business was conducted as follows.

2. Minutes and Resolutions.

Minutes of the regular meetings held February 23, 2010, March 23, 2010, April 27, 2010, and May 25, 2010 were read and approved. Minutes of the special meetings held March 9, 2010, April 6, 2010, and June 8, 2010 were read and approved.

3. Financial Report and Vouchers.

The Financial Report was reviewed. Various vouchers drawn on the Maintenance Fund were reviewed.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Commissioners unanimously approved and authorized payment of Maintenance Fund Voucher Nos. 10, 24 through 26 in the amount of \$454.73.

4. Business from the Floor

Prior to receiving public input at today's meeting, Commissioner Harris provided background information on the issue of primary interest to most who attended this meeting. The information covered the following topics:

Commissioner Harris wrote the article about the grant application to purchase the former Wells Nursery site in the June edition of the *Fall City Neighbors* newsletter to provide information to a broader audience in the community. The article states that the District has submitted an application to pay for a half of the cost to acquire 9 acres of the 14 acre site.

He has also led the communications about the grant application with the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) and the Fall City Community Association (FCCA). The District was first approached by site's property owners during its October regular meeting. The Board felt it was a site with great potential as a community park worthy of

consideration since that time. The District is at the beginning of this process and not the end. With this grant application, we are afforded the opportunity to continue the discussion of what the site could look like and what specific uses it could accommodate.

The District was initially formed in February 2009 with a mission to sustain the public control of Fall City Park. This issue was largely resolved with the formation of the District, withdrawal of the Snoqualmie Tribe's offer to receive transfer of the land, and with a change of the Council Executive. The District continues to work with the County to identify specific and needed park improvements. By State law, the District is in a position of first right of refusal should the County seek to divest itself of this site again. The District has had several discussions with the Snoqualmie Tribe and supports its current efforts for waterfront restoration along the riverbanks on the west edge of the park.

The decision to not pursue ownership of Fall City Park from King County was based on budget responsibilities of maintaining this park and the types of users it regularly serves. Since this park is located in an unincorporated area outside of the urban growth boundary and has both local and regional appeal it would seem appropriate that King County retain ownership of this facility. Therefore, this approach allows the District to allocate funds on other local priorities and initiatives.

As part of community outreach, the District solicited input during Fall City Days June 2009 and in on-line survey of residents' desires and priorities for recreation in the District between January and March 2010. The Vision Mission & Goals of the District thus expanded since District was initially formed.

The District prepared a draft of the Comprehensive Plan in early March 2010. This draft included mapping of the District and allowed consideration of opportunities for improved recreation within the District's boundaries, as well as various constraints such as environmentally sensitive areas including the Snoqualmie River floodplain.

Development of a community park became a focus of our consideration and several sites were considered. Many of the sites with potential are in the Snoqualmie River floodplain. The site recently acquired by the King County Flood District off of SE 324th Avenue SE and SE 31st Street, near Party Ponies, has potential but has limitations due to its location in the floodplain and the adjacent failing dike which is the primary reason why it was purchased by the County in the first place. Fall City Park experiences seasonal flooding and is also the home to many cultural artifacts from the Snoqualmie Tribe which limits development of the site.

Open houses discussing the Comprehensive Plan and the opportunities for a community park were held in April and May drew in many neighbors and had mixed attendance.

During public meetings the Board reviewed its options for funding additional park expansion including State funding through the RCO. Each biennium, the Legislature sets aside funding for the RCO which allocates funds to various recreational categories (such as trails, water areas, state parks, and local parks). Of that funding, approximately \$8M is available to the Local Parks category. Of that portion, 50% must be allocated toward park acquisition. Therefore approximately \$4M is available through

a competitive grant process state wide. Funding is certainly not guaranteed with the grant application, but the District always has the option to resubmit during the next grant cycle in 2012 should it not be successful in 2010.

Why did the Board move forward with the Wells site grant application? It is because of the many benefits of this site, such as it is walking distance to the community, outside of the Snoqualmie River floodway, doesn't have other sensitive areas (wetlands and streams), is relatively flat and cleared, and has the potential for expansion.

The Wells site is currently zoned for 5 acre per home. The District is seeking acquisition of 9 of existing 14 acres. This particular grant application doesn't allow for structures and so we chose not to apply for the eastern portion of the site.

The grant is a multi-step process. The District submitted its initial application in early May. We made a presentation on line and via conference call with a RCO grant review board to solicit feedback on the viability of our proposal in mid-June. The technical/written application is due July 30 and an official presentation of the application is required in-person in Olympia in mid-August.

What is the plan for the Wells site? The preliminary work shown in the 'Concept Plan for Discussion Only' was done pro bono by local architect that allowed us to start the process. Site development will continue as we get further into the process, and we can make changes before July 30 deadline.

The Board decided for the Comprehensive Plan that the site should be classified as a Neighborhood Park which would allow for a variety of uses at the site.

Specific development of a master site plan for the Wells site could be done by hiring a professional landscape architect, by getting ideas and input by using it as a class project for the school of landscape architecture (i.e. UW), and with input from the community. Ultimately it is for the community to decide what the master site plan is going to include.

What is the time line? The RCO grant funding is 2 year cycle. Funding would be available in June/July 2011, if we get the grant. If selected in early November, the short platting process would be initiated by the owner. An appraisal of the site would need to be completed within 6 months of the closing of the deal.

A value of the proposal has been estimated at \$1M, which includes both costs of the site and 'soft' costs required to acquire the site and make it safe for public use. The District would most likely pay for its fifty percent share of the project with a bank-provided bond. The RCO grant would pay for its fifty percent share of the project.

The District is also communicating with other groups such as the Trust for Public Lands as other funding sources.

If the District's application is not selected by the RCO, the Board will have received useful experience and exposure by submitting it.

A list of concerns about this application heard already:

- a. Field lights like Preston Athletic Fields – has not been discussed by the Board and would not be compatible with nearby surrounding neighborhoods.
- b. Active vs. passive use – active use box checked on the ‘management priority’ question to allow both active and passive uses and greater flexibility for when a master plan is determined by the community. An active use would seem to allow for passive uses, whereas a passive park would not seem to allow active uses.
- c. Wide service area shown on grant application exhibit – the boundaries of the Snoqualmie Valley Youth Soccer Association and Falls Little League are included on the application because Fall City youth participate in both of these leagues.
- d. Will the District overpay for the site? No, the District is required to follow federal process which requires an appraisal plus a review appraisal to determine the price of the site.
- e. Parking – some concerns have been expressed about having too little on-site parking and therefore there would be spillover parking onto the adjacent street and or too much (70 spaces shown on concept plan) and therefore would draw too many people. The number of actual stalls is likely determined by standard design guidelines which are based upon the specific types of uses, which have not yet been determined.
- f. Traffic – the site would generate too much traffic which would be incompatible with surrounding neighborhoods. The site would need to be compatible with surrounding uses and accommodate vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian access.
- g. Transparency of process. Meetings are posted, minutes are posted. Board members are always available at meetings on 4th Tuesdays of the month at this library. We apologize that the outreach may not meet expectations of some, but that the Board acts within the guidelines of State law.

Final thoughts:

- 1) There are many benefits of any community park – economic, environmental/health, and social/society. The District’s website has included a link to a report prepared by the Trust for Public Land which outlines them in a clear manner.
- 2) There are few is any opportunities that exist like this in our community so when the District was presented with this one, it seemed a worthy project to pursue. The District has received written endorsements from groups (FCCA, PRKC, Falls Little League, Si View MPD, and King County Parks) that agree that this project has merit.

The following is a brief summary of the public input received:

- Michael Chiu – encouraged the District to create a process that is more transparent to the community. Not supportive of active uses at the site.
- Andre and Margaret Hurley – are new to the neighborhood, and have outdoors interests. Wells Nursery would be a great place that she and her dog would enjoy. Wants open space.
- Bess Granby – lives within walking distance of Wells site. Wants more survey data from Fall City residents. Commissioner Harris concurred that this is warranted and would ask the Board to take action on this issue in the future.
- Dave Hill – lives across the street from the site, opposed to the District's plan because it doesn't preserve the rural character of the area. Thinks that District can't afford it. All money comes from tax payers. Concerned that park activities will disrupt neighbors. Concerned about league sports and the use intensity, traffic, lights. He prepared and distributed a flyer notifying residents of his concerns and encouraged neighbors to express their opinions on the matter.
- Don Proctor – presented a map illustrating a plan which included open fields, play equipment, basketball and tennis courts. He expressed a desire for the development of a neighborhood park and not one which accommodates league sports. Wants a community park that community can walk to not a drive to and park. Illustrated a plan that would accommodate these elements on roughly 4 acres. Requested the District to replace the concept design on the RCO Application and also change the Comp. Plan to indicate this site would not be for league sports.
- Glen and Kris Grigas – concerned about decline property values should this proposal become a reality. Thinks that a park would have a negative impact on those values. If it did occur, they would prefer passive and not active use.
- Elizabeth and Michael Bladow – neighbor and agrees with previous speakers. Concerned about the potential for noise.
- John Chaney – lives within view of the site. Wants to do this project in order for it to stay rural. Thinks that this is a good idea. Emphasizes how hard this is to do and it should be done. Money is available to serve our community through common state-funded sources that won't raise our local taxes. Supports taxes that fund the District because these funds stay with the local community. Parks increase property values not lower them. Parks attract the types of residents that we want in a community and we should engage them.
- Rick and Debbie Welsh – neighbors with questions about the proposal; feels that walking to Fall City Park is very easy, and is concerned about security at the Wells site. How do we control overflow parking? Buying the land. \$1M what does this amount represent. Commissioner Harris indicated that this estimated amount is to acquire partial site and pay for initial costs like a boundary

adjustment, fencing, signs, and is not for development. Is an option to purchase the remaining land included? No.

- Pete Nelson – lives near site and is a good friend of the property owners. This is an opportunity that we should take advantage of for the community and is not something that over pays greedy developers.
- Bill Blakeley – lives down the road from the Wells site. Suggests that the appraised value will be less than what owner's paid, is one of the last sites that is as feasible in the community, and should be pursued further. Perhaps simply mow it and use the land as open space.
- Allen Minner – doesn't live near park, lives on Tolt Hill, but is very active in Fall City community, owns several properties in it and pays property taxes which fund the District. We have more demand in our parks and we need more of them despite some of the potential concerns. No matter where you put the park neighbors might be unhappy but we need to have a place for the kids to play in the community. The school grounds are not available for activities by others when they are in session M-F, 9 months out of the year. Wants to move forward with this proposal – this is a great location.
- Robin Brenna – loves the concept of Central Park in New York, but likes the rural character of the area and is not sure we want to attract additional people from the outside. Supports a plan that is strictly for local residents, and it should be done right.
- Randy Proctor – is in favor of the active use, feels that the concept plans are small in nature (a sports complex is something like Marymoor Park or 60 acres). His kids are grown but he still coaches youth and feels strongly about keeping kids active.
- Steve Kenngy – moved from Redmond and thinks the Californian's have ruined the character there so he moved to Fall City. Thinks this is the first step down that road. Thinks that costs are not fully identified and that lights and sidewalks are next.
- Janna Treisman – librarian for the Snoqualmie Valley School District and is a long time resident. Feels that the opportunity to purchase flood free land is within a small window. The issues raised will all be worked out in time. We can build it as a community piece by piece. Don't get bogged down in the details. She is active in the recreation groups. Specific uses can be decided later.
- Ian Jones – lives across from the park. Friends with property owners and has mixed feelings about the uses for the site. Would like to see no field lights, but is okay with people at the site. Wants open space, picnic uses, etc. with fields as a secondary item of importance. Commissioner Harris answered his question about "how do we control park once it is built?". There are different ways to participate from the community and there is no right or wrong way to control the types of uses. The Boards expects to continue to take public input over an extended period of time (at least one year, and likely more until a plan is

derived). Solicit involvement from the community. Mr. Jones would like to participate in a stakeholder group that provides recommendations on the site plan and its uses.

- Sharlet Driggs – would like to hear more positive comments and less fearful input to create facilities for children and all our community.
- Jeff and Teresa Appleseth – wants the issue of active vs. passive to be settled immediately on the grant application because of their experience with grants and the limits on changing it after award. A passive park is kept in natural state with walking paths. Concerned that we have a very short window (only until July 30) to resolve this issue. Commissioner Harris doesn't believe that the District is locked into design details of a site layout as identified in the concept plan because the District is seeking an acquisition grant but would inquire with the RCO prior to submitting the application and also prior to the next public meeting.
- Michael Wieting – is a Fall City resident since 1958 and sees changes and people coming in from other places. It is busier and more closed in. New residents want to dictate these changes. Folks can't use the Raging River river walk anymore. Thinks soccer would generate traffic. In general, there's too much development and doesn't want it to change any further.
- Pat & Karen Gachnour – worries that this will result in increased taxes. They are retired and living on a fixed income and asked about this. Commissioner Harris indicated that funding the District's portion of the site acquisition would be done within the existing District budget and in itself would not raise property taxes. The expense budget determined by the Board each the fall, or if residents passed a specific levy, or if property values increased are examples of other ways property taxes could be raised to support the District's activities.
- Del Moore – is okay with active recreational use, but is concerned about the lack of discussion about the potential for other uses at the site such as an administrative office for the District, storage for emergency supplies for the community, or other buildings. Commissioner Wilkins indicated that the grant would not allow structures to remain on site (except the pole structure as a picnic shelter) but that these ideas could be incorporated into the potential Phase 2 five acre portion of the site.

Due to the extended length of the time spent on the issue of the Wells site grant application, the desire to address some outstanding questions associated with the grant application, and the inability to discuss other items on the agenda, Commissioner Harris suggested holding a special meeting to continue to receive public input on the issue of the Wells Site Park Acquisition grant application, to discuss the open office administrator position, and to discuss and decide committee assignments.

After discussion, upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Commissioners unanimously approved holding a Special Meeting on July 6th, 2010 at 7:00 at a location to be determined due to the Fire Districts 21-day

advance notice reservation policy and the King County Library's only one meeting a month per group policy to review and approve outstanding meeting minutes, to discuss and decide the office manager position, and to discuss and decide committee assignments.

5. Correspondence

State of Washington, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) notification that *Fall City Metropolitan Park District 2010-2015 Comprehensive Plan* meets with RCO planning requirements and thus the District is eligible to participate in RCFB grant programs.

Letters of support for FCMPD Well Site Park Acquisition grant application #10-1674 by: Fall City Community Association (FCCA); King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Parks and Recreation Division; Partnership for Rural King County (PRKC); and Falls Little League.

King County Fire Protection District No. 27 – notification of meeting room use policy

6. Committee Reports

A. Administrative Committee: Commissioner Harris

No report.

B. Vision, Mission, and Goals Committee: Commissioner Petterson

No report.

C. Park Lands Committee: Commissioner Moderow

No report.

7. Representative Report: Commissioner Wilkins

No report.

8. Old Business

A. SE 39th Place Access to Snoqualmie Valley Trail (SVT)

No update.

B. State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) Grant Application

An update was provided as part of the dialogue held during Business from the Floor.

8. New Business

None

10. Adjourn

The next special meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Fall City Metropolitan Park District of King County, Washington, will be held on Tuesday, July 6, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. at a location to be determined due to the Fire Districts 21-day advance notice reservation policy and the King County Library's only one meeting a month per group policy. Notification of the meetings location will be made in conformance with the regulations outlined in the Open Public Meetings Act, Special Meetings, RCW 42.30.080.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Fall City Metropolitan Park District of King County, Washington, will be held on Tuesday, July 27, 2010, at the at the Fall City King County Library, 4301 334th PL SE, Fall City, Washington, at 7:00 p.m.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

President and Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

ATTEST:

Clerk and Commissioner