

City of Redmond PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION

Redmond City Hall – Council Chambers
15670 NE 85th Street, Redmond Washington

Thursday, January 5, 2012
6:30 p.m.

Meeting Convened: at 6:32 p.m.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Commissioners:

Mary Bourguignon, Chair
Tina Sarin, Co-Chair
Peter McDonald
Cindy Jayne
Tom Sanko
Ray Smalling
Colin Worsley
Sheri Sanders

Staff:

Carolyn Hope, Sr. Parks Planner
Dave Tucheck, Park Operations Manager
Teresa Kluver, Park Operations Supervisor
Kirk Hovenkotter, Planning Program Coordinator

Audience – 13

I. Call to order/Welcome to Citizen Guests

Mary Bourguignon, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. and welcomed guests and staff members.

II. Approval of May Minutes

Motion by Co-Chair Sarin to approve the December 1, 2011 minutes as presented.
Second by Commissioner Sanko
Motion passed: 8-0

III. Items from the Audience

Phil Teller – Redmond resident and former member of the City's Arts Commission addressed the Commission regarding purchasing and planting edible plants (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries) in lieu of the city's yearly spring/summer plant purchase for parks and public places. Mr. Teller noted that not only would it serve the citizens, but bring the community together by sharing in the care, maintenance and use of the produce.

Tim Hindman (handout) – Overlake resident, addressed the Commission regarding the Group Health (GH) site (2.64 acres). Mr. Hindman addressed the following subjects:

Key amendment – recognizes the potential of tree retention, at least on the park parcels.

City's responsibility – to define the major District park configuration

Unique coverage - mature evergreens, centerpiece of recent debate and element of community's character.

Planning for new forest as proposed mitigation – city and Commission responsibility for tree removal.

Proposed next step

- A small number of stakeholders and city staff to work together with the applicant
- Discuss the plant materials and possible relocation efforts
- City staff and the Commission work together to review opportunities regarding park spaces
- Planning of mitigation site to provide some benefit to Overlake Village residents

Commissioner Jayne stated that this would be an ideal role for the Commission to partake in. She questioned the ability to incorporate some of the existing landmark trees (1,133) in the park – modifying to incorporate trees rather than eliminate them, knowing this would be the City's only opportunity to preserve or mitigate more trees. She suggested that this would be an ideal opportunity for parks staff to work with Group Health and Overlake citizens to re-exam the space/tree issue.

Ms. Hope will discuss the project with Betty Sanders, Project Manager, and report back to the Commission.

Rianne BeCraft – Redmond resident, founder and co-leader for Redmond Wild, volunteer community group that raises awareness regarding wildlife habitat loss. The group raises awareness to residents of the importance of habitat restoration, and then how to restore and protect habitat.

Redmond Wild has implemented a program working with the Washington Wildlife Association (WWA) called the Community Wildlife Habitat Program. The program gives national recognition to communities that have made it a priority to protect wildlife habitat in their community. Redmond has been registered as a community for five months and working toward certification. Thirty communities in the Puget Sound area are participating and the cities of Sammamish and Kirkland have already secured their certifications.

Point accumulation is based on population; individual spaces (school, home, church, common area, business, park) and certification is determined by satisfying specific basic needs for wildlife – food, water, cover, places to raise young and the use of sustainable practices; only two of those categories need to be fulfilled. Only six spaces need to be certified to receive recognition.

Ms. BeCraft felt that this is a great opportunity for the Commission to be involved in. She noted that once certified participants are recognized by the Washington Wildlife Association, NW Zoo and Aquarium Alliance and Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. Once all criteria has been met the WWA will send the City notification maintaining that all criteria have been met and they will be known as a Backyard Sanctuary. Signs can be ordered to be placed in all designated areas.

IV. New Business

- A. Review of Revised Parks, Trails, Bicycle and Transit Map – Kirk Hovenkotter
Kirt Hovenkotter, Planning Dept. gave the Commission a brief update on the rough “draft” revised map. Mr. Hovenkotter brought a large map to illustrate the changes that had been made thus far.

Mr. Hovenkotter noted that the the map will be two sided; the transit side (schematic showing transit connections and options), is now at 90%-95% completion and the opposite side will be the bike, trails, and walking map which is now 60% to 70% complete. He asked the Commission’s input on the Park’s map. He would like to expand to the Watershed Park and focus on features of the park.

Ms. Hope added that staff had started this project about 1 ½ years ago and has been working with Public Works Transportation trying to combine the two types of maps (bike/trails/transportation/parks) in the most efficient way.

Suggestions:

Commissioner Smalling suggested that multi-use trails be broken into four identifiable categories – public multi-use, social multi-use trail (Hartman to Nike Parks), funded multi-use (Puget Sound Trail), and unfunded multi-use trail (future developed).

Commissioner Sanko voiced his concern about too much wayfinding on a small map. He also suggested bike shops be put on map. Mr. Hovenkotter suggested that restrooms, drinking fountains, other park amenities, tips (how to trigger traffic lights), significant phone numbers and public property would also be highlighted on the map.

Teresa Kluver suggested that another color for trails be used instead of blue, which is normally reserved for rivers or streams. Contrast in color is very important, identifying colors.

Mr. Hovenkotter noted that he is trying to use similar colors and markings as King County uses for their bike map:

- Blue – bike lane
- Yellow – shared mixed use areas
- Red – Cautionary areas (Using red as little as possible)
- Green – mixed use trails
- Chevron - directional

Mr. Hovenkotter ended by stating that he would show existing trails and labeling bike arterials/trails that are prominent and safe as suggested bike routes. Less desirable routes will be recessed in the background.

Commissioners are encouraged to contact Mr. Hovenkotter in the event they have other suggestions. He can be contacted at: 425-556-2419 or krhovenkotter@redmond.gov.

V. Old Business

A. Community Gardens –Teresa Kluver (handout)

Ms. Kluver reported that in 2010 the Parks Dept. constructed a new garden area at Juel Park. The newly constructed area, which consisted of 19, 10'x20' garden lots were rented as full or ½ space plots. A new garden space, next to the house, is programmed through the recreation division of Parks. Lots that were rented out within the first year were offered to the same individuals in the second year; of which the majority re-rented. In 2011 a second garden area was constructed; 17 spaces, 10'x20' (200 square feet). Those lots will be rented out as full spaces.

Ms. Kluver reported that the Senior/Teen Gardening Program grew a garden at Juel this past year. Seniors grew the seedlings in the greenhouse at the Sr. Center and the teens grew the plants in pots, the produce was given to HopeLink. This year teens will be growing and harvesting their produce out at Juel Park and again, giving the produce to Hopelink. Ms. Kluver noted that community gardens have been a very powerful community building experience at Juel.

No specific community garden sites have been pinpointed, however, potential sites have been evaluated by requested neighborhoods. Public and private properties have also been noted as potential sites. Microsoft has expressed interest in participating in the program, offering a community garden to their employees on their campus site.

Those wishing some assistance can contact the Parks Dept. for their expertise and assistance in the educational care and maintenance of the garden sites.

B. Edible Plants in Parks and Public Spaces – Carolyn Hope and Dave Tucheck

Ms. Hope reported that the city currently does not have any monies set aside to continue to develop community gardens. She has been working with staff on setting up a community garden page on the website and specifically discussing the

garden sites plus all the information necessary to get a community garden set up with the help from appropriate staff members. There is also a link, on this webpage, to the American Community Gardening Association website which has gardening tips on how to be successful in setting up a community garden in your neighborhood. The website also has links to the Juel Park Facebook page and to the Neighborhood Matching Grant information page. Assessments of proposals will be taken into consideration when inquiries are made or applications have been submitted.

Mr. Tucheck noted that the City is very supportive of community gardens, however is also mindful, and taking into account, that it does take staff resources. He added that it takes careful balancing with other new and on-going projects, and workload.

Ms. Hope asked Commissioners for their input as to how the message should be relayed to the community. Commissioner Bourguignon suggested that a sign be located in non-city property gardens areas with information stating that the garden is supported by the City of Redmond; with website information.

Staff and Commissioners discussed viable ways to inform the public about community gardens, funding and getting the process started.

Mr. Tuckek addressed Mr. Teller's email regarding using street flower pots and flower beds (located in parks) as edible gardens. Staff has evaluated the possibility and came up with the following evaluation.

- Main purpose of flower pots – esthetics, beautification, color
- Vegetable gardens and fruit trees – require more maintenance (pruning, weeding)
- Growing vegetables in pots – hostile growing environment (vandalism, carbon monoxide from cars)
- Small area at GrassLawn Park behind Field #2 – Blueberries have been planted

Mr. Tucheck re-emphasized the city's support for community gardens and encouraging citizens to take on the endeavor on their own.

Mr. Teller suggested planting strawberries at Anderson Park and in lieu of other forms of vegetation, using table grapes.

Commissioners discussed liability issues and adding subtle changes to vegetation to perhaps to slowly evolve into edible landscaping. Ms. Kliver added that some parks have some same edible plants (Alpine Strawberries as groundcover – Perrigo, Grass Lawn, Fire Stations).

C. Funding Strategy Survey – Carolyn Hope

Ms. Hope reiterated the discussion that staff and the Commission had last year regarding a potential ballot measure in 2012 to help fund parks and transportation capital projects. A 12-minute statistically valid telephone survey will be made to Redmond residents the second week of this month. The survey will address citizen satisfaction and will ask the question, "How much are you willing to spend to support city parks and what types of projects are you willing to support?" The target is 400 completed surveys.

Draft survey results will be presented at the February Commission and at a study session with City Council on February 14. Ms. Hope encouraged Commissioners attendance.

D. Youth Advocate – Chair Bourguignon

Chair Bourguignon announced that the Commission is still seeking youth advocates for the 2012-2013 school year. Staff continues to work on recruitment.

Applications are still in the process of being taken.

VI. Project/Commission Updates

A. RCC Walk & Talk

Ms. Hope gave an update on the Redmond Central Connector Project. The project will be in the 60% design phase by the end of January. John Fleming, artist, has been hired as part of the design team. Mr. Fleming will be installing some of his existing artwork throughout Redmond so residents will get the feel of his art style; art will be interior and exterior pieces. By March, Mr. Fleming will have a concept drawing of what the art piece and integrated art/landscape design will look like on the Connector. Staff is looking for appropriate locations.

The City will hold a "Walk and Talk" which is projected for March 2012. The event will start at the Downtown Park and follow the connector toward Redmond Town Center.

B. Wildlife Habitat Designation

Commissioner Jayne said she felt this is a good opportunity for the City to showcase some of their programs that are already in motion. She gave a brief overview of the program.

Mr. Tuchek reported that the City currently has 16-18 parks that meet the criteria for qualification/certification.

Commissioner Jayne suggested that the most important parks be submitted for certification; submission cost is a \$20, one time fee, per site. Once the park or open space is designated a sign will be posted on the site.

Mr. Tucheck and Ms. Kluver will be the contacts for the project and will determine which parks meet the criteria.

Parks that were suggested were Idylwood, Perrigo, Westside, Grass Lawn, Farrell McWhirter, Juel, Watershed.

C. Spiritbrook Park

Ms. Hope gave an update on Spiritbrook Park and handed out current construction photos of the park. She reported that construction is still in progress; however the sidewalk, two play equipment pieces, gravel path around wetlands and sport court (partially complete) are complete. The playfield will be fenced until dryer weather prevails to plant grass.

VII. Adjourn

Motion by Sanders to adjourn

Second: Worsley

Motion carried: 8-0

Next Commission Meeting

February 2, 2012

6:30 p.m.

Council Conference Room