



Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services/Tree Board Special Meeting Minutes

Call to Order/Attendance/Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 9:15am. by Chair Franklin.

Park Board members present: Chair William Franklin, Genny Arredondo, Hayley Berkman, Jean Hilde, David Lin, Dustin McIntyre, Sara Raab McInerney, Noah Weil.

Absent: Vice Chair Jeff Potter

City Staff present: Recreation, Cultural and Community Services (RCCS) Director Colleen Kelly, RCCS Administrative Assistant III Lori Henrich

Land Acknowledgment read by Hayley Berkman

We acknowledge the land on which our work started as the traditional home of the Coast Salish and Snohomish peoples. We take this opportunity to thank the original caretakers and storytellers of this land who are still here, and to recognize the immense culture of these peoples by remembering their history and traditions. We invite you to recognize our government's history of unfair treatment and lack of accountability against Indigenous communities as we push to raise visibility and education about them.

Retreat Goals

Identify priority focus areas by:

- Sharing ideas
- Brainstorming
- Identify pressing questions, future agenda items
- Create new subcommittees if needed
- What is Board's relationship to the community?
- Advocacy role – what is the Board's power?

Board History

- What has been done, how has the Board moved forward?
- Provide history for new members; priorities may change but keep continuity.
- Diversity and Inclusion training for new members.
- Do not need to 'rubber stamp' staff recommendations, can make other recommendations.
- Working in small groups (sub committees) felt more impactful, not constrained by public meeting.

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Impressions from the Self-guided Park tour

- James Keough Park
 - Underserved, only park in the Meridian Park neighborhood that had any play equipment; tennis court is embarrassing, park is invisible to public, feels like trespassing to enter, “wrong side of town” (not the opinion of the Board but mentioned to a Board member by someone else), parking is a challenge, needs trees along the perimeter.
- Hillwood Park
 - Feels incomplete, not a cohesive park. Tennis courts don’t look like they belong to the park, playground nestled among trees – concerns if they will be impacted, love the public art there, field turns into a swamp for soccer though generally functional. Restrooms are not great, proximity to Einstein is a challenge, liked the huge field that could be good for events.
- Brugger’s Bog
 - Play structures are old and broken; back part is a little scary and frequently not useable.
- Richmond Highlands
 - Deserted, no restrooms but there is a porta-potty, sport court is a plus, this park needs ‘activation’
- Briarcrest
 - Excited about potential spray park, it could be a destination.
- Meridian Park
 - Limited parking.
- Darnell Park
 - Not even on the ROW & Parks Ground Maintenance map, overgrown, not welcoming.
- All parks in Prop 1 do need some love; all need some green space; there are discrepancies by neighborhood.
- All parks in general have limited parking.

Overarching Interests (captured from park report-outs)

- Review Recreation Programs
- Equity
- Climate impacts; seven generations approach
- Who’s not at the table; how do we hear more voices?
- History with Darnell Park
- Every City Park should get equal attention
- Super important for families to have nice places to take kids
- Parks should provide cooling, shade, and respite
- Public Art is valuable

Brainstorming Ideas

- As a part of new board member orientation, need additional focus on history/goals so there is continuity
- Committees allow for more robust conversation and focused efforts
- Should By-laws establish standing committees?
- Conduct Bi-annual web survey of residents
- Can Board commission studies /reports?
- Public Comment give & take

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- More public hearing type forums – the point is to increase input/outreach, possibly by committees
- How can we attract more performance art?
- Can we find ways to strengthen neighborhood business centers / create a sense of place
- RBSWP – clean but lacking
- Better balance of practicality and aesthetics
- Consider layout of park along with a functional facility
- How to ensure programming reflects our whole community and who we want to be?
- How to be sure the Board is tending to all elements?
- Is mandate too large?
- Should trees have their own board?
- Code concerns regarding references to PRCS Director
- Should Board take a position on new acquisitions and how they are developed?
 - I.e., Edwin Pratt Park
- Need to understand process – how to be in front of it
- Concern about access to parks for all residents, equity
- All should be able to walk to a park and access play equipment
- Mapping (similar to tree mapping) for:
 - Play equipment
 - Restrooms
- Supporting data available to be shared with Board on relevant topics
- Play area replacement – can we get away from pre-packaged options?
 - More integrated into community
- What is the definition of ‘Best it can be’?
- Board involvement in influencing what is included in the CIP – seeing regular updates
- Facilities
 - Park restrooms need more attention
- Desire to get more input from more people – especially a more diverse cross-section of the community
- How are people feeling welcomed?
- Get kids & bikes into our parks – pump track
- Can we find a way to provide helmets/bikes?
- Are rental bikes part of the solution?
- Public Art – interactive art opportunities
 - Andy Goldsworthy, permanent creative space
- Invite art from culturally diverse communities, want all to feel welcome/represented
- Emerging issues from Council of Neighborhoods/Planning Commission with cross relevance – connecting to PRCS/Tree Board, regular check-in/joint meetings
- Potential engagement with non-city Boards (i.e., Chamber of Commerce)
- Access to data that would help determine priorities
- How are we adapting for the future, vis a vis pending changes in the community; remembering +1.5 degree temperature goal
- Can Interurban Trail be seen as a transportation corridor – TMP? General opportunities for input
- Severe weather response

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Dot Exercise

6 Dots:

- Play area replacement not “out of the box”; more integrated design
- Board influence over what is included in the CIP

5 Dots:

- Public comment give and take; more public hearing type forums
- Access to data that could help shape priorities
- Adapting for the future vis a vis climate change

4 Dots:

- Should trees have their own board?
- Concern about access for all; ability to walk to a park; similar amenities available to all

3 Dots:

- Bi-annual Survey
- Getting kids and bikes into parks
- Emerging issues from other City boards (Planning Commission/CON)
- Attention to Facilities; park restrooms
- New acquisition-- input at the front end; understand the process
- Interurban Trail as a transportation corridor

Emerging Themes and Potential Strategies

- Equity of access and amenities across all parts of the city
 - All should be able to walk to a park and find similar amenities
 - Influence on what’s included in CIP
 - New acquisitions, input at front end, understand process
 - Invite art from culturally diverse communities, want all to feel welcome/represented
- Integrated/quality design, overall high-quality park experience
 - Access to data that would help shape priorities
 - Kids and bikes into parks
 - Improved Park washrooms
 - Public Art in more/all parks
 - More interesting options for playground equipment; not all pre-packaged
- Increased Public Engagement
 - Give and take, more public hearing type forums.
 - The community can speak to the Board; the Board wants to hear from them including at the staff level.
 - Conduct surveys (bi-annually via the website)
 - More advertisement
 - Outreach to Neighborhood Associations
 - Connect to city communication plan

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- Emerging issues from other City Boards (Council of Neighborhoods/Planning Commission)

Possible Organizing Principles

- Past/Present/Future
 - Upgrading what we have/What do people want right now/Where should City be going
- Process vs. facility themes (several ideas were related to process and other ideas were related to physical (facility) improvements)
- What vs. How
- Reactive vs. Proactive

What We Could Have Talked More About

- Board interaction with Council
- Public Art
- More parks reflecting diversity of culture – cultural services programming emerging from COVID
- Should Tree Board go to Planning Commission? Better communication/sharing info access between Planning Commission and PRCS/Tree Board

Action Items for Staff

- Confirm that City Council Bond Measure discussion is on October 11, 2021
- As a Board, can they take a position on a measure once it's on the ballot?
- Can the By-laws be amended by the Board?
- Verify NRPA Membership information

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Board Approval _____ / October 28, 2021

Lori Henrich _____ / October 28, 2021

Signature of Chair

Date

Signature of Minute-Writer

Date

William Franklin

Lori Henrich, Administrative Assistant III