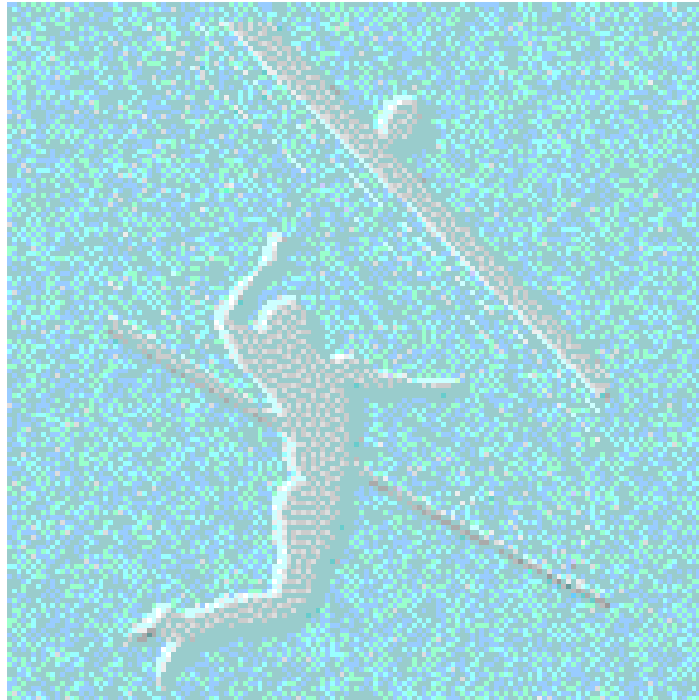


VOLLEYBALL TASK FORCE REPORT



MAY 2001

INTRODUCTION

In 2001, the Park Board conducted a public consultation process for a 12 court sand volleyball facility on the area directly south of the marginal wharf in Jericho Park. The process revealed that the community believes that volleyball is already allocated a large portion of prime waterfront in the general vicinity and that the remaining waterfront areas should be preserved and protected for more passive pursuits. At the January 14th, 2002 meeting of the Vancouver Park Board, the Commissioners passed the following recommendations:

That the Board investigate alternate possibilities for a 12 court sand volleyball facility.

**That, in consultation with the Chair, staff be directed to establish a Task Force to investigate alternate sites and,
That the Task Force be comprised of community representatives and staff and,
That the Task Force provide the Board with a recommendation/recommendations within three months.**

A Task Force was assembled by staff and met four times during the past three months. This report represents the consensus of the Sand Court Volleyball Task Force.

BACKGROUND

The Vancouver Park Board is the primary provider of sand volleyball courts in the Lower Mainland. These courts are located on various Vancouver beaches and the courts accommodate both casual and organized play.

In 1997, Park Board staff proposed constructing a 16 sand court facility on western grass area of Spanish Banks. The objective of the proposal was to reduce volleyball's impact on the beaches by transferring play to an "off" beach sand court facility. After an initial public consultation process, the Board decided not to pursue this proposal but rather designate volleyball areas on various beaches. In 1998, the Board approved the recommendations in the Management of Volleyball on Vancouver's Beaches Report. Due to the high demand for and limited supply of beach space, organized volleyball is restricted to one night per week per site for league play and one weekend per month per site for tournament play. The Report also indicated that any future demand for volleyball would have to be accommodated through "off" beach sand court facilities as increasing the intensity/level of play would infringe on the enjoyment of the beaches by others.

Unfortunately, this level of scheduling no longer meets the demand for organized volleyball in the

City of Vancouver. As per the recommendation in the 1998 Management of Beach Volleyball, staff investigated possible sites for an “off” beach sand court facility to accommodate this demand for organized volleyball. This led to the 2001 consultation process for the Jericho Park site and ultimately to the establishment of this Task Force.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Task Force was guided in its deliberations by the following Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference were developed by staff and endorsed by Task Force members at their first meeting.

Facility Requirements and Conditions of Use

To accommodate the city’s demand for organized league and tournament play the Park Board is proposing the construction a 12 court sand volleyball court facility. The facility requires 1.5 acres which is approximately 2/3 the size of a soccer field. The Park Board would allocate the use of the facility to groups who then are responsible for organizing play. The proposed facility would focus on league play and recreational tournaments rather than higher profile tournaments. Thus, this site does not require the more elaborate set-up (spectator seating, staging, PA systems, etc.) of the City’s higher profile tournaments. When the facility is not allocated to user groups, it would be available for unorganized or casual play.

Sites for Consideration

The Task Force was to consider those sites within the City of Vancouver which are available for public use - e.g., Park Board, City, School Board, Provincial properties, etc. Sites not under the Park Board’s jurisdiction would require the “owner’s” consent to proceed before the site would be recommended for public consultation.

Task Force Membership

As previously outlined, the Park Board’s objective for the Volleyball Task Force was to recommend possible site(s) for a sand court volleyball facility for public consultation. In order to accomplish this objective, the Task Force members had to in principle support the provision of sand volleyball facility on an appropriate site within the City. A key structural component for the Task Force was balancing broad-based representation with a workable committee size. With this in mind, the committee consisted of:

Clarence Hansen	Chair, Vancouver Park Board
Valerie Halpin Jones	Resident - from the Jericho consultation process
Mark Weintraub	Resident - from the Jericho consultation process
Boris Tyzuk	Volleyball Representative
Tom Caverly	Executive Director, BC Volleyball Association
June Binkert	President, Save Our Parkland Association
Colin Metcalfe	President, Vancouver Field Federation

Marilyn Bell
Mark Vulliamy
Terry Walton

Member of the SE False Creek Parkland Committee
Manager of Research and Planning, Park Board
Manager for Stanley District, Park Board

This committee does not necessarily represent the city's and/or any local community's opinion with regards to possible site selection. However, the committee does represent a broad base of opinion and this diversity will hopefully result in a successful proposal.

WORK PROGRAM

At its first meeting, members approved a terms of reference for the Task Force. Included in the terms of reference was the following work program:

1. Identify criteria to evaluate possible sites for consideration.
2. Identify and evaluate possible sites against criteria.
3. Recommend sites to Park Board by mid-April for further consultation.
4. If approved by the Board, the sites will be forwarded to general public for consideration.

Development of the Selection Criteria

The following criteria represents the preferred "site" attributes:

Suitability for conversion - existing uses and users.

Ideally, the facility should have minimal impact on the proposed site's current uses/users, i.e., prime site would include under utilized park areas or sites with opportunities to accommodate users/uses in other areas of the park, etc.

Impact of facility on the park's other uses/users/park neighbours.

Ideally, the site would have minimal impact on and would be compatible with other park use/users and park neighbours - i.e., located near active park use, minimal noise impact on park neighbours, etc. Due to size of facility (1.5 acres), a large park size is preferred.

Waterfront Location

Sand court volleyball has historically been located on the waterfront. In addition, a sand court facility naturally blends in with a water location. Thus, a location on or near the waterfront is preferred.

Availability of Parking and Washrooms

Given that a 12 court facility will attract approximately 150 players per scheduled event, a site with off street parking and washrooms facilities is preferred. Temporary washroom facilities are acceptable.

Access

Sites which are accessible by alternate transportation such as transit, greenways and bike routes are preferred. However, it is recognized that the majority of players arrive by automobile.

Maintenance of Facility

Existing volleyball areas are maintained by the Board's beach cleaning equipment. Maintenance costs are lower if the facility is located near maintained beach areas.

Site Selection - Criteria Evaluation

The ideal scenario for the Task Force would be to identify a site which meets all selection criteria. The selection process began with members proposing possible sites for consideration. The following sites were recommended for initial screening against the outlined criteria:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Everett Crowley | Killarney Park |
| Fraser River park sites | Memorial South |
| Hastings Park (PNE Site) | New Brighton Park |
| Jericho Park | SE False Creek Site |
| Jericho Hill - BCBC Site | Sunset Beach Park |
| John Hendry Park | Vanier Park |

Appendix A evaluates each site against the committee's defined criteria. It become apparent that no site met all of the criteria outlined. However, the initial screening suggested that the following sites were the best candidates for further evaluation:



Jericho Park

The proposed site is the land adjacent to the tennis courts. The area is a combination of lawn, access road and grasslands. The Task Force concluded that this site did not work well either functionally (sand on tennis courts) or visually adjacent to the tennis courts. If this site were to be pursued, consideration should be given to removing or relocating the tennis courts. In addition, the area currently accommodates six sand court volleyball on Locarno Beach which is immediately to the west of this area.

Jericho Hill - BCBC Site



Jericho Hill - BC Building Corporation Site

This Provincial owned site is currently a maintained lawn area. The specific site is located to the west of the parking lot off West 4th Ave. The site represents a temporary solution as the site's long term development has yet to be determined.

The Task Force concluded that the site could work as a temporary site. This would allow for additional time to find a more suitable Park Board site. The big advantages for this site include the minimal impact the site would have on existing users as well as park neighbours. In addition, the site has on site parking. Drawbacks for this site included the uncertainty of the site's future and its "off the water" location. In addition, use of this site as a temporary volleyball facility requires BCBC approval.



New Brighton Park

The proposed location is the lawn area immediately to the north of the tennis and to the east of the swimming pool. This area is impacted by noise and dust from the neighbouring grain terminal. While the site has been identified as the possible location for daylighting of a stream in the future, it is believed that both features could be accommodated in the area.

This site was of interest to the Task Force primarily due to its waterfront location and the fact that the eastern side of the park is generally under utilized. In addition, the facility would have minimal impact on existing park users/use and there are no adjacent residents. The negatives for this site included its isolated location and corresponding dependence on automobile access. In addition, the impact of adjacent industry (noise and dust) was also a concern.



Sunset Beach Park

The proposed location is the non regulation play field. Sunset Beach Park is a large and very active linear park between English Bay seawall and Beach Ave. The field is heavily used for casual play. The site is bordered by high rise apartment buildings on one side.

The Task Force concluded that the advantages of this site were (a) that it represents a change in programming rather than a new use for the site, (b) the site is adjacent to a beach area and (c) it is accessible by various forms of transportation. Two possible downsides for this site were identified: (a) the redevelopment of an open area where pick-up field sports are currently played may displace this activity onto one of the few regulation fields in the downtown core and, (b) the proposed change of use may be of concern to neighbouring residents.



Vanier Park

The proposed location is the area immediately west of the Marina parking compound. The area is currently used as an over flow parking area and meadow/grassland area. The site would require the removal of some trees.

This site was of interest to the Task Force primarily due to its waterfront location and the fact that the site's development would have minimal impact on other park uses/users and neighbours. Loss of trees could be mitigated through well planned landscaping and planting. The primary negative for this site was the existing concentration of city wide facilities in the immediate neighbourhood.

Conclusion - Ranking of the Sites

Upon further analysis, the Task Force agreed that the Jericho Park site did not meet the overall criteria for site consideration and was subsequently withdrawn as a possible site. The committee concluded that each of the remaining four sites had various and differing strengths and weaknesses. The committee did agree that all four sites (Jericho Hill - BCBC site, New Brighton, Sunset Beach and Vanier Parks) would be acceptable locations for further consideration and any

of the four could be forwarded for public consultation.

The Task Force achieved consensus in endorsing Sunset Beach as the top choice for a 12 court sand court volleyball facility. The committee believed that this site best met the “site selection” criteria. While the Task Force recognized that developing this site would impact the existing users of the park and possibly the neighbouring residents, it was felt that volleyball is an appropriate use for this area (adjacent to a beach), the site is currently used for sports thus volleyball represents a programming change rather than a change of use, and the site is accessible by various forms of transportation. If the Board is to pursue this site, the Task Force recommends that the Board work closely with existing users (to relocate play) and park neighbours so as minimize/resolve possible concerns.

It is important to note that given the site selection history for this facility, the Task Force would support forwarding any of the three other sites to a consultation process (Jericho Hill site, New Brighton or Vanier Parks) if one of these sites is deemed as having a better chance for success. Independent of site selection, the Task Force also recommends that the Board implement mitigation measures to reduce the impact the volleyball facility will have other park users and/or park neighbours. Such measures would include landscaping, planting and screening as well as not permitting the sites use for high profile tournaments (no p.a. systems, bleachers, staging, etc.).

Community Consultation

In terms of a community consultation process, the Task Force recommends that the Board first solicit the opinion of local community groups or residences prior to conducting the public consultation for the “chosen” site. In addition, the public consultation process should include open houses (preferably on or near by site) so as to facilitate open communication between the Board, park users and park neighbours.