

**Minutes of Meeting
Culture and Recreation Committee, Vancouver Park Board
2099 Beach Avenue, Vancouver**

DATE OF MEETING: September 14, 2005

ATTENDEES: Park Board Commissioners
Commissioner Heather Deal
Commissioner Lyndsay Poaps
Commissioner Suzanne Anton
Commissioner Anita Romaniuk
Commissioner Loretta Woodcock

Park Board Staff

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Liane McKenna | Director of Queen Elizabeth District |
| Diane Murphy | Manager of Recreation Services, Queen Elizabeth District |
| Susan Gordon | Coordinator, Arts and Culture |
| Bill Manning | Manager of Operations, Queen Elizabeth District |
| Bob Trydal | Manager of Operations, Stanley District |
| Stacey Carter | Park Ranger, Queen Elizabeth District |
| Barbara Joughin | Recorder of Minutes |

Delegations

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Tom Holmes | Sunset Community Centre Association |
| Doug Newstead | Sunset Community Centre Association |
| Margaret Newton | Vancouver Dog Owners Association |
| Caralee Randall | Canine Citizens of Yaletown |
| Don Currie | |

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

1. Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the Culture and Recreation Committee meeting of April 6, 2005 and July 6, 2005 were approved as presented.

2. Moberly Field House:

Diane Murphy introduced the Committee to members of the Sunset Community Association (the Association) who were present to describe a project to renovate and update the existing community hall at the Moberly Fieldhouse. The building has been operated jointly by the Association and the Vancouver Park Board since 1999 as the Moberly Arts and Cultural Centre, with a mandate to support increased public use as an artist's centre and general public events.

Doug Newstead gave some history of Moberly Hall, which was built in 1958 by the community. A community cultural development process began in 1997 that introduced the idea of Moberly Hall as an arts centre, and an upgrade was completed with funds from the 1997/98 Capital Plan. The facility now has one large hall and a smaller space in the basement, but has limited space for

programs. The current proposal is to renovate the unoccupied caretaker's suite to create a third space for programs, activities, and meetings. Tom Holmes told the Committee that the Association has approved up to \$7500 for renovations, including the removal of a wall. However, since no support beam is required, renovation expenses are projected to be less than the approved amount. The renovated space will be wheelchair-accessible.

The delegations confirmed that the renovation will allow for program expansion, and noted that the bathrooms will provide a sound buffer between the new space and the main hall for programs such as dhol drumming and pre-school activities. The Park Board's contribution to the project includes regular site maintenance such as moving or removing the stove wiring, covering pipes, bringing plumbing and electrical systems up to code, wall repairs and painting, and possible kitchen cabinet removal. The delegations told the Committee that with approval from the Board in October, the work can be completed within two working weeks and finished by November in time to plan for program start-up in January 2006.

Next Steps:

Commissioner Romaniuk moved that the Committee recommend that the Board approve the proposal to renovate the caretaker suite at Moberly Hall for a change of use, and Commissioner Woodcock seconded the motion. The motion was approved, and Commissioner Woodcock congratulated all for bringing forward such a well-prepared proposal.

3. Potential Arts and Culture Projects – World Urban Forum/World Peace Forum:

Susan Gordon summarized ideas for potential arts and culture projects in association with the World Peace Forum and the United Nations World Urban Forum, and asked the Committee for comment and feedback on Park Board involvement in these two events.

World Peace Forum (WPF)

The World Peace Forum will be held in Vancouver from June 23-28, 2006 to foster an international culture of peace and strengthen city and social alliances and networks. The Park Board has been invited to participate in the initiative, and several suggestions have been made for peace installations in Seaforth Peace Park, including a labyrinth, a Japanese peace pole, and a mandala. Other project ideas include floating biodegradable candles in English Bay or other waters, "potters for peace", and participating in a Judith Marcuse Project. Park Board activities could involve speakers, films, workshops, etc, as well as such community centre activities as mobile-making and mass choral singing.

World Urban Forum (WUF)

The WUF is a biennial gathering established by the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat) to examine urbanization and sustainable cities. It will be held in Vancouver from June 19-23, 2006. The Committee expressed enthusiasm about potential Park Board involvement with the WUF and discussed the need to find ways to make citizens aware of the event, such as pre-event programming at community centres and in parks. In addition, the Park Board could develop parallel programming with similar themes and build on the formal WUF program, with, for example, the homelessness project at Roundhouse or other initiatives developed by the new Park Board First Nations programmer, Cease Wyss.

The Committee asked staff to look for ways to strengthen relationships with the WUF and to find opportunities to encourage their speakers and delegates to engage with the city and its communities.

4. Rest and Read Project Update:

Susan Gordon updated the Committee on the Rest and Read Project by the Lifewriting group at Brock House Society's that attached 45 short stories to park benches in Jericho Park during July 2005. There was a very positive response to the project, which was extended for an additional two weeks and received good coverage in the media. The group would like to expand the project to other seniors centres and locations next year. A member of the Committee suggested that arts and culture items such as this could be highlighted at Board meetings that take place in the community.

5. Dog Offleash Location Proposals

During the open question period at the July 25, 2005 Board meeting, several members of the public requested changes to the Board's dog offleash plan. Staff researched possible sites that might be suitable for expanded dog offleash areas, and Bill Manning presented a series of proposals to the Committee with a request for specific comment and feedback on each proposed site. The Committee noted that neither dog bylaw fines nor enforcement are within the jurisdiction of the Park Board.

1. Coopers Park – extend present offleash area to all day hours
2. CRAB Park at Portside – extend present offleash area to all day hours
3. Nelson Park – all day offleash hours in fenced dog area in the redeveloped park
4. Devonian Harbour Park – new offleash area with all day offleash hours, area to be determined
5. Creekside Park – new offleash area with all day offleash hours, area to be determined
6. Stanley Park – all day offleash hours in an area adjacent to Ceperly Park

In addition, staff commented on two other locations.

7. George Wainborn Park – not currently considered as a future dog offleash area
8. Vanier Park – conduct a site survey (identify summer users, determine awareness about site use limitations, and gather ideas for use) and report back

The Committee, staff and delegations discussed each park.

1. Coopers Park – The Committee discussed the proximity of residential towers to the park, and a delegation expressed concern about the future status of the dog park.
2. CRAB Park at Portside – The Committee noted that there is a discrepancy between the information about offleash hours and beach access posted at the park and on the website, and asked staff to clarify this information before proceeding.
3. Nelson Park – A member of the Committee noted that fencing in this park is critical and that fencing may become necessary in other offleash dog parks.
4. Devonian Harbour Park – The Committee said that there are good reasons for an offleash dog area in this park, and asked staff to look at the site in more detail.
5. Creekside Park – The group discussed several concerns related to potential conflict with current uses of the proposed site, and, in acknowledgement of the demand in the area, discussed an alternate location at the north end of the park. Staff will review the site alternatives in more detail.

6. Stanley Park – The group discussed the proposed area adjacent to the Ceperly Park picnic shelter in Stanley Park. A member of the Committee asked what environmental considerations would be reviewed, and staff replied that the site had no water access or sensitive habitat.
7. George Wainborn – The Committee asked why staff will not recommend this park for use as an offleash dog park. Staff said they apply Board-approved criteria (size, use, landscaping, proximity to residential areas) in the preview of all potential sites, and this site does not meet the criteria.
8. Vanier Park – The group talked about the legal history of Vanier and Hadden Parks, and the suitability of an offleash dog area in the park. Staff noted that there are several sensitivities in Vanier Park, and recommended that the Board take time to gather information.

Delegations

Margaret Newton brought three petitions to the Committee, including signatures from Vanier Park and CRAB Park at Portside, and provided feedback on each of the proposed parks. She expressed approval for the offleash areas suggested for Devonian Harbour and Ceperly Parks, and commented that more daytime offleash hours in CRAB Park are needed due to poor lighting and security concerns. She said that the area suggested for offleash dogs Creekside Park is the area with the highest pedestrian and bicycle traffic in the park, and suggested an alternative area at the north end of the park in a field between the children's playgrounds for parents with both children and dogs. She said that Vanier Park was a successful dog park because of its isolation below the cliff, and that survey results indicate that it is a necessary dog space.

Caralee Randall told the Committee that the activities of Canine Citizens of Yaletown promote responsible dog ownership and address unfair fines. She requested a meeting with Park Board staff to define goals for a dog-friendly Vancouver and to discuss dog park supplies (pick-up bag dispensers and bags), waste containers, and appropriately designed bulletin boards. She expressed disappointment that George Wainborn Park will not be put forward as an offleash area when it comes under Park Board jurisdiction because it is currently highly used in this way. She is also concerned about the future of offleash hours at Coopers Park due to the close proximity of residential towers and the lack of disclosure about the dog park to prospective buyers.

Don Currie wrote a letter to the Board about his concerns with garbage, safety and dog issues in the north False Creek area. He spoke about the lack of cleanliness and garbage bins in his neighbourhood as well as the lack of enforcement of dog offleash and seawall separation rules. He told the Committee that residents pay high property taxes and some should be spent on enforcement.

Next Steps

Commissioner Deal thanked staff for responding to the Board's request for a new downtown offleash site with six suggestions. The Committee asked staff to review the sites in more detail and staff will prepare recommendations and report back to the Board.

6. Next Meeting:

The meeting adjourned at 9:15pm. The next Culture and Recreation Committee meeting will be on October 5, 2005.