

Minutes of Meeting
Planning Committee, Vancouver Park Board

DATE OF MEETING: March 21, 2006

ATTENDEES: Park Board Commissioners

Commissioner Korina Houghton, Chair
Commissioner Spencer Herbert
Commissioner Loretta Woodcock

Park Board Staff

Piet Rutgers	Director of Planning and Operations
Jim Lowden	Director of Stanley District
Philip Josephs	Manager of Revenue Services
Susan Gordon	Coordinator, Arts and Culture
Megan Stuart-Stubbs	Community Arts Programmer

Delegations

Eleanor Hadley
Nathan Edelson

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm, with the following Agenda:

1. Approval of Minutes of March 7, 2006 Meeting
2. Dogs Off Leash – Consultation Results
3. Brockton Lighthouse – Transfer of Ownership
4. Cardero Park – Chilean Monument
5. Downtown Eastside – Art Project Update
6. Seaforth Park Peace Pole

1. Approval of Minutes of March 7, 2006 meeting

The minutes of the March 7, 2006 meeting were approved as presented.

2. Dogs Off Leash – Consultation Results

Jim Lowden reported the results of the consultation process for five off leash dog sites to the Committee. Time extensions were proposed for Coopers and Portside (Crab) Parks, and new sites were proposed in Stanley, Devonian and Creekside South Parks. He described the process for public notice that was followed. Each site was posted with at least two signs, a press release went to all media, advertisements were placed in the Sun, Courier, Province, Westender, and Ming Pao newspapers, flyers were posted in local community centres and libraries, and a feature box and full story were posted on the website.

By the end of the consultation period on February 28, 2006, there were 196 general responses, 167 site-specific responses, and two unsolicited petitions received (49 names to designate Harbour Green Park as an off leash site, and 57 names to prevent unleashed dogs in children's play areas). In addition, there were 39 responses to a poll by the Courier newspaper on dog use fees for fenced off leash areas, with 25 in support and 14 opposed. Overall, there were 229 responses in favour of more time and more places for dogs, and 134 opposed.

Responses to changes at the individual parksites were as follows:

<u>Park</u>	<u>Proposed change</u>	<u>In Favour</u>	<u>Opposed</u>
Coopers Park	Time extension	28	3
Portside (CRAB) Park	Time extension	5	3
Stanley Park	New site	12	31
Devonian Park	New site	11	8
Creekside Park South	New site	6	5

Respondents indicated several reasons for their positions:

- 35 people said that enforcement is not adequate;
- 13 people expressed environmental concerns;
- Five respondents identified safety as a concern, (a 57 name petition was received against dogs in children's play areas);
- Four people said that fencing is required to clearly define dog zone boundaries.

Staff noted that there are environmentally sensitive areas in the park system where dogs should not be allowed on- or off-leash, and cited a recent swan death at Lost Lagoon as an example of this nature. In addition, all of the proposed new dog off leash areas are on the seawall and adjacent to bike routes, which creates a potential hazard for both dogs and cyclists. Each off leash dog park will require fencing to ensure that dogs don't run onto the bicycle paths.

Delegations

Eleanor Hadley told the Committee that she is opposed to dogs in Devonian Park because it is a gifted park that should not be used as a dog park, and that dogs should not be allowed on Bikini Beach. Staff noted that dogs are not allowed on this beach. She is concerned about disease associated with dog waste, and is upset that dogs are taking over our public parks. She also suggested that Nelson Park be leveled off for more practical use of the space, including soccer, baseball and tennis.

Staff recommended that the proposed time extensions in Coopers and Portside (Crab) Park be endorsed by the Committee, and identified different approaches to the proposed new dog off leash sites.

Discussion

- Staff noted that there was a low level of response from Portside (Crab) Park, possibly because it does not receive a lot of use. The park contains two children's playgrounds and children's summer programming, and if the Board approves the off leash time extension at this site, fencing will be required to separate the children and dog zones.
- Staff clarified that the proposed Ceperly Park location in Stanley Park is the treed area behind the parking lot, not the meadow or the children's play area. A member of the Committee suggested that this site be referred to the Dog Strategy Task Force for input and discussion.
- The group discussed the new fenced park for small dogs at the shuffleboard courts in Stanley Park. Benches and a picnic table have been installed and gravel and sand put down as a surface. It opened a year ago and is very popular.

- The Committee discussed different approaches for the five proposed dog off leash sites. The group agreed to endorse the proposed time extensions at Coopers and Portside (Crab) Parks, and it was suggested that the proposed new sites at Stanley Park, Devonian Park and Creekside Park South be forwarded to the Dog Strategy Task Force for discussion.
- The group discussed the idea of interviewing people in Stanley Park, Devonian Park and Creekside Park South. The information gathered could be useful for the Dog Strategy Task Force although members may wish to determine what information they would like gathered from a public survey.

Recommendation

The Planning Committee recommended that the Board approve the proposed dog off leash time extensions at Coopers and Portside (Crab) Parks, and that the proposed new off leash sites at Stanley, Devonian and Creekside South Parks be referred to the Dog Strategy Task Force.

3. Brockton Point Lighthouse – Transfer of Ownership

Philip Josephs introduced a proposal for the Coast Guard to transfer ownership of the Brockton Point Lighthouse to the Park Board for a nominal fee of \$10. The Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) approached Park Board staff in 2005 and offered to transfer Brockton Point Lighthouse to the Board as they no longer require it for navigational purposes.

The lighthouse structure is a small building with a 10 x 10' open interior space and a wooden ladder ascending to the halogen light, which is fixed in position as it is no longer in service. There is electricity at the site but no water supply. Maintenance staff have assessed the site, and estimate that operating costs will be around \$2000 a year. Built in 1915, the building is well-maintained, and staff have requested that DFO transfer it in good condition. The Vancouver Charter gives the Board the power to acquire properties for the use of the public while in parks.

There is currently a lack of food service along the seawall in this area. Staff are proposing that a summer concession food service be operated as a single-season pilot program by Legends of the Moon, to provide packaged foods, drinks and ice cream to the public. The Public Health Inspector has agreed to grant a seasonal food service permit for a concession at this site.

Discussion:

- A member of the Committee inquired about arrangements with the operator and staff explained that the current contract with Legends of the Moon would be extended to include the pilot program at Brockton Point Lighthouse, with sales recorded separately but included in their gross sales for calculation of the rent. The viability of future operations will be evaluated from this year's sales.
- Staff noted that the plaza in front of the lighthouse should be upgraded, and said that outdoor tables will be installed. It was suggested that the Committee's recommendations specify that the building be transferred in a condition to the satisfaction of the General Manager, and that the building be painted by DFO before it is transferred.

Recommendation:

The Planning Committee recommended that the Board approve that the Brockton Point Lighthouse be transferred to the Park Board for a fee of \$10 and in a condition to the satisfaction of the General Manager.

4. **Cardero Park – Chilean Monument**

Susan Gordon presented the Committee with an update on the proposed installation of a public art work to be donated by the Chilean community in Vancouver. In July 2004, the Park Board accepted the donation of a public art work by Raul Eberhart to celebrate Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda, and recognize the longstanding relationship between Chile and Vancouver. In February 2006, the new Consul General of Chile contacted Park Board staff and requested that, due to escalating installation costs, which have more than doubled in the two years since the gift was accepted, the Park Board accept a portion of the approved art work.

The downsized art work would be a steel tablet (2.2 metres x 1 metre) engraved with a poem by Pablo Neruda in Spanish and English, a dedication to the poet and the relationship between the Chilean and Canadian communities, and an acknowledgement of the donors. The proposed location shifts to the south end of the park, where the tablet would be installed against existing shrubbery.

Discussion

- A member of the Committee thanked staff for working with the donors to find a way to create a positive resolution to the situation that continues to express the relationship between the two countries.
- The group discussed that the installation of the downsized art work may represent the sum total of the gift of public art accepted from the Chilean community.

Next Steps

Staff informed the Committee that notification of the installation will be re-posted at the site because it has been almost two years since the proposal went through a public consultation process. There will not be another public consultation held on the topic. A staff report will be prepared for review by the Board.

Recommendation

The Planning Committee recommended that the Board support the installation of a downsized Chilean monument in Cardero Park.

5. **Downtown Eastside – Art Project Update**

Susan Gordon presented an update on the Downtown Eastside Public Realm Arts Activity and Events Plan, and introduced Nathan Edelson, senior planner for the Downtown Eastside (DTES). The DTES Public Realm Arts Activity and Events Plan is a tool created by and for the community to advance the creation and promotion of the arts in outdoor public spaces. It evolved out of recognition that arts activities help build stronger communities.

In 2004, the Board approved up to \$25,000 funding from the Corporate Sponsorship Fund to develop an arts activity plan for the public realm, including all the parks in the DTES area, and the Vancouver Agreement provided matching funding. After one and a half years of extensive outreach and consultation, the project team is completing a plan that includes a set of principles to select and implement proposed art projects, events and programs. The plan also includes fifteen first-round pilot projects, proposed to begin in July 2006 in collaboration with project partners, arts groups and partners that have been involved in arts programming in the area and are interested in doing more.

Nathan Edelson provided the Committee with information about why this process was identified as a positive direction for the DTES, and listed a range of arts initiatives that are helping to improve community relationships and communication about some of the area's issues. The objectives of the DTES Public Realm Arts Activity and Events Plan are to use public space in a way that fosters diversity, support community based initiatives, and build the capacity of arts organizations. People who are active in parks programming across the community are asking people who live and work near the parks what they want, and the results will be included in the report, as will cost effective ways of focusing fundraising opportunities, building capacity in groups, and sharing expertise and efficiencies.

Discussion

- The Committee was asked about their experience with DTES arts events and the members described the different events that they had attended in the past.
- Staff explained that the Community Arts Council has agreed to manage the administration of the pilot projects and to house and support a staff person. Their support will include resource identification, group capacity building with smaller groups, assistance with the permitting process, and helping to develop other funding sources.
- Staff noted that this initiative is one component of a larger plan and the City of Vancouver will position it as part of their economic, arts and culture, and health plans.
- The Park Board donates the land on which events can take place, and in this way is a significant partner. Park Board Arts and Culture staff will continue to assist with program administration, and regular event planning and application processes will continue to be followed, although methods to make these processes more streamlined will be explored. A member of the Committee asked to be kept informed about how this streamlining may occur.

Next Steps

The Downtown Eastside Public Realm Arts Activity and Events Plan will be completed by the end of March 2006, and brought back to the Board for endorsement. Funding will be requested from the Vancouver Agreement partners and the private sector.

Recommendation

The Planning Committee recommends that the Board support the Downtown Eastside Public Realm Arts Activity and Events Plan.

6. Seaforth Park Peace Pole

Megan Stuart Stubbs presented information about a request for the Board to accept the gift of a peace pole and install it in Seaforth Peace Park. Keiko Iko, of the Japanese chapter of the World Peace Prayer Society, offered the gift to the Vancouver Park Board during a visit to Vancouver in 2005. The plastic pole is 2.5 meters tall and 10cm x 10cm in size, and will be painted with English, French, Japanese and Chinese greetings of peace on each face. The proposed installation site is an existing bed in the southern plaza of Seaforth Peace Park. A peace pole, donated by a local chapter of the World Peace Prayer Society, was installed in Seaforth Peace Park in 1997, and several other peace poles are installed in other locations in Vancouver.

Students will be involved in the creation of peace mandalas, and community workshops are being organized across the city in conjunction with the arrival of the pole. A small celebration is planned for the pole's installation in June 2006. Staff requested that the Board accept the gift

and participate in the celebrations.

The Committee discussed the installation of the gift peace pole in Seaforth Peace Park and agreed that it is a very suitable location.

Recommendation

The Planning Committee recommended that the Board accept the gift of a peace pole for installation in Seaforth Peace Park.

7. Next Meeting

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 21, 2006.