

**Minutes of Meeting  
Planning Committee, Vancouver Park Board**

**DATE OF MEETING:** November 20, 2007

**ATTENDEES: Park Board Commissioners**

Commissioner Heather Holden, Chair  
Commissioner Spencer Herbert  
Commissioner Ian Robertson  
Commissioner Loretta Woodcock

**Park Board Staff**

Mark Vulliamy	Manager of Research and Planning
Tilo Driessen	Park Planner, Planning and Research
Doug Taylor	Recreation Services Co-ordinator
Alyson Thorpe	Recorder

**Guest**

Lenore Copeland	President, False Creek Community Association
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The meeting started at 7:00 pm, with the following Agenda:

1. Non-Motorised Boating – Southeast False Creek
2. Playing Fields – Evaluation Update

**1. Non-Motorised Boating – Southeast False Creek**

Staff provided a presentation on non-motorised boating in Southeast False Creek. Non-motorized boating facilities outside False Creek include the Rowing Club in Stanley Park, Jericho Sailing Centre, and Kitsilano Yacht Club. However, there is a growing need for boating facilities inside False Creek. The demand is increasing for all non-motorised boats: dragon boats, canoes, kayaks, outrigger canoes, and rowing skulls. Existing boating centres are operating at capacity and are challenged by the lack of parking, storage, dock space, and other facility needs. Details for the boating centre that is part of the Southeast False Creek Community Centre include extensive dock space, boat sheds, washrooms, change rooms and meeting rooms. Programming will accommodate a diversity of boaters.

The current status of Southeast False Creek is that excavation for the community centre is complete, the foundation permit has been issued, and the contractor expects the building to be completed in approximately 18 months of construction time. It will then be handed over to VANOC for the exclusive use period of the Olympic Games. Waterfront walkways and bicycle paths will be opened to the public in a couple of weeks. The consultant has been hired for the Creekside Park/Expo deck replacement project. It is anticipated that early concepts will be available in January. An extensive public process will begin in March/April, with Board and Council reports expected before the summer break.

Discussion

The Committee discussed the competing interests between motorised and non-motorised boats, the amount of boat traffic in False Creek, the coordination of water sports programming between multiple groups, and the potential addition of other boating facilities. Staff pointed out that

recreational boating can be flexibly programmed such that boat traffic conditions are taken into consideration. The Park Board will be involved in any permit processes for additional boating facilities when they advance to the planning stage.

The Planning Committee expressed concerns about the lack of overall coordination and management of boat traffic. The Planning Committee wants the issue of governance of the community centre and the boating centre to be included in the planning stage. As there is no Community Association in place, it was requested that the False Creek Community Association be contacted for input.

### Next Steps

- The Planning Committee directed Staff to report back on a range of governance options for the Southeast False Creek Community and Boating Centre.

## **2. Playing Fields – Evaluation Update**

Staff provided the Committee with an update on the Playing Field Renewal Plan, approved by the Board in 2002. The presentation focused on the recommendations included in the plan, a summary of which was circulated at the meeting, and staff spoke to actions taken in connection with each recommendation, as summarized below:

### **Increasing Playing Field Capacity**

- *Effective allocation of field inventory:* Doug Taylor gave some examples of increasing playing field capacity by re-assigning playing fields to appropriate age and skill level teams, and extended year round usage on some fields.
- *Lights on more all-weather fields:* Staff have met with sports groups to identify opportunities and clarify process.
- *Maintenance/top-dressing of fields:* Upgrades from dirt to sand bases and deep-tining/top-dressing program are resulting in higher quality fields with good drainage.
- *Add six new synthetic fields:* With preloading about to begin at Trillium parksite (2 fields), 4 of the targeted 6 are either complete or in progress. The target can be met in the next Capital Plan if funding is included for 2 fields.
- *New field sites through land acquisition:* Opportunities to do so are limited but are being explored.

### **Sustaining the Playing Field Inventory**

- *Combined renewal schedule for Parks/VSB fields:* An integrated schedule of renewal priorities has been established
- *Additional maintenance:* Grass field fees go into maintenance budgets, supplementing the capital investment in deep-tining/top dressing. Maintenance costs, however, are escalating.

### **Financing**

- *Alternative capital funding:* Some external funding has been secured (e.g., contribution from Soccer Clubs to Point Grey Field) and a new fields have been negotiated in the context of public amenity from major projects.
- *Maintenance from fees:* User fees for synthetic turf go into a life-cycle replacement fund.

Optimal annual revenues per synthetic field are in the order of \$45,000. This revenue would cover life-cycle replacement if a synthetic turf lasts 15 years. Increasing the revenue would be difficult because already fees are on the high end in the Metro Vancouver context.

### **Harmonization of Parks/VSB field policies and procedures**

- *Joint maintenance/purchasing:* Coordination of maintenance and supplies purchase was explored with VSB, but no significant resulting economies were identified.
- *Synchronized field classification and fee structures:* VSB has adopted Parks field classification system and fee structures are now aligned
- *Joint booking system:* decided that VPB would be the place. In process of determining what resources would be required from VSB.
- *Joint monitoring system:* Park Board Rangers now monitor both Park and VSB fields.

### Discussion

The Committee discussed the economics of conversion of grass fields to synthetic turf versus rebuilding grass fields, in response to rising demand for fields. Staff noted that it is less costly to increase capacity through synthetic turf installation than through land acquisition for new fields.

The advantage of building fields on VSB property is the maximum use of the fields – schools use is limited to week-days. The timeline for a facility on East Fraser lands was discussed.

### Next Steps

- The Planning Committee directed Staff to initiate planning in relation to future field turf installation, including reconsideration of site selection criteria and an updated list of candidate sites.