

Date: October 10, 2008



TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Park Naming: 37th Avenue & Oak Street and 72nd Avenue & Osler Street park sites

RECOMMENDATION

- A. That the Board approve the name Oak Meadows Park for the 37th Avenue & Oak Street park site.*
- B. That the Board approve the name Ebisu Park for the 72nd Avenue & Osler Street park site.*

POLICY

Proposed park names will be evaluated by considering historical, cultural and geographic elements and using the following park naming guidelines:

1. Geographic: The park, trail, road or other feature being named generally should relate to a constant feature either nearby or within that park. This could relate to a bordering street name or a natural or man-made feature. This does not preclude the consideration of a name already in common use for the park. Such geographic criteria give ease of identification with relation to the park.
2. Commemorative: When no such constant feature is present or it is desired to commemorate an historical event or person important to the Park Board, City of Vancouver, or a person having made a substantial contribution to the Park Board, a park may be named for that person. Generally, names of individuals should only be used posthumously, except in the case of a living person who has a lifetime achievement consistent with the Park Board's mandate.

DISCUSSION

In 2007, the Park Board approved a new park naming process that will help make naming parks more consistent while ensuring more public involvement in the process. A citizen-based Park Naming Committee was formed to bring community and historical views to the process.

The role of the Park Naming Committee is to share ideas, solicit and receive name suggestions through a variety of methods, deliberate about naming submissions and make recommendations to the Park Board for their approval.

Elizabeth Walker, member of the Vancouver Historical Society, author and former librarian, was appointed to the Committee by the Board as a standing member for a two-year term. Volunteers from the public were invited to join the Committee to provide local representation for the two park sites currently without names. Selected for the 72nd & Osler park naming exercise were Keith Roy (Marpole-Oakridge Community Association Board member) and Claudia Laroye (Marpole Business Association Coordinator). Selected for the 37th & Oak Street park site was Ann Warrender (Riley Park Community Association Board member). Unfortunately, no business group representative was available for this area.

Over a six week period this past summer the public was invited to submit names for the two parks. A campaign informed the public about the process and offered a number of methods for name submissions. To ensure the public was given an opportunity to participate, staff used a number of techniques, including site signs, newspaper advertising, website information, neighbourhood flyers, facility posters and media coverage. Prizes consisting of Flexipass recreation passes and VanDusen Botanical Garden admission passes were used as incentives.

Over 140 names for the two park sites were submitted. Approximately 54% of the submissions were for the 37th Avenue and Oak Street site and 46% for the 72nd Avenue and Osler Street park site. Commemorative name suggestions made up 57% of the submissions for the 72nd Avenue park site. Suggested names for the 37th Avenue park site were split equally between commemorative and geographic submissions.

The Committee reviewed the submissions and did additional research before reaching a decision on recommended names for the two park sites. Both names being recommended came forward from public submissions. The names being recommended are:

A. **Oak Meadows Park** for the park site located at 37th Avenue at Oak Street.

The name follows the Park Board's Park Naming Guidelines as it designates a geographic location by including the name of the major bordering street (Oak) which is on the west side of the park. The park has several large areas which are officially designated as Meadows on sign boards posted in the park. By including the location (Oak) and the vegetation (Meadows), the name is very descriptive of the park. Finally, the words, Oak Meadows, seem to flow together and suggest a place where urban dwellers may find a peaceful outdoor park experience.

B. **Ebisu Park** for the park site located at 72nd Avenue at Osler Street.

The history of much of this area of Marpole is one of Japanese heritage and of the Japanese Canadian fishing community that was established in Marpole and on the

Fraser River in the early 1900s. Ebisu is the Japanese God of Fishermen, of the working man, protector of young children and good luck. This name is appropriate in that it reflects and celebrates the heritage of the area and acknowledges the ethnic history of Marpole, a history that was almost entirely erased due to the forced removal, dispossession and internment of Japanese Canadians in World War II. The establishment of Ebisu Park would reflect and honour Marpole's past, help educate the current community, and celebrate some of the thoughtful design themes of the park itself.

SUMMARY

The Park Naming Committee's recommendations for the two park sites reflect community input while meeting the park naming guidelines. Staff recommend approval of these names and would like to thank the Park Naming Committee members for their work.

Prepared by:

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