

Date: May 6, 2010



TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Kensington Park: Dedication of Land for Road Purposes

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT, subject to City Council approving similar resolutions, the Board:***
- i. revoke the designation of Kensington Park (legally described as Lot K, District Lots 700 and 701, Plan 7517, Group 1, New Westminster District) as a “permanent park”;***
 - ii. support the establishment of a strip of land (0.08 hectares or 0.20 acres) along the western edge of Kensington Park (Knight Street) for road purposes, as described in this report and shown in Appendix A; and***
 - iii. support the designation of the remaining portion of Kensington Park as a “permanent park”, as described in this report and shown in Appendix B.***

Recommendation A.i. requires an affirmative vote of not less than 2/3 of the Park Board.

POLICY

Although not a formal policy, the long-standing practice of the Park Board is to support dedication/establishment of strips of park land or the granting of right-of-ways through parks for transportation and/or infrastructure purposes, as long as the review concludes that the outcome is in the public interest.

The Vancouver Charter (section 488) describes the procedures for designating a park as a “permanent park” and for revoking “permanent park” status. The Charter states that “such designation may be revoked or cancelled (...) by resolutions of both City Council and the Park Board where, in each case, the same was passed by an affirmative vote of not less than 2/3 of all the members thereof”.

BACKGROUND

Kensington Park is bounded by Knight Street to the west, 33rd Avenue to the north, Dumfries Street to the east, and 37th Avenue to the south. The park is 5.84 hectares (14.4 acres) and was designated as “permanent park” by City Council on November 3, 1981.

DISCUSSION

On March 29, 2005, City Council approved the 'Clark-Knight Corridor Plan', a long-term transportation plan for the arterial street. The plan includes two components that affect Kensington Park:

- a) the widening of the street corridor by 0.6 m (2 feet) between 15th Avenue and Marine Drive; and
- b) the construction of left-turn bays along Knight Street at 33rd Avenue.

On November 3, 2009, City Council approved the detailed design of the left-turn bays along Knight Street at 33rd Avenue, which included a portion of Kensington Park.

The widening of the street corridor by 0.6 m (2 feet) and the construction of left-turn bays require the establishment of 0.08 hectares or 0.20 acres of Kensington Park for road purposes (about 1% of the existing park). Between 35th and 37th Avenues, a 0.6 m (2 foot) wide strip is required. Between 33rd and 35th Avenues, the required strip widens from 0.6 m (2 feet) at 35th Avenue to about 6.9 m (23 feet) at 33rd Avenue.

The intent for the widening of the street corridor by 0.6 m (2 feet) is to create sufficient room along the sidewalk to plant a row of trees between the sidewalk and the street in the medium or long term. Park Board staff support this initiative because it will improve the pedestrian environment along the sidewalk and lead to the planting of additional street trees, without having a negative impact on Kensington Park.

With regard to the construction of left-turn bays, Engineering Services and Park Board staff have agreed to the following design features along Knight Street between 33rd and 35th Avenues:

- a) a retaining wall will be built between 33rd and 34th Avenues;
- b) the zone between the softball diamond backstop and the new retaining wall will be made flat (rather than remaining sloped downwards toward Knight Street);
- c) a new pathway will be built on the west side of Kensington Park between 33rd and 35th Avenues; and
- d) a new staircase will be built to connect the new park pathway to the signalized intersection of Knight Street and 33rd Avenue.

These physical changes will be paid for by Engineering Services as part of the construction of the left-turn bays on Knight Street. Ongoing maintenance of the retaining wall will be the responsibility of Engineering Services. Ongoing maintenance of the park pathway and staircase will be the responsibility of Park Board.

The proposed retaining wall will be constructed in close proximity to 7 cedar trees located in the park. A review of the detailed plans leads Park Board staff to conclude that 3 to 5 cedar trees may be lost due to the project. Engineering Services have agreed to plant two replacement trees for each tree that will be removed.

Park Board staff have reviewed the detailed proposals and support the establishment of 0.08 hectares or 0.20 acres of Kensington Park for road purposes.

Because this portion of Kensington Park is designated as “permanent park”, the following steps are required:

- a) both Park Board and City Council revoke the “permanent park” designation; this requires an affirmative vote of not less than 2/3 of both elected bodies;
- b) City Council approve the required resolution to establish the required portion of Kensington Park as road; and
- c) City Council designates the remaining portion of Kensington Park as “permanent park”.

The Park Board is being asked to: i) revoke the “permanent park” status of Kensington Park; ii) support the Council resolution to establish the required portion of Kensington Park as road; and iii) support the designation of the remaining portion of Kensington Park as “permanent park”.

The portion of Kensington Park proposed to be established as road is shown in Appendix A. The remaining portion of Kensington Park which is proposed to be designated as “permanent park” is shown in Appendix B.

NEXT STEPS

If Park Board approves the recommendation contained in this report, a report will be brought forward for Council’s consideration in the near future. If approved by Council, staff will proceed with the steps as indicated in the report.

Engineering Services has indicated that the construction of the left-turn bay adjacent to Kensington Park is scheduled to be constructed this summer.

SUMMARY

The Park Board is asked to momentarily revoke the “permanent park” status of Kensington Park in order to establish a small portion of the park for road purposes. Staff have reviewed the proposal and support its adoption.

Prepared by:

Planning and Operations
Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
Vancouver, BC

MD

**APPENDIX A:
PORTION OF KENSINGTON PARK
PROPOSED TO BE DEDICATED TO THE CITY FOR ROAD PURPOSES**



**APPENDIX B:
REMAINING PORTION OF KENSINGTON PARK
PROPOSED TO BE RE-DESIGNATED AS "PERMANENT PARK"**

