

**Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Parks and Recreation
Planning & Environment Committee Meeting
Held at the Vancouver Park Board Office on
Thursday, May 06, 2010**

ATTENDEES: Park Board Commissioners

Sarah Blyth, Chair
Ian Robertson
Stuart Mackinnon
Raj Hundal, Vice Chair
Loretta Woodcock
Aaron Jasper

Park Board Staff

Piet Rutgers	Director, Planning & Operations
Peter Kuran	Acting General Manager
Philip Josephs	Co-Acting Director of Stanley District
Thomas Soulliere	Co-Acting Director of Stanley District
Tilo Driessen	Manager of Planning and Research
Octavio Silva	Manager of Business Development
Brian Quinn	Manager Horticulture Operations Queen Elizabeth & Stanley Districts
Hart Nijjar	Recorder

Delegations:

- Henry Tso, Aboriginal Tourism BC
- Richard Krentz, Aboriginal Tourism BC
- Kevin Kearns, Vice-President, Facility Development & Future Planning,
Science World

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm, with the following agenda:

1. Approval of Minutes of the April 8, 2010 Meeting
2. Summer Train Event
3. Report on the “Ecological Integrity of Stanley Park” – Next Steps
4. Science World Project

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning & Environment Committee held on Thursday, April 8th, 2010 were adopted as circulated.

2. Summer Train Event

Staff presented information on a partnership opportunity with the Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC (AtBC) to host a summer train event at the miniature train in Stanley Park. The miniature train hosts special events on a regular basis including Bright Nights and the Ghost Train, which play a critical role in train operations and performance. The Park Board wishes to accommodate a summer event to complement these two flagship events and the opportunity has now presented itself. Staff introduced Henry Tso and Richard Krentz of AtBC.

AtBC is a non-profit organization that aims to promote BC's Aboriginal tourism industry. It works closely with tourism, business, education, and government organizations to offer quality Aboriginal experiences and actively promotes these experiences to visitors and local residents. It receives funding from the Government of Canada and Government of British Columbia.

AtBC would like to create an Aboriginal cultural tourism showcase event in Stanley Park starting in the summer of 2010 and continuing annually, based on the success of the pilot year, which will be known as the Klahowya Village in Stanley Park. The event would build on the success of recent AtBC events and the exposure generated and obtained by BC's Aboriginal communities during the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games. The village will provide a cohesive, branded visitor experience merging traditional artisan village elements with contemporary AtBC experiences and BC First Nations authentic culture and traditions. Visitors will experience and engage in a variety of entertainment and cultural attractions, either on a self-guided or hosted tour basis. The event will take place from the end of June to the beginning of September and be free of charge excluding the miniature train ride which will require payment of fare.

The event will utilize the existing plaza areas and site pathways as well as the miniature train. These areas will be fully branded for the event and provide visitors with an authentic artisan village experience complemented by authentic food and beverage offerings and cultural entertainment and sharing. Self-guided and hosted tours as well as interpretive experiences will be available. Special daytime and evening events will be available for large groups and corporate bookings.

To provide an authentic artisan experience, the village will have various key attractions including: a loghouse entrance, a teepee, a traditional canoe carving area, a totem and sculpture park, a story circle, a Klahowya train, and various other attractions.

Event details will be available on the AtBC website, the Park Board website and other tourist websites. The event will also be marketed through print and live media advertising and through cross promotion with other Park Board partners. The Park Board will supply services and activities normally provided for summer Miniature Train operations such as staffing and utilities while AtBC will be responsible for all incremental costs.

The Board will receive revenues from train admission and 5% of food and beverage revenues as well as indirect revenues from event parking, the Children's Farmyard, and other park operations. The event will also generate incremental revenues for the Park Board and its partners, and enhance visitor experience to Stanley Park. The event will allow the Board to build partnerships

with the community and corporate sponsors and will provide skill development and job training in tourism for Aboriginal youth and the Trailblazer program.

The event has the support of all three Park Board First Nations partners and staff recommends that the Planning and Environment Committee endorse this proposal to the Board for their review and consideration on May 17, 2010.

Discussion

A member of the Committee inquired how long discussions have been taking place, as there is a short time line before the event will potentially take place this summer. Staff replied that talks began at the beginning of April but there has been a time delay in bringing the matter before the Committee because of the time needed to develop the concept and secure the support of all three Park Board First Nations partners.

A member of the Committee asked what type of authentic food would be provided by AtBC during the event. Food for sale will include: smoked salmon, candied salmon, and bannock.

A member of the Committee asked AtBC whether they feel confident they would realize their vision in the time frame allotted. Mr. Krentz confirmed AtBC could guarantee a great experience despite the tight timeline. Mr. Tso noted that the event will build on past events held by AtBC and is confident their team can do a good job.

A member of the Committee asked for clarification on AtBC's vision for the miniature train. A pre-recorded audio will provide a traditional greeting to visitors and tell stories of the First Nations on the coast. At the end of the ride, visitors will come off the train to a carving station where they will be able to see carvers working on pieces.

A member of the Committee inquired whether other park stakeholders have been consulted as part of discussion regarding the event. Staff confirmed a letter was sent to stakeholders and discussions have also taken place with CUPE 1004. Feedback has been positive as stakeholders are excited at the possibility that more tourists will be in the park because of the event.

The following is a summary of the comments made by Mr. Tso and Mr. Krentz:

- AtBC has developed good relationship with BC tourism
- The event will encourage groups to use the Stanley Park shuttle
- They hope the event will draw people for the businesses in park
- They have a strong marketing strategy
- They are working towards a sustainable society for Aboriginal youth and this event will help with that aim

The Committee thanked the delegation for their comments and were excited to endorse the event to the Board. They also thanked staff for their work on the proposal.

3. Report on the “Ecological Integrity of Stanley Park” – Next Steps

During the May 3 Board Meeting a report from the Stanley Park Ecology Society was presented for information, and staff were asked to report back on next steps. Staff propose to present a list of potential choices for action items, based on the contents of the report, in the fall. The update will also identify how long it will take to obtain resources and measurable results for the choices. The Board will then be asked to prioritize the items for action. Staff are seeking the Committee’s endorsement of the proposed approach.

Discussion

A member of the Committee asked whether it would be possible for Staff to present a report on the status of amphibians. Staff replied a list of feasible action items can be presented in the fall.

A member of the Committee inquired whether Staff could begin immediate action on the issues relating to Beaver Lake as presented in the report while they are working on a list of other action items for the fall. The report indicates that there are serious issues impacting the sustainability of Beaver Lake and the species in it. There is a sense of urgency to address those issues and determine what action items are feasible for Beaver Lake. However, other members of the Committee felt Staff should be given time to fully analyze the contents of the report and make a list of action items based on their findings rather than concentrating on Beaver Lake immediately.

Staff acknowledged time is required for them to appropriately analyze the report, and that a vision statement will be needed regarding Beaver Lake. Based on direction given by the Committee, Staff will focus on aquatic ecosystems as one of the priorities in the list provided in the fall, in addition to other options for consideration. The list will then be prioritized by the Board for action. A memo will be sent in the summer updating Committee members on the progress of the list.

A member of the Committee also asked the fall include information on what would be required for the Park Board to create a stewardship plan for Stanley Park, including details on the timeline and cost.

Commissioner Hundal and Commissioner Jasper left the meeting at this time.

4. Science World Project

As background information, staff advised on a plan for the replacement of the Expo decks requested by City Council two years ago. Some planning work has been completed, resulting in key principles for the vision of the decks and area surrounding them. The principles include an identified location for an outdoor science exhibit, for which Science World has recently obtained funding and is now bringing before the City for approval.

Staff introduced Kevin Kearns, Vice-President of Facility Development & Future Planning at Science World, to provide information on the Science World proposal. Science World is a non-

profit organization whose mission is to engage British Columbians in science and technology and to inspire future science and technology leadership throughout the province. It has over 550,000 visitors annually including over 80,000 students and 200,000 group participants from around the Province. Science World has an operating budget of \$10 million, 75% of which is earned from revenue.

As the building was constructed in 1989, there is now a need for renewal of infrastructure. Science World would also like to grow its attendance numbers while expanding the level of engagement with the public through new and different spaces. Science World has recently received Federal funding to achieve some of these aims: \$24.5 million for facility renewal, \$5.5 million for the Outdoor Science Experience, and \$3 million for the greening of Science World. Of the funds received, \$2.5 million have already been allocated for consultation purposes.

Science World is requesting to expand their lease area in to Creekside Park for an Outdoor Science Experience. The goals of the Outdoor Science Experience are to engage the community in topics of sustainability, enliven the parkland surrounding Science World, and provide for growing attendance, while maintaining a continuous bike/pedestrian path, emergency egress, and service access. The exhibit will provide information on sustainable housing, energy, water, food, waste, and transportation as well as a green lab and centre stage. The experience will also include various temporary exhibitions, a fast charging station, and public programming. The site plan proposed by Science World would have 70% of its exhibit on the lease area expansion.

Next steps for the Outdoor Science Experience include continued consultation with the public as well as City and Parks staff in preparation for a Development Permit Application. Once the application has been submitted, Science World will undertake formal public consultation period, after which they will present their plan to the Park Board for advice and to City Council for approval.

Park Board support of the plan is required to successfully complete the project by the March 31, 2011 deadline.

Staff outlined concerns with the above proposal. There are complicated property issues associated with the proposal that will involve changes to lease agreements between the various parties. The City has asked Science World to approach the project in two phases to allow them to spend the funds allotted to them in an efficient manner. Phase one would address facility renewal, while phase two would focus on the outdoor science exhibit. The second phase needs careful consideration and may be impacted by public response. As such, the City would like to ensure that due process followed and has encouraged Science World to make certain they have an alternate plan pending public response. Mr. Kearns indicated that Science World will be proceeding with both phases simultaneously due to time constraints.

Discussion

A member of the Committee inquired how much of the space used for the exhibit on park land would be available to the public for no charge. Mr. Kearns replied that majority of the space would be part of an area requiring admission for the majority of the time.

A member of the Committee asked whether the bicycle path will be negatively impacted. Staff responded that the new path will reconnect to the existing park.

A member of the Committee asked Staff what public concerns may arise regarding the proposed exhibit. Members of the public may be concerned about the loss of park space and lack of public access. Members of the North East False Creek community may be particularly concerned about the development and use of the park and it should be ensured that proposal will be beneficial to the community.

The Committee expressed support for the educational value of the exhibit but is concerned about the use of Creekside Park, the lack of revenue benefit, and proposed pay for use of land that was previously free to access. Mr. Kearns noted that he is aware of these concerns, but believes Science World provides a public benefit and series of amenities. Many programs are offered at Science World for no cost or low cost because the organization is non-profit. Further, one of Science World's goals is to engage directly with the community, which will continue through the proposed exhibit.

The proposal will come to the Board in the fall once public consultation has been completed. A member of the Committee requested the item come back to the Committee before it goes to the Board.

The meeting adjourned at 9:16 pm.

Piet Rutgers, Director,
Planning & Operations

Commissioner Sarah Blyth,
Chair