

Date: June 8, 1995

SUBJECT: SEA FESTIVAL

#### CONSIDERATION

THAT the Board consider the request of the Vancouver Sea Festival Society to expand their activities in the English Bay area to include a concert stage in conjunction with a Salmon Barbecue on Sunset Beach Park.

#### POLICY

The Board has a policy to approve an Annual Calendar of Events and to bring back any major changes for Board consideration. The Board has approved the Sea Festival from Thursday, July 20, to Sunday July 23, 1995, based on activities of the previous three years.

#### BACKGROUND

The Sea Festival has a history of over 20 years of activity in the West End. While there are many supporters of this event there have also been a number of residents vocal about the nature of some event activity, the amount of drinking and consequent behaviour of some people attracted to the West End by this event.

In 1991 the event was reduced in size, length and use of park land because of financial overruns in 1990 and the number of complaints from West End residents. In 1992 the Sea Festival Board further decided to change the format of the event. They collaborated with various local community organizations to stage a variety of events and activities related to a "Celebration of a Community by the Sea" on beaches and parks around the city. They restricted activities on parks to those related to the sea. The focal point was removed from English Bay/Sunset Beach. All activities were scheduled during the day. This format has been in place for the past three years. There have been no complaints from West End residents about Sea Festival activities.

#### DISCUSSION

The current Sea Festival Board has been concerned about the lack of focus in the event and the consequent loss of sponsors and increasing costs, especially related to the Parade. They want to bring the Sea Festival back to English Bay in order to attract sponsors to fund the Parade and events. The sponsors are looking for profile and large audiences. There has been some discussion with staff about different program ideas to this end but no firm proposals, requests or site plans have been forthcoming until now. Staff have some concern that the late date of this proposal leaves little time for the organizers to consult with or inform the immediate neighbours as per the requirement established after the 1990 West End Special Event review. To this end the organizers have committed to providing the WestEnder with a press release for its June 14 publication five days in advance of this June 19 report to the Board.

The organizers are proposing three major focal points for increased activity in the English Bay area: a children's area in Ceperley Park; displays, demonstrations and sporting activity around the English Bay Bathhouse; a concert stage, Salmon Barbecue, a marine display and water activities on Sunset Beach & Park. It is the concert stage and the marine display, in particular, which make it necessary to bring this event request back to the Board.

The organizers have made a proposal in their June 4, 1995 correspondence to staff (Appendix

A) for a number of programs. The discussion in this report will be limited to those major activities which are additional to those of the last three years.

The area proposed for the greatest increase in activity is Sunset Beach. The organizers are requesting to hold the Salmon Barbecue and a concert stage for the four days; Thursday from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm; Friday & Saturday from 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm; and Sunday from noon to 6:00 pm.

The stage program will feature low key but amplified performances designed to attract families. There will also be fitness demos and fashion shows during the day and the opening ceremonies Thursday evening. The stage, a 40' x 60' saddle dome tent with three sides, will face the ocean and be located on the N.E. corner of the field. The Salmon Barbecue will be on the N.W. corner away from the Park Board concession. Drinks will not be sold separately in competition with the Park Board but a drink will be included in the price of the Salmon Barbecue. There will be no alcohol.

The other major activity planned for the Sunset Beach area is a marine display of boats and nautical supplies. It will be located on 1/3 of the Sunset Beach parking lot, adjacent to the field.

The organizers are planning to have a couple of events on the water. They are also trying to arrange for hand gliders who would land on either Vanier Park or Sunset Beach field. The activities planned around the English Bay Bathhouse are all relatively compatible to the area with the exception of the Volleyball tournament. The public complains now about the two beach courts set up for everyday recreational play. The Sea Festival Volleyball tournament has traditionally been at English Bay. They will be limited to six courts and the most appropriate site will be chosen.

The children's event at Ceperley is planned only for Saturday afternoon so the impact on the park will be limited in duration. The activity should be attractive to the large numbers of families drawn to the new 2nd Beach Pool.

The parade which traditionally assembles in the park and travels along Beach Avenue will be the same as in previous years.

There will be two radio station mobile units broadcasting from the English Bay area but the program will not be amplified from the units.

The event sponsor is in the communications business and poses no product conflict with the Board. They will have info booths in all three English Bay locations.

The amount of activity in the West End has been considerably reduced following the review in 1990. The Pride Parade which ends up at Sunset Beach and the four nights of the Fireworks are the only other major events in addition to the Sea Festival still happening in the English Bay/Sunset Beach area over the summer. The Board does still receive some complaints from West End residents about the noise and/or the visual impact related to events held in Vanier Park.

## CONCLUSION

The organizers are committed to making these events and sponsor activity well planned and controlled, particularly relative to sound. They will target the stage program to a family type audience. The impact on the immediate residents should be limited. The variety of activities planned for the English Bay area will provide a focal point of interest to residents and regular users as well as a source of entertainment for visitors to the event. Prepared by:  
Recreation Division  
Vancouver Board of Park & Recreation

JK/ab

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