

MINUTES OF MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
HELD IN THE PARK BOARD OFFICE  
ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 04, 1995

PRESENT:	Chair	- David Chesman
	Commissioners	- Malcolm Ashford
		- Alan Fetherstonhaugh
		- Tim Louis
		- Donna Morgan
		- Vic Kondrosky
	General Manager	
	Director of Administrative & Revenue Services	- Philip Josephs
	Director of Planning	- Jim Lowden
	Director of Recreation	- Allan Argent
	Manager - Public Affairs	- Terri Clark
	Manager - Park Acquisitons & Research	- Pieter Rutgers
	Recording Secretary	- Julie Chiu

The Chair advised the Board that Commissioner Wilson was on vacation and Commissioner DeGenova was out of the country.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on Monday, November 20, 1995 were adopted as circulated.

First Meeting of December

Commissioner Chesman advised the Board that the Procedure By-law provides that at the first meeting of December a new Chair be elected, failing that a new Chair be appointed interim. Since two Commissioners are absent tonight it would not be the best time to engage in this process.

Moved by Commissioner Louis,

THAT the term of the Chair and Vice-Chair be extended for one week.

-Carried Unanimously.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Commissioner Chesman advised the Board that he attended the lighting of the Tree of Peace at Seaforth Peace Park on Sunday, December 3, 1995. This event was organised by the Kits Chamber of Commerce and well attended.

Commissioner Chesman advised the Board that the Stanley Park Christmas Train will begin on December 8 and end on January 1. The lighting of the Lights for Life tree at the foot of Bidwell will be on Wednesday afternoon at 3:00 p.m.

COMMUNICATIONS

Seasonal Adjustment of Aquarium Admission Rates

Board members received copies of a letter dated November 21, 1995 from Dr. John Nightingale, Executive Director, Vancouver Aquarium, requesting Park Board approval for a seasonal fee structure.

Moved by Commissioner Fetherstonhaugh,

THAT the Board accept the Aquarium's request for fee a increase.

Eleanor Hadley appeared before the Board and stated that she does not support the Aquarium's request for a fee increase. Ms. Hadley stated that she objects to the standard of having tourists pay more. This is a public park and public standards should be maintained. The Aquarium should be responsible to the citizens of Vancouver and the Park Board. Ms. Hadley suggested that the Aquarium should pay a percentage of their revenue to the Park Board to take the burden off Vancouver taxpayers.

Annelise Sorg, Coalition for No Whales in Captivity, stated that if the Board allow the Aquarium to increase their admission rates, the Aquarium should be requested to increase their rates further by \$1 which could be put back into Stanley Park to alleviate the taxpayer's burden.

Marie Dickens, Vancouver Aquarium, stated that in order for them to stay competitive their admission rates must be in keeping with the market and the requested rates are competitive. The costs of operating their facility are increasing. The Vancouver Aquarium prides itself on being financially stable and revenue sources must be enough to cover these increasing costs. The Aquarium is underpriced at its current rate structure. Their pricing structure considers the needs of both the local and tourism markets.

Board members discussed the matter and Commissioner Morgan called notice on the motion as there was no staff report with a recommendation only a letter from the Aquarium. More information about this has been received tonight and it has not been discussed or looked at by a committee.

Commissioner Chesman stated that if notice of motion as opposed to a deferral motion were to be called, it ought to have been done prior to the delegations. Commissioner Chesman stated he would support a deferral motion from Commissioner Morgan on the basis that information was not available until the commencement of the meeting.

Commissioner Fetherstonhaugh stated that this matter could be dealt with as the letter from the Director of the Vancouver Aquarium very clearly states their request for the Board's approval to adjust their admission rates. There is no need for a deferral.

Commissioner Morgan stated that she would like this request from the Aquarium go through the process of a committee to work on bringing more information with a recommendation back to the Board. Commissioner Morgan withdrew the notice of motion.

Moved by Commissioner Morgan,

THAT we defer this matter until we get a report back from the appropriate committee.

Commissioner Chesman stated that the Board has an Aquarium liaison, any committee would only be internal. We could answer the questions better by giving ourselves a week to check out the information.

Commissioner Chesman suggested that Commissioner Morgan amend her motion accordingly.

Moved by Commissioner Morgan,

THAT the Board defer the request from the Vancouver Aquarium for the Seasonal Adjustment of Aquarium Admission Rates for one week.

-Carried.

(Commissioners Ashford and Fetherstonhaugh contrary)

Vancouver Aquarium: Commissioner Chesman's Motion

Commissioner Chesman put forward the following motion on November 24, 1995:

THAT any request by the Vancouver Aquarium for an expansion of the area currently occupied by the Vancouver Aquarium under its lease with the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation be referred to a public referendum.

FURTHER, THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation defer consideration of any such request for expansion until such time as the public of Vancouver have voted in favour of such expansion in a public referendum.

Eleanor Hadley appeared before the Board and stated that it seems the Aquarium Task Force make decisions without the public being aware of them. Ms. Hadley stated that she was opposed to any further expansion.

The Chair clarified to the delegation that the Task Force has not formally met.

Annelise Sorg, Coalition for No Whales in Captivity, congratulated the Chair for his quick response to the Aquarium's proposal for expansion. Park Board staff should just say no to the Aquarium's request for expansion instead of bringing the matter to the Board each time. A bigger concrete tank will not make any difference to the whales. Ms. Sorg stated that if the Aquarium wished to expand the tank, the sea lion tank adjacent to the whale tank could be used. This would be within the footprint of the Aquarium.

If this matter should go to referendum, another question should be added: Is Vancouver in favour of continuing to keep killer whales captive in Stanley Park.

Heather Strange appeared before the Board and stated that she was opposed to the Aquarium's proposal for expansion. This does not represent any positive contribution to the Province of British Columbia or Stanley Park. The pool will

always be too small for the whales and the fact is the whales should not be in Stanley Park. This does not need to go to referendum or to a vote as it should not be an issue.

Patrick Cotter stated that he was opposed to incarceration of whales. The Aquarium's stance of being an educational institution is not valid as they seem to teach people that it is acceptable to keep captive creatures of undisputed high intelligence. Mr. Cotter stated that he did not understand why the question was being put to the public even before a request has been made.

Commissioner Chesman clarified to the delegation that the motion arose from the Aquarium's press release which indicated that the Aquarium was having internal discussions on having both whales stay. This may result in a request to the Park Board sometime in May or June, for an expansion to the whale pool. This could involve the expansion of the current footprint of the current lease. Commissioner Chesman stated that the motion was not an abandonment of the current policy. This is a motion to indicate that this Board will secure the public's interest in parks and to act as an appropriate trustee of that interest we will not alienate it short of a public referendum.

Jim Harvey, Friends of Stanley Park, stated that he would prefer the Aquarium to leave the whale business and return the land to park. Mr. Harvey cautioned the Board that the question asked in the referendum should be carefully thought out and it must include Stanley Park. Mr. Harvey suggested that the Board should pass a motion indicating that the footprint of the Aquarium be restricted to its present size and its height be restricted to its present levels. The value of the referendum question is that it will assess the Board's broad measurement of opinion from the voting taxpayer.

Commissioner Chesman stated that he was not anti-Aquarium and considers them to be a force of substantial good in our community. The Aquarium provides educational and conservation programming to the citizens and especially to the youth of Vancouver. Commissioner Chesman stated that he was opposed to whales in captivity and have urged the Aquarium to move towards a posture that would eventually see the end of whales in captivity in Vancouver.

Commissioner Chesman stated that he did not want to have issues relating to the Aquarium overshadow other matters which must be handled by the Board. Commissioner Chesman stated that he would like to include the phrase "to be held during the next available general civic election" at the end of the first paragraph. It is his intent to have the referendum during a civic election which would have a nominal cost as opposed to a significant cost to the taxpayer for a stand alone referendum.

The motion will now read as follows:

THAT any request by the Vancouver Aquarium for an expansion of the area currently occupied by the Vancouver Aquarium under its lease with the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation be referred to a public referendum to be held during the next

available general civic election.  
FURTHER, THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation defer consideration of any such request for expansion until such time as the public of Vancouver have voted in favour of such expansion in a public referendum.

Commissioner Morgan stated that she was reluctant to support the motion as currently worded as she is concerned on how the question would be framed to the public. She would like to suggest some amendments to the motion.

Moved by Commissioner Morgan,

THAT the Park Board set the wording for any such referendum by unanimous agreement.

THAT any cost incurred by such a referendum be covered by the Vancouver Aquarium.

Commissioner Morgan stated that it was important to have a unanimous agreement on the wording of the referendum to prevent City Council to overwrite the decision of the Board. It is important that the public is not led to believe that the expansion of the Aquarium is a humanitarian act.

Commissioner Louis stated that although going to a referendum was the right step, it was difficult to vote for the motion without knowing what the question of the referendum would be.

Commissioner Ashford stated that the purpose of the motion put forward by Commissioner Chesman was to make the Aquarium aware that the Board is taking this issue seriously. The wording of the referendum could be dealt with at the time the Aquarium requests the expansion.

Commissioner Chesman stated that any request from the Aquarium will be reflected in the referendum question.

The amendment motion was put:

THAT the Park Board set the wording for any such referendum by unanimous agreement.

- DEFEATED.

(Commissioners Ashford, Chesman and Fetherstonhaugh contrary)

Moved by Commissioner Morgan,

THAT any cost incurred by such a referendum be covered by the Vancouver Aquarium.

Commissioner Morgan stated that whenever there is a requirement for a plebiscite or any neighbourhood survey it is incumbent on the developer to pay the cost of such a process. The Aquarium should be responsible to pay any relevant cost in a referendum.

Commissioner Chesman stated that he checked with the City Clerk 's office and was advised that it would be a nominal cost. It would be the Park Board requesting for a referendum and not the Aquarium.

The amendment motion was put and it was DEFEATED.  
(Commissioners Ashford, Chesman and Fetherstonhaugh contrary)

Commissioner Louis stated that the real issue is not whether the pool should be expanded but, should there be whales in captivity.

Moved by Commissioner Louis, THAT if a referendum is approved by the Park Board as outlined by the chair that there be on the ballot prior to the question addressing the expansion of the Aquarium there be a first question to be worded as follows:  
Should the Vancouver Public Aquarium continue to keep whales in captivity.

-DEFEATED  
(Commissioners Ashford, Chesman and Fetherstonhaugh contrary)

Commissioner Morgan stated that a request from the Aquarium is not expected until May or June. Also, she needs more information on this matter and the issue of the question of what would be on the ballot is integral to be able to vote on the issue of having a referendum.

Moved by Commissioner Morgan,

THAT this matter be deferred to the first meeting in January.

-DEFEATED  
(Commissioners Ashford, Chesman and Fetherstonhaugh contrary)

Commissioner Morgan stated that she would vote against the main motion as a plebescite does not allow an interaction and discussion as public meetings allow.

Commissioner Fetherstonhaugh stated that the Aquarium would be required to accept the results of the referendum and the matter would be resolved.

Commissioner Chesman stated that this motion is an indication to the Aquarium that this Board will not be approving any expansion. The next Board will have the benefit of a referendum result. This motion will also assist the Aquarium in their deliberations should they consider expansion plans.

The main motion was put as follows:

THAT any request by the Vancouver Aquarium for an expansion of the area currently occupied by the Vancouver Aquarium under its lease with the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation be referred to a public referendum to be held during the next general civic election.

FURTHER, THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation defer consideration of any such request for expansion until such time as the public of Vancouver have voted in favour of such expansion in a public referendum.

- Carried.  
(Commissioners Louis and Morgan contrary)

## Trout Lake Little League Fieldhouse Proposal

Board members received copies of a staff report dated November 23, 1995 for the Board to consider approval of the construction of a 500 or 1,000 square foot fieldhouse on the eastern side of John Hendry Park.

Brian Przednowek and Karen Sanderson advised the Board that they had a public meeting on November 21. Commissioner DeGenova who was in attendance at that meeting favoured the 1,000 square foot building. The 500 square foot building would not have enough space and would not meet their needs.

The 1,000 square foot building has been designed to fit into the site rather than a smaller building. The cost of construction is the same for either of the buildings.

Moved by Commissioner Fetherstonhaugh,

THAT the Board approve the construction of a 1,000 square foot fieldhouse (Appendix A - Little League's proposal) on the eastern side of John Hendry Park with all arrangements to the satisfaction of the General Manager.

-Carried Unanimously.

## Special Events for 1996

Board members received copies of a staff report dated November 23, 1995 recommending that the Board approve the 1996 Calendar of Major Events as described in the report.

Lynne Kent, Kits Point Residents Association, appeared before the Board regarding the Special Events in the Kitsilano area. Ms. Kent advised the Board that there is a growing uneasiness among the residents as the events seem to be growing year after year. Ms. Kent stated that there is a need for the community, event organizers and staff to once again meet to discuss the problems.

Christopher Gaze, Bard on the Beach, thanked the Board and staff for the use of the park. Mr. Gaze requested an extension of one week to their schedule to accommodate the growing interest on Bard on the Beach.

Robert Quick, Friends for Life was present to answer any questions the Board might have to their event scheduled for July 7, 1996.

Commissioner Morgan stated that she had three concerns and in consideration of the number of delegations for Nelson Park she would prefer to defer this item to the end of the agenda.

## Nelson Park Land Use Study

Board members received copies of a staff report dated

November 23, 1995 recommending that the Board advise Council of its preference for the Option 1 Heritage (Recommendation B1), and that the Board is prepared to accept the Revitalization Option (Recommendation B2). Either choice is subject to the Board and Council reaching a satisfactory arrangement on compensation.

Pieter Rutgers, Manager - Park Acquisition & Research gave a brief overview of the history and options available to the Board and Council for the resolution of the use of Nelson Park. Mr. Rutgers advised the Board that the consulting team in conjunction with the staff Steering Committee initially generated about 17 options which were narrowed down to three options which best meet the individual heritage, park, or development objectives while still meeting the minimum requirements for all other study objectives such as market and non-market housing, and daycare. These three options were presented to a Council/Park Board workshop, Nelson Park residents, the general public, and various civic advisory bodies. In addition, the consultants also presented information on a "status quo" scenario in which all existing buildings are retained and upgraded for continued use as rental housing.

Don Allison, McLaren Housing Society, stated that they provide affordable housing for people with Aids. The Society also provides subsidised housing for people to stay in their own homes. Low income housing in the West End is becoming scarce. Mr. Allison requested the Board to support the recommendations of the Friends of Mole Hill that is to retain all the homes as they are and open the units which have been closed down to provide more affordable rental housing.

Dorothy Mills, West End resident, stated that that City and Park Board have mismanaged the houses. Ms. Mills stated that the West End does not need a park. The houses should be renovated and maintained to provide affordable housing.

Elynn Dobbs, Chair, School Consultative Committee, Lord Roberts Annex, appeared before the Board regarding the Nelson Park Land Use Study. Ms. Dobbs referred to Appendix D of the land use study report and stated that one of the recommendations was to involve the School Board as one of the major stakeholders in Nelson Park and that any development should "reflect the needs of the whole West End community. However, the land use report does not have any reference to family or children. Ms. Dobbs stated that the parents felt it would be more beneficial to close the lane between Comox and Pendrell creating a unified block and mini-neighbourhood. Safety and security is of primary importance. Revitalization Op B2 best reflects the views of the parents.

John Atkin stated that he supports the revitalization option. Everything will still be in place. Revitalization is a good project for the West End.

Joe Arnaud stated that the public in the West End do not want the park expanded nor do they want a playing field. Mr. Arnaud stated that he was in favour of a status quo. This has been going on for too long, the money spent on consultants could have been spent on maintaining the houses.



Tom Durning , Tenants Rights Coalition, presented a motion passed by their board requesting the Park Board Commissioners and City Council to adopt the following: that all houses be left in their current location and all units be maintained at low end market rentals; that all houses be upgraded over time from revenue generated; that proper heritage designation be given to the houses on the site and most importantly that a community based planning implementation procedure be put in place to determine how the mole hill site should develop in the future by the community and for the community.

Tom Laviolette, Downtown Granville Tenants Association, stated that they support the principles of Friends of Mole Hill. Mr. Laviolette stated that low income housing is fast becoming a thing of the past. It is with this in mind that the DGTA asks the Board to remove its demand for parkspace out of this block of houses. West End is rich in amenities but poor in affordable housing.

Renee Jensen, West End Seniors Network and Friends of Mole Hill, advised the Board that they are working toward a consultation process to discover the best mutually agreeable method of saving an important part of their living heritage which already exists as promoted by City Plan. Ms. Jensen stated that the Revitalization Option offers hope for reconciliation, making existing organisations part of the process and keeping the people living there at home.

Sean McEwen stated that he was disappointed with the Revitalization Option which does not look at any creative opportunity for open space in the basic planning. This option is good that it keeps the existing houses in place but it does not include a different attitude to the public enjoyment of the space between the buildings. Mr. McEwen suggested that the plan should include the possibility of a re-alignment of the lanes and organising the common space for community gardens and children's play area. There is a need for low income housing in the city and particularly in the West End.

Klara van der Molen, West End resident stated that everyone had a right to live with dignity. She supports the recommendations of the Friends of Mole Hill which is to save all the houses.

Marie Hietakangas stated that the Revitalization is a good start but not enough, the Friends of Mole Hill have put together a good recommendation. What they need is a public process to work on it. The houses are important and so are the people who is part of a community.

Caroline Low stated that she is a parent of a student at Lord Roberts School and does not share the views offered by Ms. Dobbs. Ms. Low stated that we need to teach equality to our children. She supports the recommendations of Friends of Mole Hill.

Blair Petrie stated that the revitalization option is a step in the right direction. He is in the process of publishing a book on heritage houses. Mr. Petrie stated that the Nelson parksite is an important heritage resource. The Board could look at closing the lane, provide community

gardens and children's playground. He would like to see a community based planning process.

Bill Lort, West End Neighbourhs in Action, stated that they support the Mole Hill Project. There is a need for affordable housing in the West End.

Wayne MacKinnon stated that heritage is something that cannot be replaced. Mr. MacKinnon stated that the tradition of keeping heritage buildings should be continued. It is not just a group of houses, it is a community and any changes would destroy the community. Mr. MacKinnon stated that as a member of the Board of St. Andrew's Wesley United Church he supports the efforts of the Mole Hill Living Heritage Society to preserve the block of homes as it currently stands.

Mel Lehan represents Neighbour to Neighbour which is a coalition of over 50 resident associations in the city. Mr. Lehan advised the Board that they support the retention of the existing houses on mole hill at their current sites and encourages upgrading over time. Most importantly they would like to retain the existing 168 rental units.

Linda Diano, Mole Hill Living Heritage Society and Friends of Mole Hill, commended staff on inviting them to review the Revitalization Option. Ms. Diano stated that living in these houses provides a quality of life to the people. Inadvertantly we have achieved a vision of parkspace, it may be different but it is full and it is a place for all west enders to share and celebrate. There is some achievement of a park mandate on mole hill as it stands today.

Lynne Bryson, Chair, Vancouver Heritage Commission advised the Board that they support the Revitalization Option and commend staff for the formulation of the proposal. Ms. Bryson stated that the Heritage Commission does not support any of the options presented by the consultants but instead asked to seek further exploration of Option 1, the heritage option. This option allows another layer of history to be built in the form of in-fill buildings and development on the corner site. It is also worth noting that the general public has come out strongly to support the heritage retention in this area.

Commissioner Morgan stated that due to the lateness of the hour the balance of the agenda items should be tabled until the next meeting. Board members concurred with Commissioner Morgan's suggestion.

Moved by Commissioner Fetherstonhaugh,

THAT the Board advises Council of its preference for the Option 1 Heritage (Recommendation B1), and that the Board is prepared to accept the Revitalization Option (Recommendation B2). Either choice is subject to the Board and Council reaching a satisfactory arrangement on compensation.

Commissioner Fetherstonhaugh stated that the West End is a park deficient area in the city. Previous Boards tried to

alleviate this problem and decided to buy these houses with the intent to provide more park space. Social and low cost housing is not within the mandate of the Park Board. However, this report is an attempt to compromise and to provide affordable housing, daycare and parkspace. Commissioner Fetherstonhaugh stated that he will support Option 1 Heritage recommendation B1.

Commissioner Morgan proposed a number of amendments to add constructively to the debate at Council.

Moved by Commissioner Morgan,

THAT the Park Board recommend to City Council on the issue of Nelson Park Land Use Study that the Board supports option A1 with the amendment that the Nelson Park site provide rental residential units equal in number to all 168 residential housing units on the site.

-DEFEATED.

(Commissioners Ashford, Chesman and Fetherstonhaugh contrary)

Moved by Commissioner Morgan,

Further that we support recommendation B2 with the removal of the phrase: "providing no additional parkland".

-Carried Unanimously.

Moved by Commissioner Morgan,

Further that we support the following amendment to recommendation C:

THAT staff embark upon a community based planning process for an implementation strategy for the city land adjacent to Nelson Park based on the selected option including sub options and stressing the development of community recreational greenspace on existing open spaces on site.

-Carried Unanimously.

The main motion with amendments was put as follows:

THAT the Board advises Council of its preference for Option 1 Heritage (Recommendation B1);

and,

THAT the Board is prepared to accept the Revitalization Option (Recommendation B2) as amended by deleting the words "no additional parkland".

Either choice is subject to the Board and Council reaching a satisfactory agreement on compensation.

FURTHER, THAT the Board support the following amended Recommendation C:

THAT staff embark upon a community based planning process for an implementation strategy for the City land adjacent to Nelson Park based on the selected option including sub options and stressing the development of community recreational greenspace on existing open spaces on site.

-Carried Unanimously.

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V. Kondrosky  
General Manager

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Commissioner David Chesman  
Chair

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