



Date: April 24, 2002

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Kitsilano Beach Park Basketball Courts

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT the Board reduce the number of permanent basketball hoops at Kitsilano Beach Park from four to two.**
- B. THAT the Board lower the two remaining permanent hoops to 6 feet and 8 feet.**
- C. THAT the Board provide one portable basketball hoop for 3-on-3 adult play in the area around the lifeguard tower.**

BACKGROUND

On February 25, 2002 the Park Board heard from a delegation of adjacent residents requesting the removal or relocation of the basketball hoops in Kitsilano Beach Park.

The reason for the request was based on the concern that the daytime inappropriate language used by basketball players was having a negative impact on parents and children using the adjacent playground and the night time noise generated by late evening play was disturbing to the local residents.

Last summer the staff met with this group and reviewed the specifics of their concern and the history of this problem in the park.

On July 20, 1987, the Board passed a resolution to limit the basketball played on Kitsilano Beach Park to between May 15th and September 15th in order to deal with the noise complaints. Later in 1992 the Board considered a proposal for the relocation of the basketball courts. There was not conclusive community support for this relocation.

The following is a summary of the feedback received from that proposal:

- 5 opposed the relocation to the new site
- 6 supported the relocation
- 3 said to take the courts out all together
- 5 said to leave the courts as they are

As an additional strategy, in the mid-1990's staff began covering the basketball hoops with lids to stop people from playing night time basketball.

These solutions appeared to help reduce the problem for a number of years, however, in the summer of 2001, the foul language, night time activity and general aggressiveness of the users of the courts again became a concern.

DISCUSSION

After meeting with adjacent residents in August 2001, staff developed a new hoop cover to deal with the issue of nighttime noise and raised the profile of this problem with our Neighbourhood Integrated Services Team (NIST) and the Police.

During the past winter staff met to discuss how the Kitsilano Community Centre and the lifeguards could work together at developing ways of addressing local concerns and brought these ideas to a meeting in January 2002 with concerned residents to explore possible solutions. Between January and April staff researched further technical solutions and the methods of implementing further changes.

In an effort to determine how to best manage the local issues while recognizing the recreational needs of the larger community staff talked with Pat Pagazzi from the local Community Police Office and Michael Hind, the Executive Director of Basketball B.C. Constable Pagazzi indicated that during the last year the Vancouver Police have responded to hundreds of local noise and disturbance complaints during the months of June, July and August. In response to these complaints a new program involving local citizens working with police is being implemented this spring. This new program will have volunteers working directly with police. Volunteers will identify potential problems and notify the police so that they can take a more pro-active approach to their work. At present Park Board staff are working with this newly formed group to address the concerns associated with the basketball courts.

DISCUSSION (Cont'd.)

After talking with Basketball B.C. about the issues associated with the basketball courts the idea of changing the heights of the hoops was discussed. It is believed that the height of the basketball hoops will have a direct impact on who uses the basketball court. An 8 foot hoop is the standard height for basketball programming for children in grades 2 and 3. By lowering the hoops to 6 and 8 feet the existing basketball court area will likely become more of a children and family play area. Adults wanting to play basketball will be encouraged to use the portable basketball hoop to be provided in the area around the lifeguard tower.

On April 22nd, 2002, staff met with local residents to discuss the ideas presented in this report and their response is provided as Attachment A.

SUMMARY

Finding an appropriate solution to the day and night noise problem will require making changes to the existing courts. Rather than removing or re-locating all of the courts, lowering the remaining hoops, removing two of the posts and programming the space for children is expected to provide the results the community is looking for. With the adjacent playground equipment and the nearby beach and lifeguard station, the basketball court area can become an ideal destination for children and families.

With the new police department program of involving local citizens, the issue related to night time noise will be dealt with in a more effective manner.

Staff will continue to monitor this situation and report back to the Board with any further recommendation should they be required.

Prepared by:

Bill Manning
Manager of Operations
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Board of Parks & Recreation
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BM/rml

ATTACHMENT 'A'

From: Phil Cunliffe [cunliffe@dowco.com]
Sent: Monday, April 22, 2002 4:32 PM
To: Bill Manning
Cc: Liane McKenna; Digby Peers; John Owen
Subject: KPRA meeting of today

Dear Bill,

Many thanks to you and Diane for meeting with us at Kits Beach Park this afternoon. As agreed, Digby and I will present the following proposals to the directors of KPRA:

1. That Staff recognizes the day and nighttime problems caused by the basketball courts at their present location and that efforts to solve these problems since 1985 have not been successful.
2. That the most practical solution would be to relocate the courts to the south-west corner of the tennis courts, as proposed by Staff in their report of March 26, 1992.
3. That prior to recommending relocation of the courts, a final attempt be made to mitigate the problems by reconfiguring the courts to discourage adult play while encouraging their use by children by:
 - a) Removing one hoop from opposing ends of each of the two courts,
 - b) Lowering the height of the remaining two hoops to between six and eight feet,
 - c) Locating the higher hoop at the north west corner of the courts,
 - d) Locating the lower hoop at the south east corner of the courts (the court closest to the existing earth berm),
4. That new signage be prepared to replace the existing "Dusk to dawn" signs, indicating that the courts are exclusively for the use of children aged 12 years or younger and that play after sundown is strictly prohibited.
5. That park staff continue cover the hoops with the existing "lids" at dusk each evening with removal scheduled for no earlier than 10:00 am each morning.
6. That KPRA representatives be provided with a police telephone number (other than 911) to report nighttime disturbances.
7. That Staff monitor the basketball court issue on a regular basis and report their findings to the Commissioners and KPRA as deemed appropriate.
8. That should the changes outlined above not succeed in resolving the problems, Staff will inform the Commissioners and recommend that the courts be relocated.
9. That the above changes be effected prior to opening the courts for the summer season.

Should the Commissioners vote to accept these proposals we will continue to monitor the courts and report our findings to you on an ongoing basis. In the interim, we greatly appreciate your understanding of the problems caused by the basketball courts and your concern for the impact they have on area residents and park users.

Sincerely,

Phil Cunliffe
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