



Date: June 12, 2002

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: FARMERS' MARKET

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board approve the request of the "Your Local Farmers Market Society" to conduct a Farmers' Market on the Riley Park Parking lot at Nat Bailey Stadium from 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. every second Wednesday from July 3 - August 28th and three consecutive Wednesdays September 11th, 18th and 25th, 2002.

POLICY

The Board has a regular practice of giving annual approval to a variety of organizers and non profit societies for the use of parkland to conduct events, subject to conditions established by the Board and, with all arrangements to the satisfaction of the General Manager.

BACKGROUND

On March 10, 1997, the East Vancouver Farmers Market Society received approval from the Park Board to conduct a farmers' market on the Trout Lake Community Centre parking lot from 9:00am - 2:00pm on twenty consecutive Saturdays from May 31st until October 11, 1997.

The Farmers' Market continues to operate on an annual basis on Saturdays from the May long weekend until the October long weekend. It has proven to be a valuable weekly event that is enjoyed by local residents as well as other members of the public. It has provided an opportunity to shop for fresh produce in an enjoyable, relaxed atmosphere where neighbours can socialize and meet one another.

Throughout the last five years, the Society has developed a good relationship with staff and the Grandview Community Centre Association. They have been a pleasure to work with and respond to suggestions and requests in a timely manner. The Society has taken a responsible approach to the farmers' market at Trout Lake by putting measures in place to minimize impact to the local neighbourhood and the community centre. This has been accomplished by monitoring access to the parking lot, setting up and taking down the market efficiently and leaving the site clean.

In 2000, the East Vancouver Farmers Market Society changed its name to “Your Local Farmers Market Society” to allow markets outside of East Vancouver to feel included in their mandate. The organization is a non profit society in good standing.

The Society believes that the “Farmers’ Markets” create linkages that address “community” in a holistic sense, incorporating social, economic, environmental, health and sustainability issues. They operate from a community based philosophy and understand and respect the mandate of the Park Board.

The Society’s goal is to create a farmers’ market within an urban setting that is a regular community event focusing on and celebrating the growing, harvesting and sharing of local food.

In November 2001, the organization completed an eleven month strategic planning process. The results of the study indicated that the three most important features of the markets are fresh quality of produce, an outdoor atmosphere and a sense of community. It also indicated a great desire from several Vancouver neighbourhoods for a market in one’s “own backyard”.

The Society also hosts a Farmers’ Market in the West End on Saturdays from 10am - 2pm at Lord Roberts School and will be in North Vancouver this summer on Sundays from 10am - 3pm at the North Van City Hall.

This type of activity is becoming more popular in local neighbourhoods and there are indications that a number of organizations may want to pursue opportunities to hold farmers’ markets in other Park Board locations.

DISCUSSION

The Society is proposing to hold a farmers’ market at the Nat Bailey Stadium parking lot that is designated for Riley Park Community Centre use. This lot is adjacent to Ontario Street, in a central location directly across from the Community Centre. It provides easy access for the vendors as well as additional parking for the public. This site is also along the Ontario Street Bike route making it accessible to cyclists and it is within walking distance of the surrounding community.

The farmers’ market proposal would include a small scale market with approximately twenty vendors with produce for sale from BC farmers, processors and local artisans. There will also be acoustic music, activities for children including face painting, balloon making as well as cooking demonstrations. The event would occur on every second Wednesday from July 3rd - August 28th

during the baseball season as well as three consecutive Wednesdays including September 11th, 18th and 25th, 2002, from 4:00 - 8:00pm after the Canadians games are over. There would be a total of eight events throughout the summer and early fall.

The organization has applied for a special event permit and subject to the approval of the Board a permit will be issued where the Society would be required to meet the necessary insurance requirements, permit conditions of use and will be charged a special event fee.

The Riley Park Community Association has been consulted and is supportive of the Farmers' Market proposal at this site. Fred Hermann from the Canadians who leases Nat Bailey Stadium was also consulted to ensure there are no conflicts between the baseball schedule and the farmers' market event. He is also supportive of the proposal.

As part of the community consultation process approximately four hundred flyers were distributed within a two block radius of the community to solicit input, concerns and feedback from the local residents in regards to the proposal (Appendix A). A meeting was held on June 12th, 2002, at Riley Park Community Centre where the Society did a presentation and solicited feedback from the public. Eight residents attended the meeting and expressed their support for the proposal. The comment line received four phone calls and staff received two emails from local residents who were also supportive.

The response from the community has been very positive, neighbours and the community are looking forward to attending the Farmers' Market at Riley Park.

SUMMARY

"Your Local Farmers' Market Society's" request to operate a Farmers' Market on every second Wednesday from July 3rd-August 28th as well as September 11th, September 18th and 25th in the Riley Park parking lot at Nat Bailey Stadium would provide an enjoyable opportunity for the local residents and the community to access a fresh produce market as well as participate in a bi-monthly mid-week event. The feedback from the community as well as the Canadians at Nat Bailey supports this proposal.

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