



Date: June 27, 2002

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

RECOMMENDATION

- A. *THAT the Board leave the basketball courts as they've been in prior years.*
- B. *THAT the Board increase the programming activities around the Kitsilano Beach Park Basketball and playground area and install a code of conduct sign.*
- C. *THAT the Board continue to work with the Community Police Office to resolve night time noise issues.*

BACKGROUND

On February 25, 2002 the Park Board heard from a delegation of residents adjacent to Kitsilano Beach Park requesting the removal or relocation of the basketball hoops in the park. The request was based on a concern of inappropriate language being used by some basketball players, the negative impact it was having on parents and children using the adjacent playground and the disturbing night time noise generated by late evening play.

On May 6, 2002 the Park Board discussed a report recommending changes to the basketball courts at Kitsilano Beach Park. After discussing the issues the Board decided to implement a broad public consultation process to determine how to deal with the issues related to the basketball courts.

To inform the public on how they could become involved, the Board installed site signage, provided access to a web site feedback and comment line, mailed out feedback forms to 2500 local residents, and provided feedback forms at all Vancouver Park Board Community Centres and all Kitsilano Beach Concessions and Lifeguard Stations. From June 1st to June 20th Park Rangers surveyed 89 basketball players and 49 non basketball players.

On June 18th staff met with representatives from the BC Black Historical & Cultural Society to discuss their interests in the site and their ideas for solutions to the problems at the courts. Staff also provided further information to the group on the specifics of the public consultation process that was used.

DISCUSSION

The response to the request for feedback has been very good. Of the 944 people who provided feedback 78% favoured leaving the courts as they've been in prior years, 16% favoured focusing the existing courts on children and relocating the adult basketball court to the area west of the existing tennis courts and 6% favoured the option of 1 hoop for children and 1 hoop for adults at the existing location.

Many people took the opportunity to provide comments beyond the options identified on the feedback form. Some of those comments include:

- remove all basketball courts from Kitsilano Beach Park
- add more basketball courts to Kitsilano Beach Park
- move the children's playground area
- provide 1 hoop for children only
- remove parking stalls and create a court on an existing parking lot
- increase programming activity around the basketball area and install a code of conduct sign

Reasons given for leaving the courts as they are include:

- the existing basketball area is rich in history and many people have been playing there for a long time.
- the existing area provides something for all ages. Having adults and or older siblings playing on the courts while being in eye sight of younger family members in the playground area is seen as an advantage
- many people like to watch the basketball players (younger kids claim they learn from watching the better players)

What people had to say about relocating the Adult Basketball Court:

- most basketball players said they didn't mind moving to the area next to the tennis courts as long as they got a full court
- many of the non basketball players voiced their opposition to the idea of creating a new basketball court for adult players. Increased noise, displacement of existing park users (ie hacky sack players & sunbathers), wasting tax payers dollars, and concern over a loss of green space were reasons given for opposing the relocation of the adult courts.

Plans for addressing ongoing noise issues:

During the past few months there has been growing interest in increasing the programming activity around the basketball courts and childrens' playground at Kitsilano Beach Park. Staff at the Kitsilano Community Centre have established some initial contacts and will be following up by developing a number of different programs targeted at the basketball and playground area.

To address this issue of night time noise the Park Board will continue to cover the hoops each evening around 9:30 p.m. and remove the covers each morning around 9:30 a.m. Staff will continue to work closely with the Neighbourhood Integrated Service Team (NIST) and Constable Pagazzi from the local Community Police Office to encourage residents to become involved with the new volunteer program that will have volunteers working directly with the police.

SUMMARY

Finding an appropriate solution to the day and night noise problem at the Kitsilano Beach Park basketball courts will require a multi-pronged approach. The public consultation process significantly favoured leaving the adult courts where they are. Kitsilano Beach Park has many different users and each one must take responsibility to ensure their activity does not have a negative impact on another. With increased programming, the installation of a code of conduct sign and a strong working relationship with the Community Police Office and their volunteers the problems associated with the basketball courts can be addressed.

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