

Date: September 22, 2010.



TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Winter Farmers Market – Riley Park

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board approve a special event permit for Your Local Farmers Market Society to operate a Farmers Market in the Riley Park parking lot at Hillcrest Park as outlined in the staff report.

POLICY

The Board grants permits 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

Since 1995, Your Local Farmers Market Society (YLFMS) formerly known as the East Vancouver Farmers Market Society has been working with Vancouver's communities to establish neighbourhood based authentic farmers markets. The goal of YLFMS is to create outdoor markets within an urban setting that are regular community events focusing on the growing, harvesting and sharing of local food.

In 1997, the Society received approval from the Park Board to conduct a weekly farmers market on Saturdays in the Trout Lake Community Centre parking lot. In 2002, approval was given for a farmers market on Wednesdays to be held in the Riley Park parking lot adjacent to Nat Bailey Stadium and in 2007 approval for a farmers market on Sundays in the Kitsilano Ice Rink parking lot beside Connaught Park. The Park Board has had a long standing positive relationship with YLFMS and the operation of their Vancouver Farmers Markets throughout the past twenty-three years.

In the spring/summer of 2009, YLFMS made a decision to relocate the mid-week farmers market that was held at Riley Park to the Main Street Station location.

Currently YLFMS operates the Vancouver Farmers Markets at two park locations in Vancouver on an annual basis during the spring, summer and fall seasons at John Hendry Park and Connaught Park as well as at Lord Roberts School and the Main Street Station area.

DISCUSSION

The Society is proposing to hold a winter farmers market in the Riley Park parking lot on the east side of Nat Bailey Stadium. This lot is adjacent to Ontario Street in a central location directly across from Riley Park Community Centre and in close proximity to the new Aquatic Centre and Legacy Facility in Hillcrest Park. It provides easy access for the vendors as well as additional parking for the public. The site is also along the Ontario Street bike route making it accessible to cyclists as well as transit as there are two bus stops along Midlothian Street and it is within walking distance of the surrounding community.

The winter farmers market would operate on Saturdays from November 6th to April 30th (except December 25th and January 1st) from 10:00am – 2:00pm with set up starting at 8:30am and take down by 3:30pm. The set up in the parking lot would include fifty to seventy-five vendor tents with a dimension of 10' x 10', four to ten hot food vendor carts and a small storage pod.

This proposal was considered at the Park Board Services and Budgets Committee meeting on September 21st, 2010.

YLFMS has applied for a special event permit. Once issued, the Society would be required to meet the necessary insurance requirements, conditions of use and pay the applicable fees.

Key partners and stakeholders including the Riley Park Community Centre Association and the Vancouver Canadians at Nat Bailey Stadium have been consulted and are supportive of the winter farmers market at this site.

Staff will monitor the event during the 2010 season and an evaluation of the winter farmers market will be completed with YLFMS in the fall of 2011.

SUMMARY

Your Local Farmers Market Society's request to operate a winter farmers market in the Riley Park parking lot within Hillcrest Park adjacent to Nat Bailey Stadium provides an enjoyable opportunity for the local residents and the community to access a fresh produce market during the winter as well as participate in a weekly event. The positive feedback from the community and participation at the previous farmers market at Riley Park supports this proposal.

Prepared by:
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