



SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 18, 2020

A Special Park Board meeting was held on Thursday, June 18, at 6:38 pm, at the Park Board Office and via videoconference.

PRESENT: Commissioner Tricia Barker
Commissioner John Coupar
Commissioner Dave Demers, Vice-Chair
Commissioner Camil Dumont, Chair
Commissioner Gwen Giesbrecht
Commissioner John Irwin
Commissioner Stuart Mackinnon

GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE: Shauna Wilton, Acting Deputy General Manager
Cheryl Chan, Manager, Executive Office and Board Relations
Carol Lee, Meeting Clerk
Jessica Kulchyski, Meeting Assistant

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Chair acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on the traditional territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations. The meeting is being held on the land respectfully and with honour to each other, the land and the communities that the Commissioners serve. The Chair invited Commissioners to join him in committing to actions of reconciliation in their deliberations and decisions.

1. COVID-19 Pandemic – Stanley Park Transportation and Access Reopening Plan

The Chair reviewed the protocol for registered speakers to participate in the virtual meeting.

The Chair reported that the Board had been informed during the staff briefing that was held immediately prior to the Special Board meeting that the timing of actions to reopen Stanley Park to vehicular traffic may be impacted by the Board's decision on the motion on notice. In addition, due to several factors, the Park Board will be unable to reconvene the Special Board meeting prior to June 22, 2020 if a decision cannot be reached during the June 18, 2020 Special Board meeting. Therefore, the Chair proposed the Board limit the time to hear from speakers until 11:00 pm and commence debate at 11:00 pm.

In response to a point of information, the Chair confirmed that the Park Board Procedure By-law requires a motion to extend any Park Board meeting beyond 10:00 pm.

Extension of Meeting

MOVED by Commissioner Demers
SECONDED by Commissioner Irwin

THAT the Park Board extends the meeting beyond 10:00 pm.

CARRIED

In favour: Barker, Coupar, Demers, Dumont, Giesbrecht, Irwin
Opposed: Mackinnon

Motion to Suspend the Rules

MOVED by Commissioner Irwin
SECONDED by Commissioner Giesbrecht

THAT the Vancouver Park Board limit the time to hear from registered speakers until 11:00 pm and proceed to debate at 11:00 pm.

CARRIED

In favour: Demers, Dumont, Giesbrecht, Irwin, Mackinnon
Opposed: Barker, Coupar

Motion to Suspend the Rules

MOVED by Commissioner Irwin
SECONDED by Commissioner Demers

THAT the Vancouver Park Board varies the length of time Speakers are permitted to speak to three minutes.

CARRIED

In favour: Demers, Dumont, Giesbrecht, Irwin, Mackinnon
Opposed: Barker, Coupar

Commissioner Coupar introduced the motion on notice that was submitted with the Special Board Meeting request to the Board Chair on June 14, 2020 and commented on the need for any changes to Stanley Park to be made transparently and with community and stakeholder engagement. Commissioner Coupar expressed concern with the delay in reinstating Stanley Park's pre-COVID-19 transportation and access plan.

Main Motion

MOVED by Commissioner Coupar
SECONDED by Commissioner Barker

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Vancouver Park Board ask the Park Board Acting General Manager to take immediate steps to reopen Stanley Park to its pre-COVID-19 transportation and access plan, and that this be completed prior to the weekend of June 20–21, 2020.

The Board was advised that from June 15, 2020 to 12:00 pm on June 18, 2020, the General Manager's Office received the following correspondence:

Topic	Oppose	Neutral	Support	Total
Reopening Stanley Park to pre-COVID-19 Transportation and Access Plan	187		42	229
Allow access to cars in Stanley Park (at least one lane)			44	44
Close Stanley Park to motor vehicles			16	16
General Comments (did not clearly state position)		21		21
Total	187	21	102	310

It was noted that:

- All correspondence has been sent directly to Commissioners
- Correspondence that was received after 12:00 pm on June 18, 2020 or not sent to the Park Board General Manager's office is not reflected in the numbers noted above
- A petition was received from HUB Cycling requesting a dedicated lane for cyclists with 1,660 signatures
- The majority of those who opposed the motion indicated they support one lane for cars and one lane for cyclists.

Recess

The meeting recessed at 6:55 pm. and reconvened at 7:22 pm.

The Board heard from 47 speakers, of which 33 spoke in support and 14 spoke in opposition to the motion. The speakers provided the following comments and responded to questions from the Board:

- A petition with 15,000 signatures supporting the motion was submitted to the Park Board
- Concern that the plan to reopen Stanley Park to only one vehicular lane is being undertaken without public and stakeholder consultation
- There are practical implications to creating a separated bicycle lane that must be considered
- The False Creek seawall, with similar terrain to the Stanley Park seawall, has reopened to bicycles and pedestrians
- The proposal to reinstate the pre-COVID-19 transportation and access plan to Stanley Park by June 20–21, 2020 is irresponsible
- It is inequitable to reopen Stanley Park primarily to vehicular traffic as many residents do not have the financial means to own a car
- The proposed reduction in vehicular traffic in Stanley Park supports the Climate Action Plan
- Concerns with the restriction of vehicular traffic in Stanley Park:
 - Impact to individuals with mobility challenges and families
 - Impact to the businesses and charitable events located in the park
 - Reduction in Park Board parking revenues at a time when there is a significant municipal deficit as a result of COVID-19
 - Public safety will be jeopardized due to emergency vehicle access being impeded

- Increase in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions created by traffic congestion in Stanley Park
- Cost of the infrastructure required to create a dedicated bicycle lane
- Impact to employees who work in the businesses located in the park
- Denying access to Stanley Park would not be in the City's best interest
- The Special Board meeting is not accessible to all and will result in changes that will negatively impact seniors without adequate consultation
- Children and young adults who live in the vicinity of Stanley Park and those work in the area need a safe space to participate in active transportation
- The motion is premature given that the COVID-19 pandemic is still active
- The decision to close Stanley Park Drive is illegal and discriminates against people with disabilities
- A study of the cost and feasibility and public consultation should be undertaken before a separated bicycle lane is created
- The investment in Prospect Point Café was made based on two lanes of vehicular traffic and a parking lot to bring guests to the establishment
- The study of creating a separated bicycle lane should not be undertaken during the extraordinary occurrence of a pandemic

Recess

The meeting recessed at 8:43 pm. and reconvened at 9:01 pm.

- Support for the reopening of two lanes of vehicular traffic and full access to parking
- Visitors to Stanley Park contribute to the local economy
- A project undertaken in the 1980s restricting vehicular traffic in Stanley Park created significant traffic congestion on Georgia Street
- Concerns with the restriction of vehicular traffic in Stanley Park:
 - Foregone revenue as a result of the current closure of Stanley Park Drive
 - Increased cost to operate buses in Stanley Park
 - Safety of using public transit during the COVID-19 pandemic
 - Creation of traffic congestion on Georgia Street due to the number of people who wish to visit Stanley Park
- Creating a separated bicycle lane caters to a very small segment of the population
- There are other parks available to those who wish to visit parks during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Stanley Park Drive was closed to facilitate compliance with physical distancing guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic and to reopen Stanley Park Drive at this time will pose health risks
- Request that Stanley Park Drive be reopened immediately, followed by a study and consultation on improving the experience for users of Stanley Park
- Suggestion to create restricted times for seniors to access Stanley Park by private or HandyDART vehicles to address social isolation
- The need to ensure that Stanley Park remains accessible to everyone, as originally intended when Stanley Park was opened in 1888

- Concern that decisions have been made to purchase concrete barricades and restrict parking spaces without public consultation on the creation of a separated bicycle lane
- Concern that temporary changes to Stanley Park Drive to facilitate compliance with COVID-19 physical distancing guidelines have evolved into permanent changes
- Expectation that the Park Board will be subject to legal action if the motion is defeated

Recess

The meeting recessed at 9:51 pm. and reconvened at 10:06 pm.

- Over majority of speakers have indicated support for the motion to reopen Stanley Park to vehicles
- The Park Board should consider all residents of Vancouver, not just special interest groups
- Reducing traffic to one lane of vehicular traffic will negatively impact children who are enrolled in cadets that is located in Stanley Park
- Encroaching on the existing roadway to provide a separated bicycle lane is too high a cost
- Suggestion that the seawall be widened to accommodate a separate bicycle lane
- Concern with the loss of revenue to the Park Board as a result of the demise of businesses that operate in Stanley Park
- Providing two lanes of vehicle traffic will result in the loss of the ability of cyclists to enjoy Stanley Park
- Suggestion that restaurants operating in Stanley Park diversify their businesses to attract cyclists
- Suggestion to utilize time, rather than physical barriers, as a dividing factor to allow cyclists and vehicles to enjoy Stanley Park
- Suggestion to reopen the bicycle lane on the seawall
- Reopening Stanley Park Drive to vehicles will allow those who are anxious about contracting COVID-19 to enjoy Stanley Park in the safety of their vehicle
- Commissioners have a fiduciary responsibility to protect the financial position of the Park Board
- Request that Stanley Park be reopened to assist the tourism sector that has been severely impacted by COVID-19

Recess

The meeting recessed at 10:41 pm. and reconvened at 10:51 pm.

Extension of Meeting

MOVED by Commissioner Coupar
SECONDED by Commissioner Barker

THAT the Park Board extends the meeting to hear from all registered speakers.

DEFEATED

In favour: Barker, Coupar

Opposed: Demers, Dumont, Giesbrecht, Irwin, Mackinnon

Motion to Suspend the Rules

MOVED by Commissioner Irwin

SECONDED by Commissioner Giesbrecht

THAT the Park Board moves to debate on the motion after the remaining speakers in Group D have been heard.

In favour: Barker, Demers, Dumont, Giesbrecht, Irwin, Mackinnon

Opposed: Coupar

- The access to Stanley Park can be restored to all residents through the motion that was passed at the June 8, 2020 Park Board meeting
- Suggestion that Commissioners consider the affordability of access to Stanley Park
- Cyclists are safer on the seawall as the barriers that have been erected on Stanley Park Drive pose a danger to cyclists
- The removal of cyclists from the seawall has improved the experience for all park users and reduced conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians
- A separated bicycle lane is required to shift cyclists to Stanley Park Drive
- Vehicular travel is inaccessible to many segments of the population
- The need for the Park Board to act on the climate emergency
- A 30% reduction in vehicular traffic is not equivalent to a total ban
- Suggestion that Stanley Park Drive remain closed to vehicular traffic during the COVID-19 pandemic but seniors who reside in the West End be permitted to access Stanley Park by private vehicle
- The reduction of parking or vehicular access will be a disincentive for cyclists who are required to drive with their bicycle to Stanley Park
- Vehicle traffic in Stanley Park will allow for physical distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Chair advised that the decision to hear from speakers until 11:00 pm and to conduct debate on the motion without adjourning the Special Board meeting was based on information provided by staff regarding the intention to reopen Stanley Park to vehicular traffic on June 22, 2020. Therefore, any adjournment would have resulted in a further delay to reopening Stanley Park.

Recess

The meeting recessed at 11:22 pm. and reconvened at 11:37 pm.

Substitution Motion

MOVED by Commissioner Demers
SECONDED by Commissioner Giesbrecht

THAT the Main Motion be substituted with the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

- A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board express its confidence and gratitude towards staff for their sustained prudence, foresight and efficiency throughout the current pandemic;
- B. THAT the Vancouver Park Board direct staff to continue to pursue the reopening of Stanley Park as presented in the [COVID-19 Pandemic – Parks & Recreation Reopening & Recovery Update](#) on June 8, 2020, and that the detailed plan outlined at the Board Briefing held on June 18, 2020, which is being developed in collaboration with park partners to ensure vehicle access to all park facilities, be implemented on an urgent basis; and
- C. FURTHER THAT any significant delays and/or changes to the aforementioned reopening plan be presented to the Board prior to implementation.

CARRIED

In favour: Demers, Dumont, Giesbrecht, Irwin, Mackinnon

Opposed: Barker, Coupar

Question on the Substitution Motion

Commissioner Coupar requested that the motion be separated into distinct propositions. The Board was advised that Item A may be considered as a distinct proposition, however Items B and C must be considered jointly.

Question on Item A

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Vancouver Park Board express its confidence and gratitude towards staff for their sustained prudence, foresight and efficiency throughout the current pandemic.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Question on Items B and C

BE IT RESOLVED:

- A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board direct staff to continue to pursue the reopening of Stanley Park as presented in the [COVID-19 Pandemic – Parks & Recreation Reopening & Recovery Update](#) on June 8, 2020, and that the detailed plan outlined at the Board Briefing held on June 18, 2020, which is being developed in collaboration with park partners to ensure vehicle access to all park facilities, be implemented on an urgent basis; and

- B. FURTHER THAT any significant delays and/or changes to the aforementioned reopening plan be presented to the Board prior to implementation.

CARRIED

In favour: Demers, Dumont, Giesbrecht, Irwin, Mackinnon

Opposed: Barker, Coupar

The Board adjourned on June 19, 2020 at 12:22 am.

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Shauna Wilton
Acting General Manager

Commissioner Camil Dumont
Chair