

**AGENDA**  
**PARKS AND COMMUNITY CENTERS COMMITTEE MEETING**

May 5, 2011 minutes  
Meeting held at Multnomah Center  
Chair: Kirky Doblle  
Arnold Creek:  
Ashcreek: Ester McGinnis  
Bridlemile: Steve Mullinax  
Collins View:  
Crestwood: Jim Ure  
Far SW: April Fong  
Hayhurst:  
Hillsdale:  
Homestead:  
Maplewood:  
Markham:  
Marshall Park:  
Multnomah:  
S Burlingame:  
South Portland: Ken Love  
SWHRL:  
WPP:  
Visitors:  
Guests: Astrid Dragoy  
Staff: Leonard Gard

**Agenda**

Agenda is approved with these changes: Add friends forum to old business. Remove summer meeting sites from old business and add it to new business. Also add the following to new business: ideas for committee meetings and recommendations for a new PP&R director.

**Conversation with Astrid Dragoy**

*River View Cemetery acquisition:* The acquisition of this 146-acre site was formally announced on May 2. It fulfills all the elements of their natural area acquisition strategy: it connects to other natural areas, it's the largest private natural parcel in the city, it creates wildlife corridors. The city has been working on the acquisition for years. They could not publicly talk about it in order to protect the parties involved: the Trust for Public Land, Metro, and the city.

Immediate plans: Ownership will transfer in August or September. City Nature will manage it. They have a 5-year contract with BES to do invasive removal. Despite the presence of invasives, there is lots of good overstory and herbaceous plants. There are a number of demand trails. Some are dangerous because they go straight downhill. Then, in

three or four year, they will talk about next steps. Purchase money came from Metro greenspace money, the city's local share of greenspace money, and the BES gray to green program.

A baseline inventory was done in 2009. It included an assessment of birds, mammals, and fish. Ecological values were determined to be high. Seven streams run through the property westward, enter culverts to go under Hwy 43, and then enter Powers Marine Park and then the Willamette River. Three culverts are now passable for fish. As improvements are done to Hwy 43, several more culverts will be made fish-passable and amphibian-friendly.

The purchase price is \$2.5 million. PP&R is seeking a \$500,000 grant from the state for restoration, for example, to pay for the 5-year contract with BES. This coming fiscal year, PP&R will get only \$17,000 for operations & maintenance but that figure will ramp up, and then technicians can be hired to work in natural areas. None of the existing trails was planned; all are demand trails, and many are poorly aligned.

In response to questions, Astrid reports 1) she has talked to Curt Nelson, the head of the park rangers. They do patrols and look for illegal camps in nature areas. Wildfires are the main concern. 2) PP&R had no communications with Lewis & Clark College during the purchase negotiations.

*Marquam Nature Park trails:* There will be a community open house in the matter of the proposed new soft surface walking trails in the park. The open house will be on May 25 at the Hoyt Arboretum. Some preliminary alignments were established in 2007 public process; those alignments included some internal loops. PP&R doesn't have enough money to build all the trails. The purpose of the open house is to get public input on which of the proposed trails should be picked to move forward now to design and construction.

PP&R received local share money for acquisition and capital projects and chose to spend it on trails in Stephens Creek and Marquam nature parks. They hired a consultant to consider issues such as sustainability trails, impact on creek systems, etc. The consultant did an assessment and ratings and estimated cost of construction. Construction of picked trails will probably take place June-August 2012.

*PP&R a finalist for award:* PP&R is one of four finalists for a gold medal award for excellence from the National Recreation & Park Association. They will hear this summer who wins.

*PP&R budget:* The mayor issued his budget for the next fiscal year the news is bad for PP&R. PP&R is taking a 1.5% cut that will be ongoing. In contrast, the police and fire bureaus go a 5% increase. Other bureaus also got increases, though not as much as they requested.

## **Minutes**

April minutes are approved with one change: on the last page under Steve's report, "the woman" should be replaced with "Sue Thomas."

### **Old business**

#### *Friends of Spring Garden Park:*

Umpqua Bank selected the SGP project as one of three finalists for a grant. Voting at the local Umpqua branch is taking place now. The Friends have also received money from the Parks Foundation to send out postcards to five local zip codes. The other two finalist projects are benches on Capitol Hwy and a mural at 34<sup>th</sup> and Moss.

#### *Dickinson community garden:*

Jim's survey went out. See his email about that. Jim talks about survey results. 172 responded and about ¾ wrote a narrative. Overall support from the survey is 84%. But there was a mixed response from daily users and neighbors close to the park. They appear to be worried about parking, traffic, and transients. Some think the garden will be unsightly. They want to leave it as is. Committee members suggest that people who responded may have had either a self-interest or a strong opinion.

Next steps include outreach to the Somali community and an open house. Planning for the Somali outreach is almost done, and a Somali group will partner with the neighborhood.

#### *Advisory committee on compensation money*

Ken reports that he sent out an email to SPNA board members inviting people to join the advisory committee. Four people have applied.

#### *Park card/tour project:*

Kirky notes there are two things to consider: 1) a recent focus group concluded that there is a strong need for people to get to know their local parks, and 2) the ONI grant program will be getting more funding. When the next funding round comes in September, we can re-apply, and if so, we now know what issues to address: 1) show evidence of need, 2) assess progress, and 3) evaluate results.

Steve: He talked to Sue Thomas, who led the PP&R Greenwalks program, and she had some suggestions that could help us:

1. Choose the park carefully. Select a park that will light people's fires. Pick a park with a special attraction, such as unique birds or trees or physical features. Ken suggest tying with a fun event, like something for children.
2. Have a focused presentation.
3. Do lots of publicity
4. Gets ideas from locals, people who live close to the park. They know what's cool about the park.

Motion is made and seconded to invite parks friends groups to our August meeting to talk to us and give us ideas regarding different parks. Dedicate about one hour to this. Motion passes unanimously.

### **New business**

#### *Committee meeting agendas:*

Discussion takes place regarding number of guests we should have at meetings. Jim suggests that Astrid and Terri come on alternated months. He thinks we need more time for other business. Others agree. Ken disagrees; he likes the information he gets when both attend. No decision is made.

#### *Summer meeting sites:*

It is confirmed that in June we'll be at the SWCC. For July, Jim nominates Dickinson, Ester prefers a nature park, Ken nominates Caruthers, Steve nominates Albert Kelly and notes it has a natural area component. Consensus develops:

July—Caruthers

August—Albert Kelly

September--Dickinson

#### *What kind of person should be the next PP&R director?:*

Ideas:

- Zari finished the big re-organization of PP&R, so the next director skills could be different.
- Eileen Argentina.
- Someone who really knows budgets.

### **Announcements**

- There's an updated Parks Committee page on the SWNI website. Soon our action plan and minutes will go up.
- The PPS project list went up. It's a list of small maintenance projects at local schools. Nearly all will be done by volunteers.
- Parks friends forum on April 16.
- The new west zone and aquatic catalogs are out.