

**CITY OF CORVALLIS
MINUTES OF THE PARKS, NATURAL AREAS AND RECREATION BOARD
FEBRUARY 21, 2008**

Attendance

Mary Buckman
Kent Daniels, Chair
Charles Fisher
Paul Hohenlohe
Dennis Iverson
Randy Keller, Vice-Chair
John Locker
Denise Nervik
Tracy Noel
Noel Mingo, 509-J District Rep.
Margie Powell
Stewart Wershow, Council Liaison

Staff

Steve DeGhetto, Park Operations Supervisor
Alice Renner, Management Assistant
Jackie Rochefort, Park Planner
Mark Lindgren, Recorder

Visitors

David Dodson, 311 SW Jefferson Avenue
Larry Earhart, 2910 NW Greeley Avenue
Dan Kellom, 1115 SE Crystal Lake Drive
Mark Knapp
Steve Matthes, 7575 NW Hoodview
Jack Schubert, 4728 SW Hollyhock Circle

Absent/Excused

Betty Griffiths, GLT Liaison

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Agenda Item	Information Only	Held for Further Review	Recommendations
II. Approval of Minutes	X		
III. City Manager Update	X		
IV. Visitors' Propositions	X		
V. Staff Reports	X		
VI. Board Member/City Council Liaison Reports	X		
VII. Evanite Proposed Trail Plan	X		
VIII. Riverfront Commemorative Park Use and Management Guidelines Review	X		
IX. Adjournment	X		The next Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting is 6:30 p.m., February 21, 2008 at the Downtown Fire Station.

CONTENT OF DISCUSSION

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** Vice-Chair Randy Keller called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. City Manager Jon Nelson presented a plaque and a certificate of recognition to Gary Patterson, thanking him for his 32 years of distinguished service to the community.

- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.** John Locker pointed out that in the January 17, 2008 minutes; his name was incorrectly omitted in the Attendance section on page 1. Mary Buckman moved and Charlie Fisher seconded to approve the January 17, 2008 minutes as corrected; motion passed.
- III. CITY MANAGER UPDATE.** City Manager Jon Nelson related he met with stakeholders to get input on starting the recruitment process for replacing Director Julee Conway, who is resigning March 7th. He stated he expects to appoint an AIC Director by next week and that the hiring process will likely take four to six months. He reported he has met with employee groups to discuss the transition period as well as the recruitment process. He encouraged board members to contact him with any suggestions regarding the hiring. He noted that he will be looking for a candidate that will commit for at least a five to seven year period. He asked that an outline that he sent to Steve DeGhetto on the transition and recruitment processes be forwarded to the board.

Charlie Fisher asked whether there would be any impact on the budget process. Nelson replied that the Budget Commission would give direction. He suggested that the new Director would likely want to have an opportunity to participate in the hiring for the new, second Park Operations Supervisor position after July 1st which was one of two major budget enhancements. He added that the Budget Commission found about \$105,000 of the \$170,000 needed to fund a new boiler for the Osborn Aquatic Center.

He asked the board for what they saw as the key challenges facing the department in the next five to seven years. Denise Nervik highlighted the importance of maintaining existing infrastructure. Kent Daniels noted that PNARB is slated for a March 6th Board Retreat and will look at long-range goals. Nelson responded that he would like a draft of those goals as soon as possible so he can move forward with advertising for the position.

Paul Hohenlohe stated the candidate should be able to juggle and balance constituencies and obligations. Mary Buckman stated the candidate needs to help the board keep attention on open space and keeping development of open space management plans moving forward. Daniels stated that a bond measure for the Senior Center, Chintimini Park and playground equipment is tentatively scheduled; lacking a key player in the process is a concern for him but he expects the organization to step forward. Also, if the Director position is filled from within, then the department will effectively go without that lead management position for about a year.

Nelson asked for ideas regarding the ideal characteristics and skills needed for a good fit for what the community wants to accomplish in the Parks and Recreation Department. This is to be used in the advertising for the position. Margie Powell stated she wanted someone with a background in natural areas management and restoration. Fisher stated that like Director Conway, the candidate should have a demonstrated skill in getting grants. Nervik stated the candidate should be able to help make the department more accessible and visible to the community. Keller stated the candidate should be able to continue the department's fine work with volunteers. Daniels noted the department has more community involvement than most departments.

Nelson related that a personnel screening committee will reduce the large number of initial applicants down to about 20-30. A supplemental questionnaire containing 8 to 10 questions relating to the key challenges will be sent out to those individuals to help determine whether they are a good fit. The committee will narrow the field down to about five and invite them to a rigorous interview process with him, a community panel, the City Attorney, Department Directors, as well as a community reception and coffee and brown-bag opportunities with employees. He stated it will be a nation-wide search.

IV. VISITORS' PROPOSITIONS. Jack Schubert, 4728 SW Hollyhock Circle, introduced himself as a member of the Corvallis Community Band (CCB) and a band committee seeking construction of an outdoor performance facility. He introduced Steve Matthes, 7575 NW Hoodview, President and Director of the CCB. He praised the department for a beautiful job on recent improvements to Sunset Park.

He stated that the group recently learned of the idea of creating a comprehensive master plan for the redevelopment of Central Park and the Madison Avenue Plaza, to be part of the 2011-2012 CIP. He stated that the CCB would like to build an outdoor performance theater as part of the development; many Corvallis groups would take advantage of it. He related that between 350 and 500 people regularly attend CCB performances each week during the summer. He stated that Corvallis is one of the few communities without such a venue. He said the CCB would be willing to do the fundraising for building the structure itself, although *not* the infrastructure (such as restrooms, etc).

Mary Buckman asked why the venue at Starker Arts Park would not work. Schubert replied that the group will play there a couple times this season; however, people are accustomed to attending concerts downtown and it enhances downtown merchants. Strong wind and duck waste on the seating area are also problems. He related that his group has considered other possible sites as well; the Chintimini Senior Center, MLK Park and other sites. He added the proposed performance area in the recently developed plan for the North Riverfront only accommodates about 12-14 performers and only about 100-125 audience members.

Fisher asked how big an area is needed for the CCB. Schubert replied that the gazebo at Central Park only holds about eighteen performers, just large enough for the Hilltop Band. He stated that they, too, would like to see another venue. Steve Matthes said seating for the performers would have to accommodate about eighty musicians. He stated that a structure could be designed so that it would not overwhelm the park and would be a visual asset. It could also be used for DaVinci Days and Fall Festival, as well.

Matthes said that the acoustics of setting up in front of the gazebo are not very good. Also, the band must bring in its own lights and sound for each performance. Therefore, the band would like a venue with a sound reflector at the back and permanent lights and sound, with a solid foundation for the band near ground level, and ideally storage rooms for chairs, lights and sound. Restrooms elsewhere in the park would be desirable, also.

Nervik stated that the band is wonderful, but the group must be aware that Central Park is heavily used and is not very large; anything put in the park must have multiple uses. Matthes replied that that was the group's intent for the structure. He added that the facility would eliminate the need for performances on Monroe Avenue.

Larry Earhart, 2910 NW Greeley Avenue, stated he was representing a group putting together a PAC to support the upcoming bond measure for the Senior Center, Chintimini Park improvements, playgrounds and ball fields. The group has named officers and developed an action plan. However, participants are mostly oriented to seniors; so the need is for advocates for playgrounds and ball fields; he encouraged the board to forward such volunteers to him at 757-7406 or lle17@comcast.net.

Mark Knapp noted that the board may be involved in consideration of the property line at Evanite and urged caution in consideration of the City accepting possibly polluted property.

- V. **STAFF REPORTS.** Park Operations Supervisor Steve DeGhetto encouraged members to submit ideas prior to the March 6th Board Retreat. He highlighted a memo on the timeline of the bond measure. He stated that the seasonal startup begins March 3rd and informed members that the Osborn Aquatic Center hosted 500 student athletes and 1,500 spectators for ages 11-14 swimming championships.

Tracy Noel asked if there was any way to get electronic versions of the joint City/County Habitat Conservation Plans. DeGhetto replied that the plans are very large documents; he suggested that she instead check out hard copies or disk copies from the office. Rochefort stated examples could be brought to the retreat. Fisher asked that they be made available at the admin front desk. Noel asked if the County has a Trails Plan; DeGhetto replied that it did.

Planner Jackie Rochefort related that she is preparing to start working with the consultant on submitting the application for a Willamette River Greenway permit for Willamette Park. The department is partnering with Public Works on building the Townsend Shelter in Avery Park; it will be similar to one recently built in Sunset Park and it should be completed in early summer. Finishing touches are being put on Phase II improvements to Sunset Park; planning is underway on Phase III improvements, which will begin in July replacing softball field lights. She is working on replacing failing picnic shelter lights in Avery Park; equipment has been ordered.

She is working with the Rose Society on installing ADA pavers in the Avery Park Rose Garden. The department will partner with the group in applying for a 50% matching Local Share Grant, which would finish the pavers and install arbors and kiosks. The value of their volunteer labor would be included as part of the match money.

She related that she tracks land use issues, including the Evanite, Seavy Meadows, Ashwood Preserve and Hilltop Village projects. Buckman asked the status on the project on Brooklane; Rochefort replied that it was approved and is now under appeal to Land Use Board of Appeals.

- VI. **BOARD MEMBER/CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORTS.** City Council Liaison Stewart Wershow reported the City Council finished up the budget. Tracy Noel related that she will be leaving the Corvallis Environmental Center in April to take a position with a non-profit in Chicago, Growing Home, Inc. She added that because of this, the CEC is now seeking a part-time director.

Randy Keller highlighted the upcoming March 8th art and music benefit fundraiser for the Benton Skateboard Alliance's project to improve and enhance the skatepark.

Kent Daniels related that the city is moving ahead with plans to place an urban renewal question on the ballot. It will probably also establish a Downtown Commission. Councilor Wershow added that there have also been discussions about expanding the Enterprise Zone at the airport; expanding further to the north gets close to the City's Herbert Open Space property.

Daniels noted that regarding the proposal raised during Visitors' Propositions to build a bandshell in Central Park, the position of the board and the current City Council is that that park is not an appropriate location for a structure of that size, for a number of reasons. He related that a subcommittee from the board and the Council, including himself, Mayor Tomlinson and Councilor Brauner, met and explored the issue. Councilor Wershow added that the Council was at one point considering a new City Hall plan; a proposal to relocate the old Depot Station to Central Park for use as a restroom was shot down; he added that it is his own opinion that the park is already too cramped.

VII. EVANITE PROPOSED TRAIL PLAN. Planner Jackie Rochefort introduced Dave Dodson from Willamette Valley Planning and Dan Kellom, Evanite Engineering Manager. She emphasized that their presentation on this Willamette River Greenway (WRG) and trail project was only informational; no board decision was needed.

Dave Dodson stated that he is a consultant for Evanite on this complex proposal, which involves a Willamette River Greenway conditional development request to make modifications within the Greenway. It also involves a request to relocate the Greenway boundary adjacent to Evanite; as well as a proposed text amendment to modify a setback standard.

Dodson used a map to show the section of the Evanite site that was rezoned in 2006 to Mixed Use Transitional, which would allow Evanite and Open Door to eventually transition existing uses to a mix of uses more consistent with those now seen downtown. This zoning designation allows for continuation of industrial uses but also allows for office, retail, restaurants, residential and a variety of other uses.

The proposal would extend a multiuse path along the riverfront bank through the Evanite property, connecting existing city trail systems from Shawala Point at Mary's River to Crystal Lake Sports Fields. He noted the City could choose to build a pedestrian bridge to avoid users from having to go west back to SW 3rd Street, providing a more contiguous connection.

The request involves a two-stage demolition of five buildings, including one 1924 building that now blocks placing a path along the riverfront. They would be demolished within one year from the time of approval. He noted the concerns regarding the City taking possession of land that may be contaminated; he noted that while the original proposal was for dedication of land along the riverbank to the City, the City indicated that it was not interested in taking on possibly contaminated property. Therefore, the proposal is now for a public access easement, including a 10' setback from the top of bank, a 12' multiuse path and a 10' landscaped strip; abutting property owners would have the option of constructing a security fence until redevelopment occurs in the future.

Dodson stated the Willamette River Greenway boundary runs along Chapman Drive; most of the site is encumbered by the greenway. He noted that most of the downtown area is encumbered by a greenway that is only 150' from the low water line and contended that the Evanite site should be the same. He argued that most of the site consists of old industrial buildings that don't provide benefit to the river, apart from a vegetated area along the bank.

Dodson stated the proposal is to move the WRG boundary to 150'; any development within that boundary area would be subject to WRG review. Also, Evanite is asking for a modification to setbacks. He noted that setbacks in downtown are essentially non-existent. However, the building setback in the south area where Evanite is located becomes 100' from the top of bank; Evanite is proposing a 32' setback.

He clarified that Evanite is not proposing to build the trail. The demolition of the buildings to allow construction of the trail is contingent on moving the WRG boundary. Evanite Engineering Manager Dan Kellom related that several years ago, the company wanted to build a 600 square foot electrical enclosure adjacent to an existing building; however, cumbersome WRG review process essentially forced Evanite to locate the facility inside an existing building, including demolition of an employee break room and costing an additional \$250,000. Kellom stated that the proposal is a compromise that gives the City a long-desired trail while giving the company latitude to modify, expand or update its facility.

Dodson stated there are several upcoming public outreach events on the issue. There will be an event sponsored by the Citizen Committee for Involvement on February 25th and March 3rd at the First Alternative Co-Op Meeting Room.

Dennis Iverson asked whether there were other examples of moving WRG boundaries. Dodson replied that he knows of only two examples of WRG boundaries being moved or modified since they were established in 1974. However, the standards that apply to the lands within WRG boundaries vary dramatically along the river and in different jurisdictions. Planner Rochefort related that department staff have met with DLCD and have had a phone conference with the Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation; staff is tracking the application closely.

Iverson asked why the WRG boundary had been established further out than 150'. Dodson replied that apparently the state chose to encumber every industrial operation that existed along the river, possibly reasoning that they had the biggest potential of making adverse impacts to the river. As the site transitions to use such as that of downtown, this encumbrance is no longer warranted.

Paul Hohenlohe asked whether, given the close proximity to the river, if there were any erosion control along the banks. Dodson replied that it appears that a lot of gravel may have been placed on top of the riverbank.

Denise Nervik asked about the progression of products manufactured on the site. Kellom replied that Evans Products began making battery separators after WWII; the plant still makes battery separators and high quality glass filter applications. The plume that can sometimes be seen from the factory is only water vapor. He related that the plume of ground chemical contamination has been shrunk to a containable size; the plant has submitted a more aggressive cleanup plan to the DEQ.

Kent Daniels asked about the company's land across the river. Kellom replied that the 55 acres consisted of trees and farmland.

Dodson stated the trail could be constructed with CIP funding; or wait for a developer to be required to build a portion of the trail when re-developing the site; or, if an urban renewal district is formed and if the project is designated as a high priority, the trail could be funded from increment revenue. Daniels commented that the community has long dreamed of connecting the trails; the proposal is a win-win.

Noel cited Dodson's comment about how implementation of WRG varies widely along the river. Dodson replied that Evanite could discuss with the state and City staff what could be possible without moving the WRG boundary. Noel asked about rumors that the plant was moving overseas. Kellom responded that that was not true and had resulted from a mis-quote in a newspaper article; Evanite has no plans to relocate and wants to continue to be a vital part of the community.

Keller asked about the millrace. Dodson replied that when the millrace was vacated, it was partially covered over; remaining portions still slowly drain some surface water during heavy rain; previously, its headgate powered a flour mill.

A member of the public attending asked to make comment. Planner Rochefort replied that public testimony is typically not taken at this point in a meeting; also, this is not a public hearing. The intent was only for information to be given to the board. Public testimony will be heard at a future Planning Commission meeting.

Rochefort stated that building a multimodal path at the site has been part of the CIP for at least the last nine years. If the easement is approved by the City, then she could develop cost projections with an engineer; feedback would be sought from the board; then fundraising would be needed to support detailed design and engineering and construction.

VIII. RIVERFRONT COMMEMORATIVE PARK USE AND MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

REVIEW. Management Assistant Alice Renner related that the minimal proposed changes involve simply tidying up City Administrative Policy. The name of Madison Plaza has been changed to Howland Plaza.

Fisher suggested that under item D, on page 5, #5 should actually be #1. Renner added that there are also two item E's. Fisher suggested substituting language used under E, page 7, for similar language regarding non-motorized use on page 3.

Buckman asked why the South Riverfront area was not listed on the top of page 4. Renner replied that South Riverfront is not listed because it is not reservable. DeGhetto added that while that one could get a special use permit for that area, it is not a fee area like the other three areas.

Buckman suggested modifying the phrase to read, “*..at least five days..*” under item B on page 6.

Noel suggested removing the reference to the Riverfront Commission on the last page, as the group has sunsetted. Referring to special use permits procedure on page 5, she suggested making it clear who is responsible for making sure a meeting with staff happens.

Buckman asked who has the responsibilities formerly shouldered by the Riverfront Commission. Rochefort responded that those responsibilities came to the PNARB; a new Downtown Commission would take on responsibilities relating to the street adjacent to the park.

Daniels pointed out that at the bottom of page 7, he suggested deleting “Bird seed is acceptable” and modifying the remaining sentence to read, “Throwing rice, confetti *or bird seed* is prohibited in the park”; several members and staff concurred.

Renner noted that “Pyrotechnic displays” was added under 5.01.040 Fire (it has been an issue).

IX. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.