CITY OF CORVALLIS
MINUTES OF THE PARKS, NATURAL AREAS AND RECREATION BOARD
AUGUST 15, 2013

Attendance
Betty Griffiths, Chair
Lynda Wolfenbarger, Vice-Chair
Tatiana Dierwechter
Joshua Baur
Jon Soule
Phil Hays
Marc Vomocil
Ed MacMullan
Joel Hirsch, City Council Liaison
Kevin Bogatin, 509-J District Liaison

Absent/Excused
Deb Rose

Staff
Karen Emery, Director
Steve DeGhetto, Assistant Director
James Mellein, Aquatic Center Supervisor
Jackie Rochefort, Park Planner
Jude Geist, Operations Supervisor
Mark Lindgren, Recorder

Visitors
Karon Badalamenti
Tony Howell
Patricia Benner

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Agenda Item	Information Only	Held for Further Review	Recommendations
II. Introductions	X		
III. Approval of Minutes- July 18, 2013	X		
IV. Visitors' Propositions	X		
V. Draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan			Motion passed that the board supported the master plan process, including approval of the staff taking into consideration testimony and refinements reflecting board and public comments tonight, as the Plan goes forward to the HSC on September 17, 2013.
VI. Parks, Natural Areas and Recreation Board Goals	X		
VII. Staff Reports	X		
VIII. Council Liaison Report	X		
IX. Board Member Reports	X		
X. Visitors' Propositions	X		
XI. Adjournment	X		The next Parks, Natural Areas and Recreation Board meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m., September 19, 2013 at the Downtown Fire Station, 400 NW Harrison Blvd.

CONTENT OF DISCUSSION

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Betty Griffiths called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

II. INTRODUCTIONS.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES- July 18, 2013.

Josh Baur highlighted Patricia Benner's submitted corrections to part of her testimony and asked it be amended as she requested: "She noted the path planned as part of the Creekside Center development was within a highly protected wetland area, and that building a full-sized multiuse path there will open up the canopy and negatively impact the site. She advocated creating better policies and criteria to be included in the Plan that give more specific direction in such cases to protect significant natural features. Under page 18, (h), she highlighted the aspect of controlling public access in the language, but noted that the draft gives no guidance. She offered to assist in crafting language to help address her concerns". Phil Hays moved and Marc Vomocil seconded to approve the July 18, 2013 minutes as so corrected; motion passed.

IV. VISITORS' PROPOSITIONS.

Tony Howell highlighted the written testimony he'd distributed to the board, saying he appreciated some of the changes to the current draft of the Plan. He said a critical aspect of the Trails Plan is how it protects natural features. He said a big part of the intent of the original language of the Parks Plan and other Plans is to allow flexibility to protect natural features; however, as trails were implemented and designed, that hasn't proven to be true as implemented during the land use process. He highlighted an example of how plans were interpreted in a quasijudicial setting, which didn't give enough leeway for flexible response to natural features design. Part of the problem is that there aren't sufficient resources to look at every trail route and determine the value of wetland, and it is not practical to do so during the land use process.

He emphasized the importance of incorporating language about siting trails where they don't damage natural features, and using types of trails that don't damage the natural features. He highlighted his testimony, page 3, on recommended language changes. He said it was critical to add language to the Regional and Connector Trails section, saying that their typical structure, such as their 12' width, was too impactful to most sensitive areas; in wetlands, for example, trails should be soft or be a boardwalk. Regarding Local and Park Trails, all trails should be set back 50' from top of bank of a stream. The current Plan language needs to be more specific, and doesn't specify wetlands as part of "Water-related Features"; he suggested adding "..50' from top of bank within a non-wetland stream corridor" as a clarification, and design in a way that doesn't require tree removal.

He said earthen Park trails of less than 3' in width can be within that 50' setback, and that boardwalks of less than 5' can, in some cases, be routed through significant wetlands, as long as it is not a forested wetland. He cautioned that in a forested wetland, even a 5'-wide boardwalk requires cutting down some trees, and even an earthen trail in a forested wetland should be limited to summer use.

He said that language needs to be added to the Table 5 on page 72 of the draft Plan, and suggested adding a constraints column. He noted that based on his experience in how maps were interpreted during the quasijudicial process, there should be language changes to how routes are described on maps. The map language currently says that "proposed trail routes are intended to illustrate optimal alignments, which will be contingent on future design studies and negotiations with property owners"; however, it doesn't mention natural feature constraints, and he contended that the word "optimal" should be replaced by "conceptual" or "preliminary alignment". He suggested changing "The location

of the mapped route through a natural feature does not indicate an intent for the final location to be within the natural feature". He said that just because the route goes through a green area on the map doesn't mean it must remain there if there is a conflict with preserving the natural feature.

He highlighted the language in the Plan from the National Parks and Recreation Association's (NRPA) conservation recommendations, including stewardship, and the importance of Parks and Recreation Departments both being stewards and modeling stewardship and suggested including them in PNARB board goals. He summarized that remaining significant natural features were important enough and rare enough in the community that that they should take precedence over other trail routing considerations. Griffiths said the language Howell cited regarding conservation trends in Section 35-37 was also in Chapter 7, Recommendations and Actions.

Patricia Benner said she wanted to add to Tony Howell's testimony, and emphasizing that highly protected natural areas were simply remnants of remnants, saying that we cannot take any more from them, and proposing baseline language that natural features must take top priority over all other Park and Recreation objectives as they are balanced. She highlighted NRPA concept of stewardship, which incorporates the aspect of education. She cautioned that construction of trails and other infrastructure through natural areas such as wetlands can destroy their functioning. She expressed concern about siting a Corridor Trail through a wetland or stream corridor, saying it would impact them. She cited the example of the Creekside Center site, in which a boardwalk was proposed as a Connector path to avoid disrupting the wetland's hydrology, and advocated adding language about matching compatibility of the site to the path users.

Griffiths highlighted emailed testimony from absent board member Deb Rose, which inquired whether there was more than one dog park; noting that the number of acres of park land (1,727 acres) listed in Section E didn't add up; and that it would be helpful to add a definition for "Exercising with Equipment". Griffiths highlighted and distributed emailed testimony from Liz Frankel, summarizing that she was concerned about the validity of the population growth figures; didn't understand the concepts of "cost recovery" and "cost avoidance"; had questions about the expansion of System Development Charges (SDC's); and expressed concerns about trails bisecting wetlands, and subordinate easements.

V. DRAFT PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN.

Karon Badalamenti, consultant with GreenPlay, emphasized that the draft Master Plan's schedule was very tight, noting that the plan goes to the City Council's Human Services Committee on September 19. She said an executive summary would be added. She said that while one of the reasons of hiring a consultant was to get outside viewpoints, the board didn't have to agree with her. The analysis includes a needs assessment; demographics and trends; and a look at funding options, such as SDC's.

The planning process tried to establish what was important for the Corvallis community in order to drive the vision for the organization and the direction of the Master Plan. She highlighted department values, vision and its mission. It includes how the department preserves and creates community heritage by providing a place and programs designed to enhance quality of life. The vision also includes how the system can contribute to increasing the standard of living and livability for residents, and attractiveness to visitors. It describes the high priority of the green infrastructure, the variety of programs impacting community health and wellness, and accessibility, including walkable access and having a connected system, with diverse offerings and opportunity throughout the system.

She said the survey of residents required at least 400 responses for a statistically valid result, and 679 were received, resulting in a very small margin of error. The results were weighted by age and ethnicity, since seniors tend to oversample and ethnic groups tend to undersample. The top five responses included maintaining what we have; health and active lifestyles; connectivity and its role in alternative transportation; implementing what has already been planned; and positive activities for youth.

The responses regarding facilities to add, improve or expand included pedestrian and bike trails; open space and conservation lands; community gardens; playgrounds (covered playgrounds may be part of the issue); indoor swimming; picnic areas, shelters; mountain bike trails, multigenerational community center; and lastly, cricket. Top programs cited by respondents included local food growing, preparation and preservation; programs for youth; continuing to expand and use volunteer programs; create athletic opportunities and leagues for youth; cultural arts; culture and arts programs; family programs; arts and crafts; and sustainability and the environment.

The Plan's process included seven public meetings, including some outreach in Spanish; she felt the results were representative of the community. She summarized that the public meeting responses found the department was doing a lot right; overall satisfaction was fairly high; the public wanted to maintain high levels of current service; and to connect the community through a comprehensive bike and pedestrian system (though the department's focus is more on recreational trails). She noted that most OSU students lived off campus and used City recreational services, and that the student population was growing. A high value was placed on services within walkable distance, and she highlighted desire for river access. School gym space is at or past capacity, so that is not a solution for Parks and Recreation, and the public needs an available drop-in gym. She suggested consideration of expanding the number of restrooms in parks.

She said the old "Level Of Service" (LOS) methodology was only about counting things as part of expanding capacity; instead, this study looked at the quality and conditions of amenities and used individual components to determine cumulative values. Improving conditions of *existing* assets could be a better way to improve level of services scores. Evaluation of trails was part of calculating the overall scoring. Due to the consistently high level of service in Corvallis, a Geo-Referenced Amenities Standards Program (GRASP) score equal to the average neighborhood park score of 82.9 was used as a service threshold for analysis. (This was a higher threshold than often found in many communities but reflects Corvallis community standards). The analysis used a one-mile radius, and added a ½-mile catchment area premium, in which access to a component can be achieved by walking 15 minutes or less.

She summarized that 93% of the community had some service, which was a very high number. The resulting map illustrates gaps in walkable access to services, saying those gaps were opportunity areas. She stated that the map would help prioritize where to site development projects, investments in the CIP, collaborations, etc.

In the analysis of playgrounds (one of the major issues for respondents), it was found that 61% of areas appeared to have no service; she cautioned that more analysis was needed to determine priority playground development. She said that a map showing where three major park components were present- Developed Park Components; Natural Areas, and Trail Access- would help highlight development and opportunities.

Badalamenti stated that the "OSU Study Area" was in transition, with a high density of students. She cautioned there were serious parking issues with the Chintimini Senior Center and that most older residents now live over one mile away; it is a beloved building that is now in the wrong place. She

suggested consideration of removing the building on the site, which would create more usable open land in an area that has less park acreage than most.

She explained that a "Trailshed" meant that there was access to a trail within a half-mile. There are nineteen unique, unconnected trailsheds, and connecting them would create a more connected system and would provide access to a number of indoor and outdoor facilities and amenities.

She said the capacity analysis highlighted the need for four more community gardens, fifteen more playgrounds, 102 more acres, and a couple more ball fields in the system. She highlighted a "key issue matrix" that shows where issues bubble up.

She said in regards to System Development Charges, the City had a couple opportunities to lessen constrictions and broaden their potential collection in order to help the system. Also, a couple SDC tools are not being used- non-residential or commercial fees are not being used; to do so would require a change through the City Council. She noted that swimming pools were a big part of the system and are impacted by growth, as are special use areas; the City of Corvallis chose to restrict how it collects and uses fees. An indoor recreation center should also be considered; a capacity analysis is needed to make that happen.

She highlighted administrative strategies for consideration, including ADA, crime prevention through environmental design, etc. There are recommendations for emphasis on fitness and wellness, arts and culture, collaborations with the County, and outdoor recreation and education.

The trail elements section was broken down by trail types, and the different trail tiers reflect priorities. There are 6.1 miles of Regional trails in Tier 1; 3.7 miles of Connector Trails; and 0.4 miles of Park Trails.

She said "Opportunity Perspectives" graphically showed approximate locations and distribution across the study area. She highlighted Osborn Aquatic Center, Tunison, and Walnut Community Rooms. The Cultural and Historic Sites Opportunities section looks at priorities. The section also looks at preservation, restoration and refurbishment of playgrounds.

Regarding the CIP, the plan suggested adding phased investment projects into three categories of critical improvements and revenue enhancements immediately or over the next one-two years, totaling $23.5 million in Priority 1 items; along with more aspirational investments over the next three to five years, and beyond five years.

Marc Vomocil asked how the plan incorporated facilities and programs provided by other besides Corvallis Parks and Rec, such as OSU. Badalamenti replied that there was a section on Alternative Providers, noting that OSU's facilities were not for the general public, only faculty, staff and students. She said County parks within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) *were* included. Vomocil asked how school and fairgrounds facilities were included; Badalamenti replied that the fairgrounds were not included, though schools were, though they were discounted, since they were not always available, with high school facilities typically less available than elementary school facilities. Vomocil said the public *can* sometimes use high school facilities like the running tracks; Badalamenti replied they were included, though discounted. She added that OSU stated that only card-carrying faculty, staff and students were supposed to use its facilities.

Betty Griffiths said that though the presentation tonight was excellent, the Plan was onerous, containing duplications, errors, and omissions. She stated that it was so different from the current plan, that it was

difficult to make a comparison, and so she simply focused on the Chapter 7 recommendations. She noted that there was no recommendation on the ADA component or whether the City was meeting it. Badalamenti replied that the City was required to work on a transition plan on programs and services last year, and was currently engaged in performing audits. Emery added the Facility ADA Plan was completed, and the Program Plan audit must be done. Badalamenti summarized the recommendation was to comply with the ADA.

Griffiths said annexation for parks needed more work, and said she could provide missing language. She highlighted Land Dedication Policy on page 218; Rochefort explained that staff discussed with the City attorney about making the language more enforceable. The department relies on SDC's or offsets, rather than a land dedication. Emery added the City Attorney ruled today that the department was not allowed to tap into one of the recommendations regarding SDC's, so that section will be deleted from the Plan.

Griffiths said it wasn't clear whether it was a five-year plan or a ten-year plan; Badalamenti replied that Master Plans typically are updated every five to six years or so, since conditions change. This plan is a ten-year vision, with longer recommendations beyond the five-year mark. The first $23.5 million in the CIP alone could take at least ten years to accomplish, but could be phased over time. Griffiths commented that to get SDC reimbursement, something must be within the Plan.

Badalamenti noted the CIP was very aspirational. Emery explained that the SDC methodology could be changed to an annual update, noting that Public Works gives an update to the Council annually, as do the other types of SDC's. Rochefort said the department could designate it a ten-year plan, and update the CIP list, saying that SDC items must be shown in a plan. Emery said that another recommendation could be updating the CIP list.

Griffiths highlighted the proposal on page 220 to create a true Parks Zone in the Land Development Code. Griffiths asked whether the long list of Funding Opportunities were ideas or recommendations; Badalamenti replied that they were ideas- some in the Trails section are specific to trails. Griffiths said a short-term recommendation on a senior center was needed in order to try to protect and preserve more on-street parking specifically for day-to-day use of the center, since the City is now considering designing and implementing new parking districts near the university. Liaison Hirsch added that about five parking districts were being considered. Griffiths will submit specific language.

Griffiths highlighted page 225 regarding Owens Farm, cautioning against using the word "rebuild"; Rochefort will check that.

Bogatin asked about the "pet friendly" section on page 226, asking if there was a standard; Badalamenti replied that there was no standard, and that a better yardstick was looking at how a community feels about its own capacity; the NRBA standard was never adopted and all systems have their own values. She said Corvallis definitely needs more off-leash areas and designated areas within parks. Griffiths questioned that, saying that Corvallis had more dog areas than any other comparable city in Oregon; Badalamenti suggested designating areas within parks in order to promote walkable use within the system to avoid people having to drive to walk their dog; this is a national trend and there is demand. Griffiths highlighted a pattern of conflicts between users in dog off-leash areas; Badalamenti replied that dog off-leash areas are typically fenced to avoid such conflicts. Griffiths said there needed to be clarification, since adding off-leash areas in neighborhoods could increase existing problems with dogs.

Griffiths asked if Patricia Benner's testimony had been considered; Badalamenti replied that she'd seen them. Griffiths summarized that Benner and Tony Howell highlighted protection of natural areas and

how to strike a balance; Badalamenti said the trail consultant had a recommendation in Chapter 7. Rochefort added that there was discussion by the technical team to potentially use larger trail connections to get to natural areas, but did not view natural features as constraints, but to treat them differently, with a narrower profile for trails, such as using a boardwalk. After the last board meeting, there was discussion about strengthening protection by siting trails to and through natural features by considering and reflecting s natural feature's degree of protection in the inventory.

Emery asked for feedback on Howell's page 3 recommendations regarding Regional and Connector Trails; Hays replied that Howell and Benner's point is that the priority should be protecting a natural feature, not trails or other management activities. Rochefort said the stakeholder team tried to capture that; she suggested using language "secondary trails *can* be used", not *may* be used; Griffiths said she heard consensus on this change. Rochefort said we are not saying we will stay out of them, but would not recommend *large* Regional and Connector trail connections through them. Vomocil added that incidental crossings of natural areas should be allowed, since they had little impact.

Griffiths highlighted Howell's language on page 4 of his testimony, fourth paragraph, regarding page 78, but advocated replacing with word *conceptual* with "*general*" or "*general preliminary alignment*", saying use of *conceptual* had caused problems. She said usage of the word *optimal*, the replacement for *conceptual*, should also be replaced.

Griffiths said Howell's testimony regarding page 81, on differentiating Recreational and Transportation paths, was hard to understand. Rochefort added that there would be conversations at the Director level to try to resolve this, but Parks trails are for recreational purposes, though that does not preclude people using them for general transportation. She said that Development staff said this plan was newer and so would take precedent, and she expected some fine-tuning. She explained that those larger trails, also shown in the Transportation Plan, are seen as important for recreational uses, but they *are* multiuse in character. Griffiths asked whether these trail revisions would show up in the Transportation Plan. Hays related that the County Parks, Natural Areas and Recreation Board had also encountered the tension in trying to accommodate two separate plans for transportation- one essentially for people trying to commute rapidly on bikes and the other for people walking with strollers. Rochefort related that Public Works was unable to refine its Transportation Plan at the same time as this Plan. She added that it was possible that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) or others could advocate differently in a public hearing.

Hays commented that surveys found that many people wanted more trails and open space; however, there was little about natural areas in the Plan. Natural areas change with time and there must be a more active management to prevent loss of characteristics in these areas. There is an excellent plan for Herbert Natural Area that addresses it well. Badalamenti said the CIP includes money set aside for development of management plans, and that natural areas were included as part of the section on "Priority Areas that have Cultural and Historic Significance". Griffiths commented that there were no specific recommendations in Chapter 7 for natural areas.

Hays said the City was now a partner with the County's Habitat Conservation Plan, which has specific requirements to protect natural areas and threatened and endangered species; Badalamenti said the Plan referenced this. Rochefort added that the separate Operations Plan includes it as well; Assistant Director Steve DeGhetto said this plan references development of the management plan but not specific cultural practices for natural areas. Emery explained that the Operations Plan includes standards for how to operate parks, and specific management plans are written for each natural area property.

Bogatin asked if there was special consideration for trails or parks in areas of potential flooding; Rochefort replied that regulations for development in flood plains must be followed. Bogatin noted that trails or parks that are periodically flooded were in fact less usable; Badalamenti replied that areas that can't be used as a park were discounted in scoring.

Griffiths asked that the outdated phrase "passive recreation" be replaced by "*structured* or *programmed* recreation" throughout the plan. Griffiths said she will submit her recommendations.

Badalamenti encouraged board members to attend the HSC hearing to express support for its plan. Emery suggested Badalamenti make the presentation and then have board member make comments.

Emery said the boards' comments could be incorporated, and that she heard support for Howell's recommendations on trails.

Soule moved the board supported the master plan process, including approval of the staff taking into consideration testimony and refinements reflecting board and public comments tonight, as the Plan goes forward to the HSC on September 17, 2013; Hays seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Emery noted that the public would have several more opportunities to give input.

VI. PARKS, NATURAL AREAS AND RECREATION BOARD GOALS.

Ed MacMullan related that he, Lynda Wolfenbarger, Tatiana Dierwechter, and Josh Baur met as the Outreach, Education, and Advocacy Subcommittee last week, with Betty Griffiths sitting in, and had a brainstorming session; he asked members to review the meeting notes.

VII. STAFF REPORT.

DeGhetto highlighted summer camp at Rock Creek. The Youth Volunteer Corps has been very popular this summer, even with the new fees for it. Preparation for fall softball is underway. He will bring nutritional guidelines for Parks and Rec programs to the September meeting.

Sharon Bogdanovich highlighted several Senior Center events, including a barbeque, a luau, and an ice cream social, with business donating materials to help keep prices low. The expanded rentals of five designated outdoor spaces around Chintimini Park are popular; temporary fencing is used during the events, such as family reunions and wedding receptions. In its first year, 561 Gold Pass annual memberships were sold. National Senior Center Month is in September, and will feature several free class sessions to encourage new participants.

Planner Rochefort said the Rotary-sponsored picnic shelter at Willamette Park was almost complete, saying that Director Emery is planning the grand opening for September 12. The park at Coronado is complete and now the property ownership must be transferred to the department. Restoration of the "Dinosaur Bones" play structure is mostly complete. The Avery Park Rose Garden is adding a pavilion in the central plaza, and will be hosting a wedding next week. Bidding will go out tomorrow for the Tunison Park improvements.

Operations Supervisor Jude Geist related that Civic Beautification and Urban Forestry Advisory Commission (CBUF) recently recommended that City Council Liaison Joel Hirsch take to the Council two proposals for tree preservation. These include "Tree for a Fee", an alternative to the current practice of developers installing right-of-way street trees at their cost during development, which would allow developers the option to instead pay the City to have Parks plant and establish those trees. This would

allow the City to plant trees properly and with proper watering, and at the right time of year, giving the trees a better chance of survival.

Direction is also sought from the Council for another tree proposal, which would institute appraised value for removing existing street trees, so that if development removes a mature right-of-way tree, the developer would have to pay its appraised value or provide improvements to help offset the cost. He noted that monetary incentive of not having to pay the cost of removing a mature tree could protect more mature trees, which are assets for the City; other cities are successfully using the approach. If a mature tree is replaced with a new 2”-caliper tree, they would still have to pay the difference in value, though they can get further credits for enhancing the planting area so that the new tree has a better chance of thriving (such as a bigger root zone). Geist said staff have been discussing the proposals with Community Development for several months. The appraisal takes into account a number of factors, including the location of the tree, its health, its species, whether the tree is in the right place, whether it is a desirable tree species, etc. Geist said staff are requesting the Council give a go-ahead on further investigating the proposals.

VIII. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT. None.

IX. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS.

Griffiths highlighted that two board vacancies were being filled by Ralph Alig, a forest economist, and Michael Mayes, with a background in non-profits and social services.

X. VISITORS’ PROPOSITIONS. None.

XI. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.