



**Parks Master Plan
Steering Committee Meeting #13
Parks Training Room
September 18, 2007 @ 7pm**

Present: Katia Gauvin, Dennis Seed, Hal Gibbard, Larry Hutchings, Bob Yates ,
Consultant; Pam Madoff, Councillor; Alison Meyer, Planner;
Gary Darrah, Manager -Park Development

Regrets: Vernon Wiebe, Helen Tremaine

Absent: Bryan Melnyk

1. Update on Children and Youth Involvement from Cornelia Lange:

- Cornelia gave an update on her observations of activities in the parks
- Why children are where they are/using which parks?
- Cornelia will analyze this information and compile a report for the Committee
- Cornelia will also compile a report from the September 22 'Parks 4 Us' forum and submit to the Parks Master Plan Committee
- Cornelia will be on CBC Radio Sept 20 at 8am
- Currently there is only a few children registered for the September 22 forum, the Committee discussed and agreed that children outside of the City of Victoria could attend as they still would be visiting City parks
- Cornelia reviewed the itinerary for the 'Parks 4 Us' forum
- Youths will represent themselves at the forum
- Younger children will have facilitators
- Alison confirmed which members of the Committee will be in attendance on September 22nd
- In the afternoon, the Forum's panel will participate in a discussion and their recommendations will be forward to the Parks Master Plan Committee
- One of the Committee members brought up two newspaper articles (Sept 11 in the Times-Colonist, the other Sept 18th Globe and Mail)...trends in playground equipment

2. Presentation from Bob Yates regarding Random Survey Results

- Committee members were sent draft of survey results
- Bob summed up some of the key results
- Most parks were used by respondents either once a week or everyday with the exception of Topaz Park
- This result may be affected by Topaz Park's location (near Saanich/Victoria border) and seen by Public as a regional park or because the park sees a good deal of usage by organized sport groups
- Barriers to park use: #1- lack of time; #2 social issues & #3 safety concerns

- Lack of time- How do you get people to make going to a park a priority in their lifestyle?
- Question regarding park strategies: Respondents not very supportive of 1) more sportsfields & 2) more off-leash dog areas
- Question regarding financing: Respondents want to see more collaboration (ie: with CRD, School Districts, other Municipalities, not-for-profit agencies and strategic/corporate agencies)
- Question regarding funding: More than 50% of respondents favoured support parks by a \$10+ increase to their taxes
- Barriers for youth: #1- lack of time; #2 scary people in parks & #3 parents won't let them go to parks on their own

3. Ideas for Recommendations based on Random Survey and other Community Consultation

a.) Develop youth programs in parks – What should this consist of? Survey done on Lower Mainland/Vancouver.....youths want more physical activity.ages 9 to 12

b.) Need to address social/safety issues in parks

- Program activities
- Provide an alternative location for social issues to occur
- Park matrons
- Research how other cities with these problems dealt successfully with these social issues
- Parks are barren not enough programs run in parks
- Need facilities to draw 'users' to this space
- Re-invigorate parks..natural areas, restorations, upgrade facilities
- Partnership with neighbouring businesses
- Establish neighbourhood watch for parks
- Enhance sense of ownership in parks
- Community Gardens – these make people have to attend the park on a regular basis
- Design exercise 'parks' for seniors
- Establish regular 'teaching/programming' in parks
- Create a strong network of 'Friends of.....' for parks

c.) Make Topaz Park more inviting to local neighbourhood

- Establish a perimeter walking route with plantings
- Link up with local schools
- Open up fence along Blanshard street ie: install a gate or two

d.) Establish access to outlying natural areas along Galloping Goose and E & N corridors....greenways

e.) *Encourage a sense of ownership in parks and promote physical activity at the same time*

- encourage natural aspect of parks ie: with interpretative activities/educational programs
- Strategies: 'Friends of.....'
- Partner with walking groups
- Establish walking routes
- Programs for seniors
- Partner with Canadian Participaction program
- Utilize in-house ability to do tours: native plant tours/walks, regular programs offered by the City and held in parks

f.) *Convert under-utilized sport facilities to other uses/facilities ie: underused tennis court to ball hockey or chessboard*

- Use the usual strategies including capital budget, partnering, etc.
- Tell Recreation Staff about underused facilities so they can program

g.) *Facilitate youth using parks for casual/informal activities i.e.: to meet friends*

- encourage this by using modified 'playground' equipment
- Provide Youth with a graffiti wall??? Spill over effect to community as items get tagged enroute to wall and when leaving
- Encourage more special events in parks i.e.: car shows

h.) *Promote linkages between Parks*

- Expedite Greenways development in parks system and linkages
 - Strategies: Budget
 - Coordinate Engineering and Parks efforts re: boulevards
 - Highlight boulevards/greenways widen/improve boulevards
- Engineering is working on a Pedestrian Master Plan.....need to coordinate with Parks Master Plan
- Involve Community Associations-----'Friends of Boulevards'

i.) *Develop a Parks Acquisition Plan*

- Gary pointed out that during the public meetings attendees voiced the need for a Parks acquisition plan, however, in the Parks Survey respondents were satisfied with the number of parks in the City of Victoria
- Committee agreed that parks need to be acquired in those areas identified as deficient in 'parks'.....need to develop a strategic acquisition plan

Recommendations will continue next meeting starting with need for more washrooms in parks

4. Review draft Principles from April 3rd Meeting

- Tabled until next meeting

5. Update on other work in progress

- None

6. Next meeting date: October 1,2007 7pm

Committee members were requested to come up with three important recommendations for Parks Master Plan....should stress or be tied into data from survey or information gleaned during public meetings.

7. Meeting adjourned: 9:30pm