



**Parks Master Plan
Steering Committee Meeting #5
Parks Training Room
February 20, 2007 7pm**

Present: Larry Hutchings, Bryan Melynk, Dennis Seed, Helen Tremaine,
Lynette Hiebert, Hal Gibbard, Katia Gauvin, Councillor Pam Madoff

Staff: Alison Meyer, Planner; Gary Darrah, Manager – Park Development,
Deirdre Peters, Recording Secretary

Regrets: Vernon Wiebe

Three member of the Public sat in on the meeting

1. Review of Agenda

- Agenda reviewed and accepted with additions to General Discussion: heritage items (ie trees/buildings), urban forest and public art.

2. Debrief Field Trip

- Members all thought it was well planned, well organized and well scheduled
- Inventory viewed was diverse but didn't include open spaces with the exception of Centennial Square (Bastion Square missing)
- What is the role that Squares play: open space/connectors?
- Lack of signage directing people to the Parks
- Medians and Boulevards not included (ie: Pandora Green)
- Missed out some connectors/walkways (ie: West Song Walkway)
- Gaps between waterfront parks- Are there plans to connect them?
- How social problems affect parks and how they develop
- Off-Leash areas (saw only Topaz and Redfern Parks)
- No signage in Parks with the "you are here"
- For signage that exists, the print size is difficult to read
- Interesting to discover the rationale behind different playground coverings ie: use of rubberized material makes it easier to spot/clean up needles, etc.
- Urban Forest: certain species are expiring
- Factors impacting on Park Development/Why some parks are underdeveloped
- Determining which specific category a park falls into: neighbourhood/community/regional park
- Surprised by the amount of graffiti on park signage
- Interested in how parks were acquired by the City
- How does zoning impact a park?
- How do views & characteristics of a park impact how it is used?

3. Review “Trends Exercise” and “Vision Exercise”

- Alison reviewed: Best Park in the World Exercise, the brainstorming on trends and factors, and the Visioning/ Rainbow Exercise.

4. Trial Run of “Actions Necessary to Achieve Vision and Prioritization”

This was a brainstorming exercise combined with prioritization of the most important aspects to spend the dollars/budget on

- Secure greenspace without losing any of the current inventory
- Banking land for later - idea of a land bank
- Land swaps
- Develop a ‘system plan’ for acquiring park we need both capital dollars for acquisitions and operating dollars for maintenance
- Public involvement and awareness...involve the community
- Continued dialogue
- Looking beyond the ‘traditional models’ of parks....doesn’t have to be a large area---places that facilitate public gatherings, or connectors between parks, use of boulevards
- Partnerships
- Parks Operations: enhanced volunteerism, maintenance stewardships, partnerships with outside groups
- Encourage planned giving/legacies....Legacy Planning create/improve Public awareness of this option
- Expand the role of the Parks and Recreation Foundation
- Keep in mind demographics and developing trends
- Monitor the overall management of the Parks system
- Establish an overall Parks System Plan with various subsections
- Create an ongoing standing committee ie: Parks Advisory Committee, to pay attention to and implement the Parks System Plan
- Ensure a connection between Parks System Plan and other plans: ie: Greenways plan and Urban Forestry plan
- Include work of outside agencies ie: GOERT
- Develop a Property Acquisition Strategy....identify which properties that the City would like to acquire for parkland/greenspace
- Ask people: “What is a Parks system?”

Part way thru the Steering Committee began to debrief the exercise.

- Some thought exercise was confusing and not sure what it would accomplish, to others it yielded useful information.
- What was its goal?
- Should the Committee be asking this question at this point? Ditch it or reword it? Decision was to keep question but restrict it to a 10minute exercise.

- Question may be reword to “What is the ideal Parks System and How do you achieve it?”
- Committee discussed the goal of March 17th event....goal is to gather information so that Committee can start writing principle goals to guide ‘the plan’.
- Decision made to include the three questions asked at first Public Parks Master Plan meeting and inform the March group why.
- What is the Parks Division doing that you like?
- What is the Parks Division doing that you don’t like?
- What should the Parks Division be doing that they are not or what should they be doing?
- Group discussed giving the participants a question to react to ie: What happens if XXX park were to close?

It was agreed that the exercise needed some fine tuning and could perhaps be limited to a 10 minute brainstorming exercise

5. Trial Run Exit Survey

- Group decided that instead of “items” to choose from it would be better if handout asked people to choose five “activities you like to do in parks” and list will be amended accordingly.
- Should it be an exit survey or part of group activity ---agree on exit survey
- Questions 1 & 2 remove the word – ‘system’
- Questions 1 & 2 replace ‘things’ with ‘aspects’
- Question 2 reword to “you would like to change *or improve* about....”
- Include a question re: ‘Did you find the session useful?’ so sort of evaluation of the session
- Include a question on the communication process: ie consultation with citizens and the best way to share/communicate information.

6. General Discussion about Exercises and March 17th Event

- What is the role of the Parks and Recreation Foundation?
- Is it an important role and how does it fit in to the development of the Parks Master Plan?
- Possibly invite Chair and/or Committee members to meeting.
- Provide march 17th participants with Parks and Recreation Foundation brochure
- How does Parks Division work? And how do various Committees fit in?
- Discussion re: keynote speaker and his speech; what will it involve?
- Keynote speech will discuss/give examples of what other municipalities/cities are developing for their areas
- New ideas with focus on urban settings
- Alison will discuss with Douglas the concept of incorporating the term ‘system’ and what is meant by it and its interrelated parts

ACTION: Alison

- Need to think of a system as a whole, no longer parks and parks acquisitions on an ad hoc approach
- Parks need to be managed to meet peoples' needs
- Idea of substituting the word 'system' with 'model' Ideal Park Model
- Committee members to consider what roles they will play on March 17th
- Following roles required:
 - registration table – sign in participants and hand out material
 - Assist/usher people to designated tables
- Idea to break up individuals whom arrive in groups is to pull tickets which assign people to specific tables.....encourages diversity at tables
 - Help with posting flipchart sheets to walls
 - Taking photographs
 - Organizing food/drink
 - Assisting with performance artist(s)
 - Need help with creating material for meeting ie: rainbow, cut out Park coins, etc.
- Poster for event will be out later this week and distributed

ACTION: Alison

7. General Discussion

- Ensuring that Greenways Plan is tied into Parks Master Plan
- Ensuring that heritage items are taken care off and integrated into the system
- Ensuring that the Urban Forest strategic plan works in conjunction with Parks Master Plan
- Develop an "Open Space" plan? a broader policy that incorporates the Greenway plan, Natural Areas plan, Public Art plan, Parks Master plan
- Don't redo any of these but acknowledge them within the Parks Master Plan.
- None of these related Plans should be in isolation but should be linked together

8. Next meeting date:

- March 6, 2007