

**CITY OF BELLEVUE
PARKS & COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday
November 10, 2020
6:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Trescases, Vice-Chair Hamilton, Boardmembers Clark, Heath, Kumar, Synn, Unger

COUNCILMEMBER PRESENT: Councilmember Zahn

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Betsy Anderson, Pam Fehrman, Nancy Harvey, Camron Parker, Michael Shiosaki, Scott Vander Hyden, Michael Austin (Community Development)

MINUTES TAKER: Michelle Cash

1. **CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Trescases at 6:02 p.m.

2. **TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF BYLAWS:**

Chair Trescases announced that there are a few procedural items that need to be addressed. She explained that because in-person meetings are prohibited by the Governor's emergency order concerning the Open Public Meetings Act, the Board will be holding its meetings remotely for an unknown period of time. Chair Trescases reminded Boardmembers that the Board's Bylaws regarding remote participation and the order of business have been suspended until such time as the Board is no longer holding its meetings remotely.

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Motion by Boardmember Synn and second by Boardmember Unger to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Boardmember Clark and second by Boardmember Kumar to approve the October 13, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

5. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

Heidi Dean
Bellevue, WA

Ms. Dean said that it is important to consider that in light of COVID-related budget deficits, the Parks CIP projects are put on hold. Ms. Dean suggested that the Newport Hills Park be postponed to save money and allow the City time for naming the park. She said that the Newport Hills Community Club was never approached for feedback with naming, from an historical perspective. The history the City gained was from Newcastle, not Newport Hills. She suggested naming the park “Shannon’s Glen” after Shannon O’Neil.

6. **COMMUNICATION FROM CITY COUNCIL:**

Councilmember Zahn provided the following report:

- Several acres of additional park land were acquired—additional details will be provided during the Director’s Report.
- The PSRC Executive Board discussed moving the NE 8th crossing project into the Eastrail Plan.
- Celebrated a planning award for Wilburton Commercial Area Study. This was a collaboration in which a Parks Boardmember participated.
- Excited about the Grand Connection Framework.

7. **DIRECTOR’S REPORT:**

Mr. Shiosaki provided the following report:

- Bellevue achieved reaccreditation from CAPRA and met all of the 151 standards on which the City was evaluated. Kudos to all Parks staff, especially: Tony Esparza and Collin Walker for their assistance.
- The NE Corner Project at Downtown Park is approximately 60% complete. The project will hopefully be complete in Spring 2021 with the artwork being placed by early Fall 2021.
- Bellevue is finalizing details to acquire a forested area near Weowna Park.

Boardmember Hamilton asked if there would be an event for the Downtown Park’s NE Gateway grand opening. Mr. Shiosaki hopes that an event can be planned once the entrance is complete.

Vice-Chair Hamilton congratulated staff on their efforts with the accreditation process. He also asked how the Parks Department fared through the City’s budget process. Mr. Shiosaki said that there were reductions throughout the Parks Department, except for Human Services. However, the overall Parks system has been kept whole.

Boardmember Unger asked if there are any updates or changes expected related to REI’s withdrawal for their headquarters in Bellevue. Mr. Parker clarified that the activity rentals would

presumably continue, if allowed, next summer—the contract is currently being negotiated for next year.

Chair Trescases asked where the historical high school arch will be located in Downtown Park. Mr. Shiosaki said that the arch will be installed in the formal garden.

8. **BOARD COMMUNICATIONS:**

Vice-Chair Hamilton enjoyed the following parks over the past month:

- Bellevue Botanical Gardens
- Wilburton Hill Park
- Kelsey Creek Park

Boardmember Kumar provided the following report:

- Enjoyed many trails and open space throughout the parks—also enjoyed the fall colors

Boardmember Synn congratulated staff on a successful reaccreditation.

Boardmember Clark provided the following report:

- Visited Downtown Park
- Visited Goddard Park
- Highlighted a document regarding the Bel-Red Plan (sent from Camron Parker)

Boardmember Unger enjoyed the following parks over the past month:

- Surrey Downs Park—great to see the playground open
- Downtown Park

9. **CHAIR COMMUNICATION & DISCUSSION:**

Chair Trescases discussed her daughter's virtual school Veteran's Day celebration that was conducted via Zoom. She also explained that one of the Bellevue Rotarian Members, Tim Motts, is the new President/CEO of the Bellevue Girls & Boys Club. Mr. Motts recently shared with Chair Trescases how impressed he is with the Inspiration Playground at Downtown Park—kudos to the Parks Department.

10. **BOARDMEMBER/COMMITTEE/LIAISON REPORTS:**

No reports.

11. **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**

A. **Newport Hills Neighborhood Park Naming Opportunity**

Ms. Fehrman reviewed the Park Naming Policy, the Newport Hills area park naming processes, and shared community preferences to support the Park Board's deliberations towards recommending a name for Bellevue's newest neighborhood park to Council. She noted that the Board can choose to recommend a community-suggested name, or a name not previously identified. The new park name must comply with the City's Naming Policy. Community name preferences are an important consideration; however, additional deliberation may include other criteria.

Mr. Vander Hyden highlighted a map of the preferred Park Plan. He reminded Boardmembers that in December 2018 the City Council approved the 2019-25 CIP budget that included \$3 million to plan, design and construct a new neighborhood park in Newport Hills. The park planning process began in May 2019 and concluded with a Board recommendation and Council's support of a park plan in December 2019. Mr. Vander Hyden added that the planning process included three community meetings, two Parks & Community Services Board meetings, and a Council Meeting. The public meetings were well attended, and staff received great feedback throughout the planning process. During the planning process, the community was asked for park name suggestions.

Mr. Vander Hyden clarified the Park Naming Policy, which states:

Council Resolution No. 8229 sets forth policies and procedures for naming public parks and recreation facilities. Council normally selects a park name after receiving a recommendation from the Parks Board, which is based upon public input using the following criteria:

- *a neighborhood or geographical identification;*
- *a natural feature;*
- *a historical figure or name of historical or cultural significance; or*
- *an individual or group that has made a significant contribution to the park system.*

Mr. Vander Hyden said that to help narrow name preferences and understand the community's preferences, an online survey was conducted between September 7 and October 19, 2020. The request to participate in the survey was sent to those who had signed-up to be notified of updates on the City of Bellevue, new Newport Hills area park website (over 1,200 community members are notified when the website is updated). Staff also worked to update the Newport Hills Community Club website, Next Door, and posted a sign at the new park site requesting participation in the park naming survey.

Mr. Vander Hyden explained that online survey respondents were asked to select their top three name choices in order of preference. The website and survey also communicated that a popular voting exercise would not be the basis of name selection; however, both the Parks & Community Services Board and City Council would appreciate including the community's preferences in their deliberations. Approximately 203 survey responses were received, indicating the top

preferred names of: Newport Hills Neighborhood Park, Ringdall Park, Newport Hills Sunset Park, Newport Woods Park, Newport Hilltop Park, and Happy Trails Park.

Mr. Vander Hyden provided an overview of the neighborhood historical figures (Borghild Ringdall—adjacent school property and historic figure; Shannon O’Neil—neighborhood historic figure; and Chip Hanauer—neighborhood historic figure). Mr. Vander Hyden also noted that the Newport area was once rich in the coal industry with the rail station running from Lake Washington to what is now the Coal Creek Parkway. The geographical and environmental identifiers were also highlighted.

Mr. Vander Hyden explained that staff anticipates sharing the Parks & Community Services Board’s new name recommendation with Council for their consideration and adoption in early 2021. Park construction documentation, environmental and land use permits are in process and park construction is expected to begin summer 2021.

Discussion:

- Boardmember Unger: 1) for any of the names, have background checks been conducted to make sure that naming a park after a specific person is appropriate; 2) of parks that have been named in the area, how many have been named after men versus women; 3) do parks that have a historical name associated with them come with a historical plaque?
Response: 1) With the current name recommendations, a Google search has been conducted but not a background check. A background check is not typically conducted but can be conducted. 2) There is one park named after a woman, and there are other parks named after families (i.e., Winter’s House). 3) An effort is made to interpret places and names (i.e., if coal mining is referenced would try to incorporate this into the design of the park as well as interpretive information).
- Boardmember Clark asked for additional clarification about the survey results.
Response: A weighted average of survey responses resulted in: Newport Hills Neighborhood Park was #1, Ringdall Park #2, and Newport Hills Sunset Park #3.
- Boardmember Clark asked if respondents of the survey were Bellevue residents.
Response: Survey respondents that provided address information were primarily Bellevue residents but the list was not closely scrutinized. A more in-depth analysis can be conducted if requested.
- Boardmember Clark asked if the potential usage of a coal-related name is more specific to the Coal Creek area versus Newport Hills.
- Boardmember Kumar would like a better sense of where the survey results came from—she wants to be sure the Newport Hills community is represented.

- Boardmember Synn asked if there is any demographic information for the Newport area.
Response: an overview of the demographic information for the Newport Hills area was provided. The research was from 2010 statistics and showed statistics for approximately 8,500 people with White and Asian being the primary race and ethnicity.
- Boardmember Clark asked if there are impacts to staff if a decision is postponed.
Response: staff would prefer a name recommendation, but the Board can postpone the decision if preferred.
- Chair Trescases encouraged a historical name for the park.
- Boardmember Synn would like strong consideration of the community's feedback. He also wants a historical name considered.
- Vice-Chair Hamilton does not think that including Newport Hills in the name is the best option for the community. He thinks that it would be nice to make this a distinctive park, since there are other properties with "Newport Hills" in the name. Vice-Chair Hamilton added that Patrick Foran embodied the Park's mission and fully represented the park's ideals. Vice-Chair Hamilton suggested that Boardmembers consider naming the park after former Parks Director, Patrick Foran.
- Boardmember Unger prefers "Ringdall Park," after a background check has been conducted. She likes the historical significance of the name, as well as the name being similar to the nearby school. Boardmember Unger is concerned with "Newport" being part of the park name and that this may be confusing to community members. She also supports naming a park after Patrick Foran, although prefers naming a park after a deceased person.
- Boardmember Clark prefers "Ringdall Park" as the name, with a background check. If this is preferred he would like historical information included at the park about Mrs. Ringdall. Boardmember Clark also supports "Ying Chun" as the Park's name as well.
- Boardmember Kumar supports the name "Ringdall Park" but would like to add Mrs. Ringdall's first name. She also does not see the Chinese names fitting within the historical guidelines. However, interpretive signs could be added to incorporate some of these names and elements. Boardmember Kumar is opposed to adding another "Newport Hills" park name.
- Councilmember Zahn expressed her appreciation for the thoughtful process of the Parks Board. Because the park is a neighborhood park, she suggested that the Board may want to focus on a neighborhood name. She suggested "Patrick Foran" or another name could be incorporated into a different park.
- Boardmember Heath expressed his support of "Newport Hills Neighborhood Park," since the surrounding community stressed the importance of this park being a neighborhood park. He does not favor naming the park "Ringdall Park," since there is already a school named after Ringdall. In regards to naming the park after Patrick Foran, there is currently not a park named after Lee Springgate, or other Parks Directors that have made an impact.

Boardmember Heath likes the idea of historical markers in the park and prefers parks named after features and locations, not people.

- Chair Trescases prefers a name that does not include “Newport Hills;” however, she prefers the neighborhood concept and could incorporate this to any park name. Chair Trescases noted that Mrs. Ringdall already has a school named after her—the school is a swing school and sometimes called Highland or Tillicum; therefore, the Ringdall name could potentially go away. If Ringdall is preferred, Chair Trescases would want research conducted, including a conversation with the school district. She appreciates the suggestion of “Patrick Foran” but would want to honor all of the amazing parks directors as well. She is also intrigued by the Chinese name but noticed it had few supporters. Chair Trescases thinks that a lot more engagement with cultural communities is necessary if a cultural name is desired.
- Boardmember Clark is concerned that the “Ringdall” name may not be strongly associated with the Newport Hills area.
- Boardmember Kumar supports “Newport Woods Park” as the name.
- Boardmember Unger supports adding the area name for the park (i.e., “Newport Hills”). She would also like to research the “Ringdall” name, if preferred.
- Councilmember Zahn explained that in the Park Naming Policy, it specifies that “Neighborhood Park” does not have to be part of the name. However, often times, the geographical area within the park’s name is helpful.
- Chair Trescases would like to research “Ringdall Park” as the name consideration, since it was selected as second on the survey.

Motion by Boardmember Clark and second by Boardmember Kumar to recommend that City Council adopt “Borghild Ringdall Neighborhood Park” as the preferred park name for the new park in Newport Hills.

Boardmembers discussed the research necessary for naming the park after Borghild Ringdall (i.e., school district’s plans and background check). Boardmember Unger expressed concern with adding Mrs. Ringdall’s first name because of the difficulty pronouncing the name.

Vice-Chair Hamilton and Boardmember Kumar view “Borghild Ringdall Park” as a bit difficult to say. However, they support “Ringdall” in the name.

Boardmember Clark views the location and wayfinding within the name important.

At the question, motion carried (6-1).

Staff will research the school district’s plans and any background information on Mrs. Ringdall, and will provide this to the Park Board at a future meeting.

B. Grand Connection Sequence One Guidelines and Standards

Betsy Anderson expressed her appreciation to the Community Development Department, Development Services, and the Transportation Department for their collaborative efforts with the Grand Connection project.

Michael Austin explained that in December 2015, the Bellevue City Council approved the work plan for the Grand Connection planning initiative and identified it as a Council Priority. The visioning for the Grand Connection began in April 2016 to develop high-level strategies regarding aesthetic enhancements such as paving, weather protection, intersections, art and culture, and vegetation; as well as concepts for key public space locations and mobility.

Mr. Austin clarified that the Grand Connection's scope of work was separated into two sequences: Sequence One addresses changes and improvements to existing infrastructure between the intersection of 100th Avenue NE and Main Street and the Civic Center District (the area in the vicinity of City Hall). Sequence Two addresses the crossing of Interstate 405 and its interface with Downtown, the future vision of the Wilburton Commercial Area, and the Eastrail.

Mr. Austin noted that between 2017-2018, the Parks & Community Services Board provided comments on the development of the Grand Connection Framework Plan, transmitted in two memos to City Council that were included in the Board's packet. Recommendations related to design guidelines included encouraging the development of a cohesive and strong sense of identity, encouraging spaces that could facilitate gathering and events, promoting a robust ecological framework, advancing accessibility and inclusion, and seeking opportunities to highlight the City's history and heritage.

In 2019, staff launched the development of the Grand Connection Sequence One Guidelines and Standards that will be integrated into the Downtown Land Use Code as one strategy for implementing elements from the Grand Connection Framework Plan. As one tool of many to implement the vision for the Grand Connection, guidelines and standards will offer direction on key features of the route as development occurs, including an ecological framework for landscape treatments along the corridor, paving treatments, color, furnishings, pedestrian lighting, and the design intent of different blocks within downtown. Mr. Austin noted that the design intent for each block, or "room" as referenced in the draft content, will serve to encourage a variety of context-specific experiences along the Grand Connection in addition to the common features that populate the full route. This context-specific approach will preserve the unique character-defining elements of different rooms within the Grand Connection, for example Old Bellevue and Downtown Park, while encouraging strategies that create a sense of identity for the corridor as a whole. Additionally, staff is working with developers in the review of current private-sector development applications/projects along the route.

In 2020, Mr. Austin stated that staff performed an audit of the Pedestrian Corridor and Major Public Open Space Guidelines and the Downtown Land Use Code and conducted a precedent analysis to identify opportunities to reduce redundant policies and guidelines, highlight existing guidelines that could remain, and capture best practices.

Mr. Austin reviewed images of a draft Transit Central Diagram that included seating, wayfinding, opportunities for sidewalk trees and under planting, etc. The draft Garden Hillclimb Diagram included lush planting selections, while also incorporating artistic expression and new lighting. Compass Plaza included opportunities for an active year-round pedestrian experience, built-in seating, raised planters, and embedded lighting. The Street Diagram included a high level of visual and physical porosity with various doors, green walls with climbing vegetation, unique artistry, and wayfinding.

Motion by Boardmember Clark and second by Boardmember Kumar to extend the meeting until 9:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Mr. Austin noted that the next steps include: 1) complete internal review of draft guidelines/standards; 2) continue with external engagement “testing”; 3) summarize/incorporate feedback into draft for Planning Commission review this fall/winter.

Mr. Austin clarified that there will be future opportunities for the Parks Board to be involved with connected planning efforts, including:

- Lake-to-Lake Trail Design Guidelines
- Civic Center Master Plan
- I-405 Freeway Lid Feasibility Study
- Meydenbauer Bay Park Phase 2
- Downtown Wayfinding Update
- Wilburton Initiatives: Eastrail Framework and Code and Policy Update
- Grand Connection Sequence Two Guidelines and Standards

Discussion:

- Vice-Chair Hamilton expressed his appreciation for the presentation and knowing where the Parks Board will be involved. He also asked for clarification regarding funding.
Response: the guidelines and standards are mainly to help guide the private projects that are being constructed along the corridor. Most of the work currently being conducted is not included in the CIP.
- Boardmember Clark asked if specific changes to the guidelines should be expected.
Response: Because there are parcels on private property in the Grand Connection, adopting the standards will provide the code structure as a resource to provide a cohesive look. This might also provide some unique experiences.
- Boardmember Kumar expressed her enthusiasm for the Grand Connection to be complete. She asked for clarification on the City’s responsibility for the Grand Connection and the timeline for Sequence One.
Response: The standards and guidelines focus on the design of publicly accessible spaces—these may include sidewalk improvements with more rigor as well as ensuring that the building’s edge is complementary to the sidewalk space. Also, the Wayfinding Plan is still being evaluated. The timeline for

Sequence One was kicked off earlier this year and should continue into next Spring.

- Chair Trescases asked if incentives are part of the City's commitment process. She thought that the Pedestrian Corridor was supposed to be driven by developers. However, this was an effort that didn't quite happen.

Response: yes, there are various ways to encourage developers to follow the guidelines and standards. Various elements of how to encourage cohesiveness throughout the City were discussed. The guidelines and standards are one element to create a cohesive experience. The City is looking at ways to provide supplemental guidance that can serve as a reference, in addition to the regulatory code, to bring nature to life within the City.

Motion by Boardmember Clark and second by Boardmember Kumar to extend the meeting until 9:05 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

12. NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Parker updated Boardmembers about Board communications to City Council. This will be reviewed at the January 2021 Board meeting and will include a list of the 2020 accomplishments.

Councilmember Zahn explained that although this is noted in the Bylaws, this has not typically been sent to Council. She also would like to understand any gaps in the CIP so that these can be reflected to Council.

Motion by Boardmember Clark and second by Vice-Chair Hamilton to extend the meeting until 9:15 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Mr. Shiosaki said that the Parks Board approved 2021-2027 Parks Capital Investment Program memo to Mayor Robinson and City Councilmembers should be included in the Council packet in the near future.

13. PROPOSED AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:

Mr. Parker reported that a formal Board meeting will not be held in December 2020. However, an informal recognition event might be scheduled for the Parks Board.

14. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS:

A. Parks CIP Project Status Report

15. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Boardmember Unger and second by Boardmember Clark to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).