

M E E T I N G M I N U T E S #2

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| Project: | Pleasant Valley Park Master Plan Public Meeting #2 - June 08, 2004 |
| Date: | June 16, 2004 |
| Presenters: | Terry Snyder, Vancouver-Clark Parks & Rec. Carol Mayer-Reed, Mayer/Reed Alex Schwartz, Mayer/Reed |

The Vancouver-Clark Parks & Recreation Department is creating a master plan to guide future planning and design of improvements for Pleasant Valley Park. The master plan will consist of a preferred design alternative and supporting documentation.

Information was gathered and input received from the first Pleasant Valley Park public meeting held on April 13, 2004. At the June 8th meeting, two alternative concepts were presented for comment. The intent was to create encourage dialog about the collective ideas and concerns of Pleasant Valley School, Battle Ground School District, local youth sports programs, relative to residents of the Highlands neighborhood, and residents within a 3-mile radius of the park.

Alternative A

In this alternative, the focus was to address concerns voiced in the first meeting about traffic congestion and lack of parking, especially if an additional practice field is located in the park. Although there is congestion during drop-off and pick-up times at the school, it was recognized that parking availability is mainly an issue during the peak of the fall soccer season on Saturdays.

Alternative A showed an expanded, shared park/school parking lot that could accommodate up to a maximum of 106 new spaces. The alternative showed one soccer practice-only field centrally located in the park adjacent to the school's existing sports fields.

The plan showed a network of paved trails, including a loop trail, that formalizes existing walking routes throughout the upper part of the park. A formalized access / viewing point of Salmon Creek at the lower level off the existing trail was suggested to reduce bank erosion. On the west, a trail connection to the proposed Clark County Regional Trail along Salmon Creek and the Washington State University trail system was shown as a key opportunity.

Other park improvements were also shown. A park activity area with a restroom, play area, bike rack and benches was located on the upper level near the school district property. A re-vegetation scheme would remove lawn from portions of the grassed storm water detention basins on the site and replace it with grasses and shrubs. The intent of re-vegetation was to reduce maintenance, attract wildlife, and create more diversity of plantings in the park. In this alternative, no improvements, other than trails and creek viewpoint, were suggested for the lower portion of the site. The existing agricultural structure was removed.

Alternative B

Alternative B contained many of the same project elements but with some differences. No additional soccer field was shown on this concept. A small 8-10 space parking lot dedicated for park use only was shown as a way to reduce conflicts between school and park users. An improved park entry concept was intended to help the public utilize the main entrance to Pleasant Valley Park without using school district property.

The park activity center location was shifted west toward the top of slope. This alternative proposed a retrofit of the existing agricultural structure to accommodate several picnic tables and interpretative signage. A wetland boardwalk and a meadow path further supported educational and interpretive themes for the lower site.

Group Discussion

Safety

Much of the evening's discussion by neighbors centered on the topic of avoiding any facilities that would either reduce safety, increase vandalism, or encourage use of the park by persons outside the Highlands subdivision.

Trails

There was some acknowledgement that a network of walking trails throughout the park could be desirable. Providing a future trail connection to a proposed Clark County Regional Trail along Salmon Creek and the WSU trail system was also supported by many meeting participants. Concerns were raised regarding safety for trail users in locations where proposed trails might pass under dense shade trees. There was discussion that all proposed tree planting should be done in accordance with safety and site lines in mind.

Parking

There was strong opposition to adding any new parking. Meeting participants were concerned about potential after hours disturbances, vandalism, visual impacts and affects on property values. It was suggested by one participant that the public school lot be studied to see whether it could be more efficient in layout. Vegetative screening of the existing school parking was suggested to create a buffer to adjacent houses. It was also suggested that perhaps there might be an opportunity to locate off-street parking along NE Salmon Creek Blvd. in conjunction with WSU trails or future Clark County Regional Trail development.

Soccer Field

There was little interest for an additional soccer field on the park site. Participants asked that fields be located in places that are better suited to large sport complexes. The idea of improved scheduling of events could reduce existing parking congestion.

Central Activity Area

There was interest by some neighbors for a central park activity area. Families with small children might use a tot lot, given that existing equipment at the elementary school serves a different age group. Discussion emphasized that the location of the area be safe and accessible.

Restrooms

Several meeting participants questioned the need for restrooms. The rationale for restrooms was that a community park, not just a neighborhood park, serves a greater number of people, not all of which can conveniently return home for a restroom. For the soccer season, portable toilets are currently located on school grounds.

Re-vegetation of Existing Stormwater Facilities

There was some interest by meeting participants for re-vegetation of a portion of the stormwater basins. However, it was noted that re-vegetation design should accommodate occasional sledding.

Salmon Creek Access

There was no interest for creating formalized access to Salmon Creek and that creek access should not be encouraged due to safety concerns.

Park Maintenance

Several residents raised questions regarding park maintenance and why a master plan is being done if there are no funds. It was confirmed by Terry Snyder that no new improvements would be made at Pleasant Valley unless additional maintenance funds become available.

Dog Park

A special dog exercise area was not shown on the plan. While, it was acknowledged that many people enjoy walking and exercising their dogs in the park, a special designated off-leash area is not warranted and may likely attract outsiders.

Par Course

It was suggested that an exercise par course be added to the proposed loop trail system.

Status as a Community Park

Due to the limitations of access, many residents questioned whether Pleasant Valley Park should be more oriented specifically to the neighborhood, rather than designated as a community park or a "destination" park. This issue should be discussed by park planners.

Next Steps

It was suggested that the plan alternatives presented at this meeting and a questionnaire be posted on the city's web site for review and comment.

After a review of the input generated from this meeting and follow-up meetings with the parks department and school district, the design team will propose a preferred scheme. This preferred scheme will be presented for comments at a public meeting to be scheduled in the fall of 2004. The next plan, if favorably received, will be presented to the Parks Board for approval. The Parks Board meeting is public and additional comments can be made at that time.

END OF MEETING MINUTES #2