

Upper Maple Leaf Park Planning Committee Meeting
Northgate Public Library
Monday, April 10, 2008

Agenda

Attendees: Donna Hartmann-Miller, Susan Harney, Marjorie Rhodes, Suzanne Philips, Jeremy Johnson, Peter Wagster, Ginger Van Ry, George Clubine

Meeting called to order at 6:10 PM. Introductions of Jeremy Johnson and Ginger Van Ry. Peter brought in photos of the reservoir and of the Waldo portico, and made copies of the Parks brochure and the reservoir map.

1) Approval of March 24 Meeting Minutes
Approved.

2) Updates

a. Report on SPU acceleration

- The acceleration to cover the reservoir is approved and work is scheduled to begin summer of 2009. The SEPA was released on January 29th, the announcement was published in the Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce on February 7, 2008 — the comment period ended on February 21, 2008.
- The columns to be placed in the underground reservoir can bear enough weight to allow some flexibility in placing some features on top of it.
- The SPU Project Manager for the lidding project is Stephanie Miller.
- SPU plans to maintain a service road around the eastern half of the lidded reservoir for access. It was pointed out that it might be nice if the new service road was not concrete but rather some quieter, more porous material, e.g., quarter minus. It was also pointed out it would need to be durable to handle the service trucks and that will be likely decided by SPU.
- There was some discussion about the projected height of the lidded reservoir. While the final height will be determined once the final design is completed, it is understood it will be approximately 4' above the current water level. That includes 18-24" for the lid itself and an additional 2' of sod.
- George did question why SPU plans to fence off the water tower at Maple Leaf when there is a water tower in Magnolia that has no fence around it. SPU plans for this are determined at the Federal level, having to do with Homeland Security issues.

b. Report from Landscape Architect Consultation

Donna toured that reservoir site with Landscape Architects Brice Maryman and Brice Cormier with SvR. They provided a consult through the Seattle Great City Initiative's Neighborhood Assistance Program. They offered several suggestions including: taking advantage of any potential swale and rain gardens to the east/northeast of the reservoir area, looking into connecting the neighborhood drainage system through any rain garden that the reservoir may feature, to think of the park as a whole when it comes to planning, and picnic shelters that could be inset into the sides of hilly areas. They particularly mentioned needing to make the park and the neighborhood work together on every level; it is this sort of thinking and action that can open up some more grant options.

c. Meeting with Tim Gallagher and Kevin Stoops

Donna and MLCC President David Miller are meeting with these folks tomorrow. Tim Gallagher is the new Superintendent and Kevin Stoops is the interim Director of Planning & Development for the Parks Department.

d. Reports on Assignments

- Labyrinth – Irene (not present). Marjorie requests to be added to this assignment. Marjorie indicates that the "labyrinth" at 103rd street that was mentioned is not a walking sized labyrinth.

She reminded the group of the exercise value and appeal to all age groups. More research to follow.

- Windmills/wind turbines – Marjorie did some research on the viability and discovered many negative things regarding noise and size which would make them a challenge for our site.
- Dog Park – Laurel. Not present, no update.
- Research gardens, natural landscaping – Gwen . Not present, no update.
- Natural landscaping and salvaging plants – Chris. Not present, no update.
- P-patch, splash pads, and sports fields – Donna is working to contact several pea patch groups as well as neighbors that abut some of those pea patches. So far, feedback from neighbors at the Picardo P-Patch has been positive regarding having pea patches next to their property. One difficulty she’s learned about is providing adequate irrigation for the gardeners. This could be possibly be handled with a cistern. Donna also has contacted several users of the current sports fields regarding their wish list for possible upgrades to the existing ball fields.
- Swales and rain gardens – Dale. Not present, no update.
- Parkor – Megan and Tom. Not present, no update.
- Tennis courts, basketball courts, and skate bump – Peter. Peter contacted a company that manufactures a court surface that can be used for both basketball and tennis. Very expensive. It was also pointed out that maintenance of this surface might be difficult and that concrete might be a better option. It was also pointed out that there are available basketball courts 2 blocks away (at St. Catherine’s). There was some discussion about what exactly was a skate “bump” vs a “dot”. More research to be followed up on.
- Visiting residences on 88th – Suzanne and Dale. Dale spoke with Donna and said her plan was to discuss this once the newsletters were distributed. This has yet to be scheduled (see notes later in meeting).
- Listing of ball fields, tennis courts, splash pads, etc. in surrounding parks and schools within a 5-mile radius – Gwen. Gwen spoke with Donna and is working on this.
- Lookouts – George. George located photos of several lookout structures that could take advantage of the views of Mt Rainier and downtown Seattle. He presented four “levels” ideas, one of which is for a park in Mt. Baker that had a similar landscape as our park.

e. Report on Parks Planning Meetings

Donna attended a meeting with the Green Lake group and found it disappointing — primarily a strangely run review of the published draft plan (approximately 60 pages). There are going to be a total of 30 meetings held around the city that people can consider attending, set up to get comments and opinions on the draft plan. She is going to provide a summary of the draft plan along with some suggested comments for people on the committee to send in. As an alternative you can review the planning documents and provide your own comments. This process will determine the direction the Parks Department will be taking over the next five years and the public’s comment is very important.

f. Update on tour of Reservoir Homes

- George offered his home as a meeting place for the next meeting to be held on Monday, April 21st instead of the Northgate Community Center. George, Ginger, Susan, and Susanne will coordinate with Dale to talk with the neighbors along there to get permission for the committee to visit their backyards and take photos of their views. Our next meeting will be held at George’s on 88th street. We can view several homes that evening.
- One thing that came up in this context is that the homeowners on 88th need to come up with a plan about the existing SPU fence. SPU suggests they will go along with the property owner’s choice on whether to keep it up or take it down. The decision needs to be unanimous — all fence or no fence (from the tower to the water treatment plant along the private property).
- There was an update about the right-of-way at the end of 12th that will be leading into the park. Ginger talked about having to phone the authorities regarding the illegally built fence and gate placed there by the new homeowner. Through efforts of the neighbors along there and the Maple Leaf Community Council, the property owner removed it.

3) Fundraising Ideas

In general we need to raise a lot of money!! EVERYONE needs to start doing research on grants.

- a. Wine Tasting
Someone needs to volunteer to take charge of this event, to hopefully take place this summer.
- b. Raffle
We think a raffle at the summer social would be a good way to engender interest in the project.
- c. Grants research
 - i. Class
There is a grant writing class being held at North Seattle Community College. Donna and others in the group are planning on attending. Others are invited to attend. Anyone wanting more information, please contact Donna.

4) Meetings

- a. Myrtle Reservoir Park – Meeting #3
May 1, Time: TBD, High Point Community Center
This is an opportunity to see what and how other groups are planning as well as the process – this is the meeting that finalizes their plan. Results from their first two meetings on online on the Parks Department website.
- b. April Community meeting
Wednesday, April 30th, 7 to 9pm, Olympic View School
Donna will present at this meeting — and will also pass out a new survey about plans for the park. Peter volunteered to sit at an informational table at this meeting.
- c. Northgate Urban Center
Saturday, April 12th, 12:30 to 3:30, Northgate Community Center
This is the second public meeting about plans for the new park at what was the former park n' ride north of Target.

5) Field Trip Planning

- a. Reservoir parks
 - Cal Anderson (completed), Beacon/Jefferson (in process), Myrtle (in process), West Seattle (out for bid)
 - Anyone interested in checking out a few of the local reservoir projects are invited to join Donna on April 19th for a few hours in the morning. She even offers to drive. Contact Donna.

6) Pro Parks Levy letter writing campaign

- Donna reminds us of an email from group associated with Seattle Great City who are working to get another Pro Parks levy onto the ballot. Ideally we will each contact at least 20 people to support this effort as our reservoir park could definitely benefit. If people could write emails to support this and have 20 others also support it, it will be the biggest impact that can be done right now.
- Marjorie pointed out so many levies go on the ballot each year and they are causing financial hardships on low and moderate income property owners who already are paying up to \$4,000 per year in property taxes. Marjorie prefers grants and other means of raising money and feels all the features don't have to go in the park at once. Donna acknowledged that the entire park would most likely be done in phases anyway, but would like to do as much up front as possible. But if people feel strongly about the taxes issue and don't support the levy, that is fine, but if committee members believe parks are a public amenity and that the need for open space is high (fighting obesity, lowering stress levels, environmental reasons), and realizing that with all the challenges to plan this park, their support of these levy funds is necessary.

Next meeting: April 21st at George's house—1027 88th Street—7:00 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.