

Langley Parks & Open Space Commission minutes of 2-14-18 meeting

present were: Gail Fleming, chair; Joann Quintana, Marianne Edain, recording
staff: Stan Berryman, Kelsey Loch
pubic: Guy Burneko

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm.

Chair Gail summarized the conflict of interest statement. No commission member had any conflict.

The minutes of the 1-17-18 meeting were approved as read.

Joann presented the Seawall Park subcommittee report. She reported that the City Council had approved the proposed contract with Mr David Price. There appeared to be no concern about recent differences between Mr Price and the city. The work product from that contract will be a site plan for Seawall Park. The city will then need to find funds to proceed with actual implementation of the plan. Mr Frank Rose is part of an arts consortium raising funds for functional art. The implication was that some of that functional art (benches, etc) might serve Seawall Park. The concept for the park is “natural, serene, low impact”. The Seawall Park subcommittee met to review the preliminary sketches with the intent to identify and resolve any conflicts. One involved the use of large rocks for seating, which some thought was a bit hard on the sitters. Approval of the contract is on the City Council’s 3-5-18 agenda.

Joann presented her work on the proposed trails meeting. She provided 2 handouts. One was a draft of a public notice/invitation to the meeting. The other was a details proposal and outline for the meeting and hoped for outcomes. Commission members were asked to review and provide comment on both. Joann has proposed that the trails meeting be scheduled for a date in May. She reports having found a document titled “Legal Issues Associated with Trails” which she proposed to post to commission members. She is creating a single source document for reference. The public meeting is tentatively proposed for a date to be determined in May. There was some discussion of what to call this event, with two suggestions: “Walkabout” and “Trails to Trees.” The question arose again concerning the possible relocation of native peoples’ trails. Mr Rick Castellano of the County Museum suggested contacting the Tulalip tribe for information. Joann’s handout includes on p. 3 a “to do” list to move this project forward. The POS needs to prepare a rough agenda, and Kelsey was asked to produce a large map for attendees to annotate. Kelsey suggested a list of questions to pose to the public. Gail proposed that we invite Kent Hanson to speak to specific legal issues around trails. Kelsey suggested that Guy Burneko speak to “people likely to walk across your property” to dispel the idea that walkers are somehow ill intentioned. Joann proposed that we identify our target audiences and write up questions, both for the public and for issues for which we feel a need for answers. She pointed out that we want to connect with statewide trails organizations, and suggested perhaps we could request a speaker from such an organization. It was agreed that it is becoming time to create a trails subcommittee.

Guy brought up the fact that a very large number of roads and lanes are marked as “private”. He asked the sheriff whether these were accessible and was told that they were, as long as they were not posted with “no trespassing” signs. Guy is concerned because without those “private” ways there are only public roads to walk, many with little or no shoulder.

Gail and Joann agreed to produce the next iteration of the trails meeting proposal, which will involve meeting with Stan and Kelsey, and to work toward scheduling a public meeting.

There was discussion of the county's Conservation Futures grant program, how to apply, and whether to do so. Marianne agreed to look into the program, the application process, the timeline, and the deadlines.

Kelsey presented copies of a map titled "Wayfinding: Needs Analysis Summary." She explained that the designation "neighborhood street" showed that a particular road is shared between motorized and non-motorized users.

Marianne, in the context of lands maintenance, once again pushed for a vegetation management plan for the city's bluffs, particularly along Cascade Walkway.

Kelsey reported that there is \$20k available, of which wayfinding is only a part. The project is to begin this summer. On 3-5-18 the council will approve the RFP. This is a wayfinding subcommittee. Joann says she has a friend whose specialty is wayfinding, whom she would like to consult. Kelsey says she wants to develop a basic sign template. This grant does not cover planning. There was general discussion of sign regulations. Guy Burneko wanted us to refer back to Gregory Bateson's Whole Systems Design. He philosophized about humans being peripatetic and wanting to create theater in the public sphere. Joann gave the name of her wayfinding friend, Paula Reese, and called her a fabulous resource for what works in signage and the psychology behind different signs. Kelsey encouraged Joann to speak with Ms Reese, but pointed out that there were no funds to pay for her services, only for the signs themselves.

There was discussion of the urban forest element and of various versions of that. There is Tree City, USA and Metro-Nature. Their standards apply only to trees on public property, but they require:

1. a tree board
2. funding equal to \$2.00/resident, to provide for maintenance workers' salaries and other costs, as well as a forestry program to inventory the trees.
3. a tree care ordinance
4. a declaration and celebration of Arbor Day

It was suggested that we check the City of Olympia's tree ordinance, as well as that of Woodside, California. DNR offers small community forest grants, which we might look into. There were questions as to what next steps we should take. It would require approval from mayor Tim and/or the city council for the POS to declare itself the tree board. This is not a new program. 90 cities in the US have thus far named themselves Tree Cities. Marianne suggested a proposal to bring in students to help with tree inventories, identification, and mapping.

The meeting adjourned shortly after 5:00 pm.