

8-24-16 Langley Parks and Open Space Commission meeting minutes

present were: Gail Fleming, Socorro Rodriguez, Marianne Edain recording
staff present were: Stan Berryman, Brigid Reynolds

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 pm.

The minutes of the 7-13-16 meeting were approved as amended.

Chair Gail read from LMC 2.57.030, which specifies the duties of the POS. She asks why it is that items which should be referred to POS, such as the potential location of a dog park or a trail along Al Anderson Road should be brought before Council but not POS.

POS resolved to request the Langley City Council in future to refer such matters to POS for consideration and recommendations.

The question arose as to the status of trails, which are in process of being moved from the POS element of the comp plan to the Transportation element. Brigid reported that the move had not yet happened. She provided copies of the spreadsheet of proposed changes to the comp plan element, but said that spreadsheet was unchanged from several months ago when it was generated. Brigid asked the POS members to provide information to update the spreadsheet. The maps need to be updated and Brigid reports that she is working on the technical aspects of that task.

Brigid specifically would like to see POS write a master plan for the City's parks and open spaces. This would be more specific and more thorough than the comp plan element. The element is (or should be) the implementation strategy, but the master plan specifies what is to be implemented. It sets priorities and identifies funding. It was thought important not to lose those details currently in the comp plan element, with a need to assure that those details are incorporated into the master plan.

Questions were raised about the responsibilities of POS with regard to trails once they have been moved to the Transportation element. The location of the statements does not change who is responsible. POS will still do planning and all other work vis a vis trails, including seeking grant funding. Moving the discussion to another element does not in any way diminish POS's responsibility for trails.

Brigid brought up the "Complete Streets" program in relation to Seawall Park.

There was discussion of § 2.2.1, toxics policy, and how it needed to be amended to require an Integrated Pest Management/ Integrated Vegetation Management preference.

There was discussion of an Urban Forest Strategy and what that involves. Brigid felt it should begin with an inventory of existing trees in the city. It was clarified that this was not a survey of native forest but of whatever trees are growing in the city.

The matter of Level of Service (LOS) was brought up, with the observation that there appeared to be a discrepancy between LOS in the POS element and the Transportation element.

The overarching question of funding was raised, and it was pointed out that there is in fact already a line item in the city's budget for some POS programs. But the line item is empty. There needs to be a source of funding for the line item. POS operates in cooperation with Public Works, which has a maintenance budget. It was reported that

previous Public Works director Challis Stringer had created a highly specific maintenance plan, and the question was raised as to whatever happened to that plan.

There is also the Capital Improvements element of the comp plan which will be updated. The question was raised as to whether POS projects would be incorporated into that Capital Improvements plan. Brigid reported that capital improvements for parks were not included in the Council's plan. Brigid asked if there were any other Capital Improvement projects other than the Noble Creek property being contemplated. The POS responded that it needed some capital for potential purchase of land and for development of the proposed playground in Generation Park. Budget requests would be for the next year and would be incorporated into the Capital Facilities element.

The question was raised as to the process for applying for grants. Any application must be signed by the mayor, and Council should be informed.

Brigid reported that Council had agreed to the creation of an ad hoc committee to investigate Seawall Park and produce recommendations for improvements. She pointed out that adjacent property owners needed to be involved in this process. She had sent a letter on 6-23-16 to participants in the previous meeting, neighboring property owners, POS, and others, and was awaiting responses. She had set a deadline of 9-1-16 for responses. This is intended to be a working committee. Rene Neff will be the Council liaison.

Brigid reported that there had been serious negative response to the proposal for an off-leash dog park at The Cedars. Brigid suggested, and POS agreed, that POS recommend to Council that Council ask POS to create a set of criteria against which to evaluate potential sites for an off-leash dog park. Stan agreed to convey the sense of the POS on this matter.

Stan reported that Al Anderson Road's right of way is only 40 ft. There is no space in the ROW to build a trail. Neighboring property owners: the Fosseks, Kathy Binder, and 2 or 3 others, and then The Highlands, would all have to agree to grant a trail easement on their properties. There are many reports of the dangers of walking on Al Anderson Road, and Stan reports that Fairgrounds Road is even worse. All parties agree that this is a serious issue, but POS feels that it is not ready to take on this matter at this time.

It was reported that the Design Langley website is in need of updating, particularly in relation to the ongoing work to update the comp plan.

The matter of budgets was raised again, with a request to see previous years' Public Works budgets. Stan reported that this calendar year he has a budget of \$75,665.00, of which \$33,000.00 pays for labor for maintenance. He has spent \$15,000.00 this year on tree cutting and says it was not enough. There is a budget item of \$5000.00 for maintenance of open space.

There was a discussion of POS priorities for the coming year. The first priority is for a trail network, for which we need an inventory of existing trails on both public and private lands. This led to discussion of specifics of budgeting for surveys of the Coles Road preparatory to designing a trail layout; budget specifics for Generation Park improvements. There was a question as to replacing the sign at Generation Park, which was not resolved.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00.