



City Parks Advisory Board – Special Meeting Minutes
March 25, 2015 – 4:00 P.M.
520 E. Cascade Avenue, P.O. Box 39, Sisters, OR 97759

City Parks Advisory Board Attendees:

Board Chair: Liam Hughes
Board Members: Peggy Houge, Dixie Eckford, Greg Johnson, David Magaret
Councilor: Wendy Holzman
Absent: Rory Peterson
Staff: CDD Director, Patrick Davenport, PW Director, Paul Bertagna
Darcy Reed, Associate Planner
Recording Secretary: Carol Jenkins

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chairman Hughes called the special meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

II. VISITOR COMMUNICATION

Board Chairman Hughes stated that he wanted to start off with a Board discussion about the Campground plan to see if it meets the goals that were set by the City Council at a joint workshop. Then, open it up to Visitor Communication to see if this new plan meets the needs of the citizens. At that point, they will come into a Board discussion about those points that are raised, etc. He stated that it is his hope at the end to come up with a list of things that the Board can charge staff with to go off and investigate. He stated that right now with the draft plan, there is no price tag on this right now and it will be staffs job to go and look that up.

Board Chairman Hughes asked for the Community Development Director, Patrick Davenport to come forward at this time.

Director Davenport stated that what he would like to see is public input on this and plans to take the Board's direction on what they would like to see done with this Campground. Staff will take it back and evaluate whatever the recommendations are and come back to the group on April 1, 2015 regular meeting with the evaluations and share this information. There will be a really quick turnaround time and he stated that with the final recommendations from the Board, he will then, take it back to the City Council for their ultimate decision on what to do. These plans are in three (3) phases and just simply a sketch of showing what is there and potential ideas on what could be done, etc. This is not any kind of specific proposal – it is just something to get the ideas going, etc.

Director Davenport gave a visual and explanation of the proposed Campground sketches discussing Phase I and that it would lose two (2) spots, closing the second entrance on Locust Street, widen the existing entrance, and adding landscaping with a berm and trees.

Director Bertagna addressed the existing berms and the different types of trees, elimination of one (1) space/hook-up site, tree camping, storm water, swales, sharing driveways, spacing, screening, the entrance and exit, possibly widening a little bit to allow for a two-way traffic movement, staging areas, etc.

Director Davenport stated that they are also proposing spaces 34, 35, and 36 no hook-up sites are shown and proposed to be removed.

Director Bertagna discussed Phase II showing the relocation of the existing dump station and moving it out east with a pull through which would get it out of the middle of the Campground. He discussed the automated dump station where the people can pay with a credit card or cash, etc. It would be locked so this dump station would not need to be manned - it will be more like a pay station, etc.

Director Bertagna discussed dry camping, tent sites, walk-in parking area, and the pet walking area. He continued to discuss the spaces being removed and converting some to full hook-ups. He discussed the logistics of water, sewer, and paths and stated that sewer is the biggest thing – it is the deepest and most expensive utility to put in. He gave a visual and explanation of the sewer main, hot tap, and water system. Also, as part of Phase II, he stated that if funding gets acquired, they would like to replace the restroom building and propose a wash station at the same time.

Director Davenport discussed Phase III showing the Locust Street entrance being closed, landscaping continuing through and a new entrance to Highway 20 with the scales, etc. He stated there would be more vehicle parking as well.

Director Bertagna stated that he wanted to make it very clear that this has not been discussed with ODOT as far as if it can't work, how it will work, where would it work because there would have to be a whole feasibility analysis that would have to be done. He discussed the park land, intersections, and different options at this time. *Director Bertagna* stated that currently the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department owns the strip of land that the truck scales are on. They are going through a land swap with ODOT for that property. If the Board wants staff to go down that road, he stated that he thinks they should engage with ODOT at some point and see what happens.

A brief discussion took place regarding moving the dump station, movements in and out of the Campground, the wash station, signage, possible ADA sites, the hiker/biker area with picnic tables and fire pits, and a timeline of when this will all happen at this time.

Director Davenport stated that staff will do their best to get back to the Board as soon as possible depending on what the Board requests of staff and sort all of this out and what is feasible, etc. One of the next things to do after these recommendations go through the City Council is to update the Master Plan for this park showing everything that needs to be shown.

Mac McCartney came forward and stated that he is representing his son and daughter-in-law. He stated that he has lived across the park for about eight years. He stated he is also representing a few

people that could not be here at the meeting. They all want about the same thing – where the dump is right now, they don't want it closer to Locust Street. There is a certain smell that comes out of there and they don't want it any closer if it can be avoided. The campsites that are right next to the road, he stated he has seen two and three years old playing out in the road, and they are all hoping it can be moved back away from the street. The cars don't pay attention to the speed on that street and cars are going by there at 60 mph and it is dangerous for those kids.

Milly Martin came forward and stated that she lives on Locust Street. She stated that she brought this up at the first meeting about the Campground regarding the sign – it is beautifully done, but it needs a board or something behind it because people cannot see it. It is very creative, but people can't find the campground.

Councilor Holzman stated that the City is aware that there needs to be better signage and make the signs much clearer. That sign does not show well, it is beautiful and maybe it should be put somewhere else in the park, or need to light it, etc.

Director Bertagna stated that the sign is not intended to be a directional sign, otherwise, it would have been placed somewhere else. Staff is actually getting some mockups and some costs for directional signage to put down Jefferson and also a left turn into the entrance. The hope is to have it in before the park opens this year.

Gary Kutz came forward and stated that he is a civil engineer and he looks at this in an engineering point of view. His first question is should a commercial establishment be accessed from a commercial street or a residential street. It should be from a commercial street. He asked if the RV Campground is considered commercial and he stated yes. The Campground should be accessed from a commercial street and not a residential street. He pointed out that Locust Street does not have a turn lane off of Highway 20 in either direction. In either direction going on Highway 20, there is not a turning lane to come onto Locust Street. The same problem exists at Jefferson Street – the same problem does not exist on Buckaroo Trail. Buckaroo Trail has a turning lane from going west off of the highway turning to Buckaroo and a turning lane going east onto Buckaroo. He stated that his point because of this, the entry off of Buckaroo Trail should be used and not Locust Street. Locust is not a good entry for the park - period. He stated that his conclusion to all of this is to have the entry off of Buckaroo Trail and have the exit off of Locust Street. That would be a good compromise with the homeowners and the City. There is already signage on Buckaroo Trail for the Campground – there is already a road there and plenty of queuing distance – that a natural.

Judy Trego came forward and thanked the Board in working with the residents and working on mitigation for Creekside Park. She stated that lodging options in Sisters have not kept pace with the visitor volume. It is a big concern to make sure there are those spaces for the visitors when they come in for the six (6) months a year when the park is open, that it is viable for the community and to help with the visitors who come here every summer to enjoy our community and all of the events. It is the 75th anniversary for the Rodeo, the 40th anniversary for the Quilt Show, and the 20th anniversary of the Sisters Folk Festival. She stated that it can be a burden, but lived next to the Village Green Park for 15 years and does know it can be a burden, but appreciates the patience with the visitors and the events in town.

Steve Bryan came forward and stated that he lives fairly close to the park and wanted to point out the petition of 104 signatures which has a couple of major points – visual impacts (being addressed) and traffic impacts (not being addressed). This is not being addressed and in Phase III, it is too far in the future to really calling it addressing this problem. He wanted to echo Mr. Kutz's suggestion to close the Locust entrance and exits and use Buckaroo Trail. He said he would like to suggest that this would take care of all the traffic problems in the residential neighborhood, and if there is traffic going out the other entrance and exit – he would suggest a fairness issue at this point. The neighbors have suffered with this traffic for a long time, and if the City actually does a decent job with signage those neighbors in Five Pine and other areas won't feel the same impact. They are very tired of this and doesn't feel like signage on Locust Street is going to do the job. They want a win-win, they want happy neighbors and a happy City and Chamber – and suggest closing Locust Street. He believes that it will be one of the cheapest options.

JJ Yacovella came forward and stated he is also a part of the group that represents the 104 petitioners in the Buck Run / Coyote Springs area. He wanted to echo a couple of broader points – they have come to learn over time since starting this proposition, when this Campground switched to an RV Park, there was very little done in regards to traffic studies and environmental impact studies – is was more or less just done. Now, 6 years plus in dealing with this and what is happening is that the general area has become incredible congested. When this was done Five Pine was in the beginning stages, there are plans now in the general area of Five Pines, Coyote Springs, and the general Buck Run area for 16 new cabins to be built, 24 homes to be built on that street where the access point to the east side of the Park off of Buckaroo Trail. He stated that he understands the City Advisory Board worries about the park, but he said that what happens inside that park affects them who live outside that park. He stated that according to the City notes – 6,253 nights where campers were in the Campground last year. This means that 6,253 vehicles entered the park. They entered and exited and that added roughly 12,500 vehicle traffic pieces to Locust, Buck Run, etc. That is more traffic and a huge amount of traffic that was never planned for this area. He discussed financials, RV height, streets, adding spaces, traffic going in and out of the campground.

Mr. Yacovella stated that what he wants the Parks Board to understand as well as the City is that this is a complicated complex issue. He said that what happens inside the park is dramatically impacting them in a very negative fashion. He said that they have heard that overall this is good for the City. That may be true for parts of the City, but it is not good for the residents of Buck Run, Coyote Springs, 4th Sisters Lodge, and possibly Five Pines as well. He said what we have here is in a bad place – he is not suggesting to move it because he's heard the money has been spent and will try to make the best out of a worst situation. He feels that until it can be fixed in recommendation from the Parks Board, the City, and the City Council adopting the idea that this is a long term proposition and a long term issue. If it goes as is, in five years the campground won't be assessable to anybody because of the traffic in the summer during the events. He continued to talk about the negative impacts for the neighborhood, property values and taxes at this time.

Alan Hull came forward and stated that the thing he is looking at for this year now in this period – can a sign be put up as they exit – 'right turn only' where it puts them back out onto the highway and doesn't allow them to come through the neighborhood. A few will be missed, but a lot of people will be going in the right direction and it is very inexpensive.

Bob Ronggli came forward and stated he lives at 4th Sisters Lodge. He stated he has two points and one is definitely the traffic and a consideration for them – exiting on Sunday afternoon or on the weekend going back out to Buckaroo Trail and taking a left going back into Salem or Portland there is a string of traffic coming in all through there. It is really a challenge in terms of traffic. If there was more traffic from the park going out that exit and taking a left – be more cautious on the decision because it is a huge bottleneck. And for the children, the grassy areas and making that more friendly with playground activities, etc. He stated that a lot of the people that live in the condominiums have friends that come and park there for different festivities and go back and forth. It is a real asset to the City – the whole park for friends to come in there. He thanked the Board and staff for their work on the project and appreciates the improvements.

Board Chairman Hughes stated that one of the first things that needs to be done is to see if these new plans meet the goals that were set for the Board by the Mayor and City Council at the joint workshop. He stated they were asked to address screening to block the view for the neighbors, enhanced signage, to neither grow nor shrink the campground and to maintain the current revenue stream. He asked if this plan accomplishes those goals that were set for the Board in all the Phases I, II, and III at this time.

Board Chairman Hughes stated that currently there is no idea of timing at this point. He stated that staff will come back before the Board, but right now, the Board needs to see if this meets the goals that were set.

A brief discussion took place regarding the timeframe of this project and being able to accommodate the drastic needs of the homeowners.

Board Chairman Hughes stated that he feels the Board has met the Council requests. The bigger question is the concerns of the residents.

Board Member Eckford stated that she listened more to the visitor suggestions and have a recap of the problems that the neighbors see particularly those living right there.

The items discussed were:

- ✓ Where the dump station is going to be relocated. It sounds like that seemed to be a positive for most people.
- ✓ Signage and that is definitely part of the plan to get the signage better so that it is more visible.
- ✓ Making a clear exit onto Locust Street.
- ✓ Changing the traffic flow slightly – one-way traffic in and out with very clear signage.
- ✓ Concerns about added congestion from new people moving into Sisters and moving into the newer developments.
- ✓ Concerns about using Buckaroo Trail for left turns back onto the highway.

Board Member Hughes stated that what he got from this and will take back to staff is to look into moving the entrance, the feasibility and costs that would be associated, and to throw in the one-way concept that was raised. Moving the entrance to Buckaroo Trail and moving it to the Highway – both of those ideas need to be addressed. Then, cost of the new restroom, cost of putting in the berm, cost of adding the wash station, converting space no. 62 to ADA, new signage and what it would look like and cost and the timeframe on getting that done, and timeframe on all of these things for that matter. The ‘right turn only’ sign at the exit – would that be feasible and what would that cost and when it could be done.

Board Member Johnson stated that he is concerned about the weigh station ingress and egress and the status of what the land swap might be. He stated that he knows it is a financial bind, but there are grants available and some people in town including himself that would love to research something that could kick start the process. There are a lot of concerns that just came up about the Buckaroo situation, the safety of kids and the traffic. The opportunity is to build a left turn lane coming west and having a ramp going west – left turn lane going into the park and a ramp off of the highway which would reduce about 80 percent of the problems. There is a feasibility and Master Plan to do and he said this is an urgent situation and would like to know what the committee and homeowners think of moving forward with something that is aggressive.

Board Chairman Hughes stated that he agrees that the entrance straight up to the highway has a lot of advantages. It may well be out of our control, but something to look at – conceptually, that would fit really well if that was ever possible to move the traffic directly onto the highway, but that is in ODOT’s court.

Director Bertagna stated that the status of the land swap is between Oregon Parks and Recreation and ODOT. The City is not a party to that and once that is done and the land that ODOT doesn’t want which could include some of this (visual) then, staff can enter into a discussion with ODOT about them doing a transfer to the City. Long term transportation planning for this area is a regional exercise because there are two highways coming to a point right there (visual). He stated that whatever traffic mitigation and whether it is a signal or a big roundabout, it would be smart to get out ahead of it and letting them know there is a need – not just a want. Maybe we could get a leg off of that intersection if we plant the seed now.

Board Chairman Hughes stated that in an email from the Bakers who are not able to be here is the talk about extending the berm. He asked Director Bertagna to bring back his official report as part of the feasible and what raises the difficulties there. Also, to clarify the area by the dump station, berms and trees.

A member of the audience got up and spoke about what is going on here and stated he doesn’t know how this got started, but his opinion in listening to everyone here is to fix this thing and down the road with doing more projects in the Sisters area to consult a civil engineer and address things at the outset of this, and they wouldn’t be sitting here listening to all of these complaints and spending all this money that could be spent wisely on other projects to make this community better.

Mr. Yacovella came forward and said something that Councilor Holzman mentioned in other meetings and a lot of people are in favor of in doing some sort of limiting the size of vehicles that can use the

park – maybe eliminating Class A RV's and having nothing larger than 25 feet, etc. because it helps everything from a traffic flow standpoint inside and outside as well.

Councilor Holzman stated that her recommendation was to maybe have some kind of wording on the website that may say that people with the larger RV's may find it difficult to get in and out. Something to give people an idea that haven't been there before and pull-through sites are often favored by the larger ones, etc. and to have some kind of language in there that that it might be difficult to negotiate through the campground in a larger vehicle. She stated that she is not proposing an actual size limit or that people can't come here, but to give people a little heads up that there may be an issue getting through the campground.

Board Chairman Hughes stated that he would entertain that discussion amongst the Board and not lean that way personally. He stated that he doesn't like exclusionary policies and wants to be accessible to as many people as possible – not to exclude them because they have a nice RV.

Director Bertagna stated that on the website under Creekside Campground, it has the size of every site in the park that they will facilitate. He said that from what they seen in running the park, the big rigs get through there fine if they put their awnings in. He stated he doesn't know that we can restrict them.

Board Chairman Hughes stated that he thinks this should be a part of the discussion at the next meeting as part of this recommendation.

A discussion took place regarding moving the camp host area, removal of the concrete slab, the dump station, green space, trees, moving sites around, bike spaces, and tent spaces, etc.

Director Bertagna stated there are six (6) trees currently marked out at the park with beetle kill. The City had a Forester come out and look at them and four (4) are completely dead and the other two (2) are infected heavily. They are pine trees and pretty good in size. They are isolated into a clump (visual). The Urban Forestry Board went out and took a look at them and recommended that they be removed as soon as possible because of the beetle infestation. The Forester came back with the same recommendation and then, he took it to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department and they said it is ok to remove the hazardous or diseased trees, but to keep the documentation.

The following are items for discussion and research by staff:

- ✓ Research the feasibility and cost associated with moving the entrance and exit, and the possibility of the one-way system that was suggested.
- ✓ Cost of the new restroom and possible timeline on funding, etc.
- ✓ Cost associated with the berm and the feasibility of extending the berm.
- ✓ Adding the wash station and the cost for that.
- ✓ Converting space no. 62 to ADA accessible space with a pathway to the restroom.

- ✓ New signage and the right turn only sign at the exit.

Director Bertagna stated that currently in the park there are two (2) showers that are unisex and two (2) stalls per side.

Board Chairman Hughes stated that he and Board Member Eckford will look into the number of stalls that are recommended for a campground. They will look into it through the State Parks and get their recommendation.

Director Bertagna stated that he will look into what they can fit into not only the existing footprint, but a potential larger footprint without it affecting any trees. It is a little tight with the existing footprint.

Board Chairman Hughes stated that they might want to look at increasing the footprint, if not just for the restroom site because there are currently no restrooms at Creekside Park and no plan to add them over there.

Director Bertagna stated that is correct and they are not ADA compliant which means they don't have the wheelchair turning and accessible stalls, etc. Staff will look into this and bring it back to the board.

Councilor Holzman asked if there is anything on the website or the reservation system with information on how many ADA requests are made, but what are people asking for and is one (1) site going to be enough, or if there is more demand that the old camp host site be removed and putting another ADA site if it is needed.

Board Member Hogue asked that at the next meeting this be added to the CIP list – a new cost.

III. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Jenkins, Recording Secretary

