



Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes

Thursday, September 17, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 pm with the following park board members in attendance:

Kevin Loy, Elizabeth Detillion, John Semrau, Kerri Cook, Mike Elde, Liz McNett Crowl, Tim Manns, Chris Allen, and Ralph Rowland.

Staff Member: Brian Adams

There were no additional matters raised by the public, beyond issues already on the agenda. The agenda and minutes were passed by those present without any changes.

Board Discussion

NSRA Gateway Center:

The Omni Processor ownership group has been publicly talking about their need for a road through the park. The last time we commented as a group we thought the park road was going to be utilized emergency or secondary ingress/egress. A spokesperson recently said in a forum that he "didn't want ugly trucks driving through his campus all day." It of my opinion that an industrial campus is the ideal pace for heavy traffic and am opposed to seeing the park become the main arterial. We have until November 2 to comment on this so we can have a draft for review very soon and further deliberate at our September meeting. We will also have an opportunity to comment at the scheduled hearing, which is going to be held at the Sedro-Woolley council chambers on September 29.

NSRA Veterans' Park Conceptual Plan:

The park concept is getting some steam and will be presented to the entire Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, September 22nd. With Board approval, the plan will get planning funds directed towards it. A refinement of the components associated with the project will need to be broken into digestible segments so that money can be raised for construction. Most all of the components in the plan are prioritized in the 2002 master plan. A picnic shelter, pathways, restroom facility, picnic tables, and other day-use park infrastructure are important from a recreational perspective. The war relics were not in the plan.

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NSRA Mitigation:

Our public works department has proposed using a part of NSRA for mitigating their Helmick Road realignment project. When they realigned the road in 2007 they filled 5 plus acres of palustrine wetland and as a result, they offered 18 acres (of park property) for wetland restoration. At the time the land was assumed to be mostly wetlands and restoration was recommended as a way to meet the Disturbance:Enhancement ratio necessary to meet their mitigation requirements.

This work was never completed and the hydrological dynamics have appeared to change in the past few years. It seems the land is now mostly dry so a mitigation project will now require a different solution. Although soil and plants indicate wetlands should be present, the hydrology is missing and the latest data indicates about an acre of wetlands. The DOE is now asking the County to monitor the site before determining a new course of action. Solutions are outlined in an adaptive management report prepared by Skagit County Public Works in June of 2011. The solutions are comprised of proposals for both off-site and on-site restoration projects. Some of these projects would create wetlands in areas where wetlands don't currently exist. It should be noted, the Adolphson Wetland study done several years ago (2001) is consistent with the recent DOE analysis—showing just an acre of wetland. The assumptions that wetlands were present were based on a visual analysis by public work staff. If our parkland is used for mitigation, I believe a conservation easement would need to be recorded, encumbering the deed. This would violate RCO policy.

If dry land is encumbered for mitigation the loss of recreational land would need to be mitigated. A conservation easement on dry land is a bad deal. Dry land only computes to 1 per 20.

Staff Report:

Fidalgo Park Update: Connector Trails are being explored. Sharpe Park will have more WTA work over the fall/winter/spring.

Recreation Update: Full Report for quarter next month.

Tursi Trail Update: No SEPA appeals. Planning and Development haven't approved the permit for construction but should in the coming week or two..

Presentin Park Timeline: Looking into opportunities for the public in this region.

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Adjourn

Next Meeting: October 15, 2015