

Parks & Open Space Commission minutes of 9-13-17 meeting

present were: Gail Fleming, chair; Joann Quintana; Marianne Edain recording  
staff: Stan Berryman; Kelsey  
public: Sharon Emerson, Trilby Coolidge

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 and the minutes of the August 9 meeting were approved as presented.

New member Joann Quintana was welcomed.

Sharon Emerson presented a report from the Seawall Park subcommittee. She reported that the city had offered funding for design work at Seawall Park. The source of that funding will either be Parks and Open Space or through Public Works next year. Sharon presented a Design Considerations memo and asked for comments and responses. There was discussion of various elements of the park, including the fact that Ross Chapin wants very much to daylight Brookhaven Creek. There was discussion of a perceived trash problem at Seawall Park and how to deal with it. There was discussion of the fence at the east end of Seawall Park and how to design so as not to foreclose a future option to open access there. Joann proposed that the endwall consist of independent panels, with some of the panels containing displays. Discussion of potentially increased access led to the same conclusions as previous discussions – elevators are expensive. Joann wanted to investigate the option of a switchbacked path down the Anthes extension. It was also agreed that signs should not obstruct views.

It was agreed that the project considerations, as revised and approved, will be presented to council.

Sharon made a formal request from the Seawall Park subcommittee for funding from the POS budget. POS agreed to make \$4775.00 available.

Joann agreed to attend the coming council meeting.

Sharon reported that the Complete Streets process will start with a kickoff meeting on October 25. She spoke with Mayor Tim and said that the next step was not to present this proposal to council but to write a Request for Proposals. That RFP would then go to council, presented by Public Works. The council needs to approve the RFP.

Marianne reported on her meeting with Pat Powell at Whidbey Camano Land Trust on the question of how to become eligible for RCO grant funding. Pat was very discouraging. It was decided not to push forward with RCO funding eligibility at this time.

There was a discussion of budget priorities. The priorities are: 1) a trail system, 2) a parks management plan, and 3) an urban forest strategy. Joann and Sharon proposed a town meeting to present the concept of trail easement Revocable Licenses. It was not clear how much should be budgeted for this item, and it was agreed to ask Mr Kent Hansen how much should be allocated for this.

It was pointed out that trails have been moved from the Parks & Open Space element of the comp plan to the Transportation element. Stan explained the process for funding trail projects. POS makes a recommendation. Public Works puts it on the project list. It takes several years to rise on the list to the point of actually being funded. First, POS identifies a specific trail and presents a proposal to city council. Council authorizes

Public Works to move forward. Then the city engineer does a rough design and cost estimate. Next the Public Works director writes a grant application and includes the cost in the Public Works budget. The question was: how much money does it take just to go through this process?

It was agreed that the most likely project at this time is a short loop trail in Middle Earth, near the Middle School end, introducing walkers to the wetland. This would involve wetland restoration as well. The POS agreed to request \$7500.00 to begin work on a loop trail/boardwalk at Middle Earth. The first step will be for POS to present the request to Council. Then present Public Works a Scope of Work. Public Works will then hire appropriate expertise to accomplish the project.

There was a discussion of the comp plan update and the POS work plan. It was determined that there is need for a new updated survey of parks & open space needs in Langley, as the last survey is nearly 10 years old. This will also be a good opportunity to poll residents/landowners on the idea of trail easements/revocable licenses. Both Joann and Kelsey felt this was quite do-able.

Details of comp plan revision were presented in writing, particularly around issues of wildlife v open space v trail corridors. Kelsey agreed to amend and/or to refer the matter to Brigid. LOS has been removed entirely. It will henceforth be in the maintenance plan. Marianne asked very specifically that all materials being removed be kept in some file for future reference. Kelsey agreed to do so.

There was discussion of the wetland map, specifically, the “areas likely to contain wetlands” designations. The necessary accompanying code language can be borrowed from the Edgewood city ordinance which is being used as a model.

There was cursory discussion of the tree ordinance as time was nearly up. Kelsey reported having attended a DNR forestry workshop and having found it very useful. She agreed that POS could/should begin to work on an Urban Forest Strategy.

It was agreed that the next step for POS is to develop a work plan, and that the tree ordinance will be addressed in the context of an Urban Forest Strategy. Kelsey agreed to provide a basic outline from which to proceed.

Gail asked if Kelsey could attend POS meetings regularly and Kelsey agreed to do so.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 pm.