

**Astoria Parks and Recreation Master Plan
Citizen Advisory Committee
March 31, 2016**

Director Cosby called meeting to Order at 8:05 am.

Roll Call

Committee Members- Jan Nybakke, Jim Holen, Scott Tucker, Ed Overbay, Patrick Wingard, Michelle Bisek, Brooke Stanley, Kassia Nye, Zetty Nemlowill, Dulcye Taylor

Staff- Angela Cosby, Ian Sisson, and Rosemary Johnson

Absent- Craig Hoppes, and Ken Hageman

Approval of Minutes

- a. The minutes of Meeting #5 on February 25, 2016 were approved with the following change: Under Deed Research, the minutes erroneously stated Ms. Johnson was unsure whether certain parcels in the cemetery were in Astoria or Warrenton. The minutes were corrected to state that Ms. Johnson did not know which parcels within the cemetery were former County property that may have a reversionary clause.

Project Timeline Review

- a. Mr. Sisson reviewed the project timeline and gave details about upcoming events.

Deed Research Update

- a. Rosemary Johnson updated the Committee on her research of Parks property deeds. At Oceanview Cemetery, the County reversionary lots have already gone over to the Northwest Conservancy. To the best of her knowledge, as long as the remaining property is used as a cemetery, there will be no reversions or restrictions. Astoria owns all of Birch Field with no restrictions. She did not find any reversionary clause or restrictions on the Yacht Club property, but the State and City prohibit the sale or vacation of streets that provide necessary public access to the waterfront. The property could be sold as long as public access to the waterfront is maintained in some way. She listed several ways this could be accomplished. An easement from the highway through private property provides legal access to the Yacht Club. She listed deed restrictions, leases, reversionary clauses, and other potential issues for the following Park properties: The Customs House, Tidal Rock Park, Violet LaPlante Park, Post Office Park, People's Park, Community Garden, Doughboy Monument, the five Mill Pond parks, Alameda Park, the Grey School field, McClure Park, Pioneer Cemetery, Children's Playground, Alderbrook Park.
 - She and Mr. Sisson answered Committee member's questions about specific issues at some of the parks, explained the impacts of required public access to the waterfront, the details of the reversionary clause at the cemetery, and individual parcels within the cemetery.
- b. Next Steps – Confirm the number of acres of developable land owned by Astoria at the cemetery.

Draft Master Plan Update

Mr. Sisson updated the Committee on the Community Profile section of the Master Plan. He explained what information was used to create the profile and reviewed the conclusions and considerations that should be part of the planning process and recommendations. While demographic data from the American Community Survey was thought to be accurate, Staff would review and compare data from various sources to ensure the information is more complete.

- a. The Peer Community Analysis included communities that are similar in size, population, demographics, and tourism.
- b. The Needs Assessment included national, state, and local trends.

Mr. Sisson reviewed the Peer Community Analysis and Needs Assessment in detail, comparing Astoria to other jurisdictions. Staff and the Committee discussed the analysis and assessment with the following key comments:

- The Newport Parks Department receives a dedicated amount of the transient room taxes each year. The Committee wanted to know if the funds were earmarked for specific projects or programs. Newport is adding an aquatic center to their recreation center, which shares a building with their city hall. This is an \$8.25 million project, funded through bonds.
 - Staff used dollars per capita averages from the Pacific Northwest, instead of national averages, because it seemed more relevant. However, the Committee believed the national averages should be included for comparison.
 - Astoria has more part-time and seasonal staff than any of the jurisdictions included in the data. Some facilities, like an aquatic center, require more part-time employees. Staff will analyze the data in order to compare employment numbers with Astoria's, as well as details about how employment costs impact the budget.
- c. The Committee and Staff discussed recent feedback on the current recommendations, as follows:
 - Promote Astoria should be included as a potential source of revenue for certain things like wayfinding signs or new trails, even though there may be some legal constraints.
 - If the Recreation Center and Aquatic Center services were consolidated, there would not be enough room to include Port of Play and Li'l Sprouts. The City currently has a very inexpensive lease with the school district at Grey School, so including childcare in the consolidation may not save money. Also, selling the Recreation Center could help offset the costs of expanding the Aquatic Center, whereas leasing the facility could be a bigger burden on taxpayers.
 - Tide Rock Park is historic and there are restrictions on what can be built on the property, but the City should still consider selling it.
 - The plan should recommend that the Trails Master Plan be implemented.
 - The Committee discussed whether daycare and afterschool services should be considered core Parks services. The school district is in the business of taking care of kids and may be starting their own afterschool program. Daycare is the only service offered by the Parks Department that is not subsidized by taxpayers and could be sold to a private entity so the City does not have to hire so many part-time employees.
 - Afterschool programs and summer camps are offered by 80 percent of parks departments nationwide, so they are widely considered core parks services.
 - In order for Li'l Sprouts to break even, either the parents or the taxpayers will have to subsidize the service. There is such a great demand for daycare services in Astoria that the City should continue to offer daycare until a comparable resource becomes available. However, the Master Plan should recommend that the City explore ways to help encourage outside growth of daycare services so that the City can move away from it in the future. The Committee agreed that Li'l Sprouts should remain for now.
 - The Committee and Staff discussed several reasons for the lack of private daycare options in Astoria and the City's ability to provide the service at lower costs through a joint agreement with the school district. The daycare issues should be discussed among several entities in the county and separately from the Parks core services.
 - The Committee unanimously agreed that Staff should update the recommendations with the feedback provided above prior to presenting them to the public.

Community Input Session – Test Run

- a. Mr. Sisson explained the activities and methods he planned to use at the upcoming input sessions and asked the Committee to provide feedback. Director Cosby noted the Committee's feedback would be incorporated into their recommendations. After the Committee completed each activity, they gave Staff recommendations and discussed the results of the activities as follows:
 - It was difficult to choose a particular preference for certain topics without more information, so, a few topics should be discussed more broadly or participants should be given the opportunity to provide comments about why they made certain choices.
 - Some topics should be divided into multiple topics to avoid confusion. However, the number of topics displayed might be limited by the space available at each venue.
 - In addition to an organizational diagram and information from prior community input sessions, upcoming sessions should include a PowerPoint presentation with a map of park facilities.

Other Business

Ms. Johnson displayed a map of Oceanview Cemetery and explained that the five acres next to the road is for cemetery use. The 25 acres just north of the lake appears to be okay for sale with no restrictions. A parcel near the entry appears to be 11 acres and has no restrictions that she knows of. The wooded area just north of the cemetery appears to be for cemetery use. She described the issues with plat maps and the way some of the deeds refer to plats and tracts, some of which no longer exist.

Next Steps

- a. Community Input Sessions
 - i. Wednesday April 6 | 5pm-7pm | Fort George Lovell Showroom | Open house with presentation at 5:30pm
 - ii. Thursday April 7 | 7am-10am | Street 14 Café | Open house
 - iii. Saturday April 9 | 5pm-8pm | Old Town Framing | Open house
- b. Upcoming Citizen Advisory Committee Meetings
 - i. April 21, 2016: 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM at the Astoria Recreation Center.
 1. Review community input, work session to revise Draft Master Plan.
 - ii. May 19, 2016: 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM at the Astoria Recreation Center.
 1. Update of Draft Master Plan, final revision opportunity before 5/24 Planning Commission Public Hearing.
 - iii. June 16, 2016: 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM at the Astoria Recreation Center.
 1. Final draft of Plan, recommendation to Parks Advisory Board

Director Cosby asked Committee members to encourage as many people as possible to attend the public input sessions.

Adjournment

- A. The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 am.

Next meeting will be held Thursday, April 21, 2016 at 8:00am at the Astoria Recreation Center.