



PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, January 29, 2020, 6:00 p.m.
Century House – ABC Room

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillor Chinu Das	- Co-Chair, City Council Member
Councillor Jaimie McEvoy	- Co-Chair, City Council Member
Shawna Barkley	- Community Member
John Davies	- Alternate Chair/Community Member
Gary Holisko	- Community Member
Tonianne Mynen	- Community Member
Sydney Sullivan	- Community Member

MEMBER REGRETS:

Deanna Tan	- Community Member
Andrew Hull	- Community Member

STAFF PRESENT:

Dean Gibson	- Director, Parks and Recreation
Steve Kellock	- Sr. Manager of Recreation Services & Facilities
Jeff Case	- Arboriculture Technician
Yihong Liao	- Landscape Design Technician
Carilyn Cook	- Committee Clerk

The meeting commenced at 6:08 p.m.

1.0 ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

1.1 Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Agenda for the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting scheduled January 29, 2020 be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED.

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of September 19, 2019

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Minutes of the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting held September 19, 2019 be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED.

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

3.0 PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Queensborough Off-Leash Dog Area Update

Yihong Liao, Landscape Design Technician, provided a presentation update of the Queensborough off-leash dog area, outlining three possible locations for a new dog park: the north field at Port Royal Park, the south field at Port Royal Park, and along the South Dyke Trail. Ms. Liao also advised that in the next six months, the City will be engaging with a consultant to create a city-wide, strategic and sustainable off-leash dog area plan.

In response to questions, staff advised:

- With respect to creating an off-leash dog park on the west side of Queensborough, it was noted that many residents already use the City of Richmond's Hamilton Neighbourhood Off-Leash Dog Park as it is very close to New Westminster;
- At the beginning of the process, via dog licensing data, staff noticed a high density dog population in the east end of Queensborough;
- Dense trees would buffer the proposed dog park and the residential buildings at 230 and 240 Salter Street;
- The City has largely followed the dog park model adopted over 10 years ago when smaller parcels of land could be used with little impact on neighbours, which has led to many fenced enclosures throughout the City. Since that time,

- the City's population has grown and has many more residents with pets, however, the City has not kept up with how pets are managed in the public realm. To address this, the strategy will examine how the City can legally allow people to have their pets off-leash and solicit public opinions about off-leash pets, and review other municipalities' off-leash best practices.; and,
- There may be areas in the community where fenced off-leash areas are not necessary, or time-of-use rules could be implemented.

Discussion ensued, and a Committee member stated that it is understandable that the residents of 240 Salter Street do not support the dog park proposal given the anticipated noise that may arise from the site.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Parks and Recreation Committee recommends that staff pause the Port Royal off-leash dog area planning until such time that the City-wide Dog Strategy is complete.

CARRIED.

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

3.2 Community Tree Planting and Tree Stewards Initiatives

Jeff Case, Arboriculture Technician, provided a presentation which elaborated on the City's Urban Forest Tree Planting Strategy, the City's upcoming tree sale for residents, and the Adopt-A-Street Tree Program.

Urban Forest Tree Planting Strategy

In response to questions, staff advised:

- Trees planted on the McBride Boulevard side of Queen's Park were planted as part of TD's Tree Planting Day as well as a memorial, independent of the City's Urban Forest Management Strategy;
- Currently, the city tree canopy coverage is at about 18 percent and the City's goal is to reach 27 percent by 2030;
- Decline of the tree canopy is mostly due to redevelopment of private property with some decline being a result of trees aging and/or dying of natural causes;
- Regarding the rise in paved back yards, the Engineering Department addresses residential yard permeability through the City's Integrated Storm Water Management Plan; support efforts can include programs that educate and encourage private property owners to do the most appropriate thing for the environment with respect to permeability;
- Paved yards may become less fashionable once residents see the value in a more permeable landscape and the City must work in partnership with residents to achieve objectives such as this;

- The trees planted will be diverse, robust, and adaptable to climate change and a demanding environment such as bad soil, lack of water, etc.;
- Fruit trees planted on boulevards would attract animals and fallen fruit may create slipping hazards; however, planting of fruit trees may be considered as the City nurtures steward-based community gardens which would ensure that fruit is harvested appropriately;
- The scope of the City's tree planting area will be mostly along boulevards and long streetscapes, eventually moving into parks where successional planting will occur;
- The City engages with residents and strives to maintain views as much as possible when pruning trees; and,
- Many developers take advantage of things such as lower roof tops in order to include greenery in their projects as this beautification increases saleability of their projects;

Discussion ensued, and a Committee member commented that there are legacy fruit trees at Simcoe Park and at some locations along the Fraser River.

City-Wide Tree Sale

In response to questions, staff advised that although it is hard to compare the two cities, New Westminster is somewhat mirroring Vancouver's tree sale program and have reached out to them for advice.

Adopt-A-Street Tree Program

In response to questions, staff advised:

- While residents are not obligated to water boulevard trees, it does help the City when they do so;
- Those interested in adopting a street tree would be assigned a tree closest to their home and residents will be informed if a tree near them is being adopted;
- Trees in public spaces could be adopted by residents living in apartments;
- Initially, adoption will be for newly planted trees with a maturity of 5 to 7 years to ensure root establishment;
- Adopters will be contacted annually to confirm continuation in the program;
- Maintenance instructions will be explicit and the trees will be on a pruning cycle of 3, 6, 9, and 12 years and then onto an 8 year pruning cycle;
- Regarding questionable arborist training and certification, City staff have encountered arbor work that does not adhere to the City's tree bylaw and has issued warning letters and fines. As well, some companies have submitted false reports which staff have also acted upon;
- The City aims to educate homeowners on best practices with respect to trees; and,

- The City may consider incentives for container gardening for residents who live in condominiums, and possibly include trees in the plant sale that can be grown in containers.

Discussion ensued, and a Committee member shared that although they reside in a condominium, they would like the opportunity to adopt a tree.

3.3 New Westminster Aquatic and Community Centre (NWACC) Update

Steve Kellock, Sr. Manager of Recreation Services and Facilities, provided a presentation update of the New Westminster Aquatic and Community Centre.

In response to questions, staff advised:

- While there will be alternate entry routes to the main lobby, the primary entrances will feature revolving doors which follows best practices for energy efficiency;
- Hallway widths at the aquatic centre will exceed minimum required standards; the design meets the gold level for the Rick Hansen Accessibility Certification which exceeds building code standards;
- Alternate entry points to the pool areas may be used during special events in order to avoid a bottleneck moving from the lobby to the change rooms and when engagement with the front desk is not necessary;
- The leisure pool would be used for privacy swims and the shallow end of the lap pool could be used for a variety of things such as swim lessons and water therapy;
- The many play structures are interchangeable, ensuring adaptability over time;
- While the glass walls will not be tinted, they will have UV protection, blinds that can come down, and be north facing. Avoiding having birds hit the glass walls is a consideration that has been brought to the City's attention;
- The project will increase the site's overall tree canopy coverage;
- Currently, an update on the Federal and Provincial Infrastructure grant application has not been received; however, staff will be travelling to Ottawa next week and seek an update at that time;
- The City has also applied for a child care grant through the Province, will also submit an application to JumpStart for an accessibility grant, and continue to explore other avenues for third party funding;
- Civil relocates, including sewer and electrical, will commence in the spring and will not affect the closing date of the recycling centre which has been moved to the end of March;
- The anticipated completion date of the facility, including the demolition of the old facility, is early 2023; and,
- Regarding interim parking impacts, the site currently has 321 stalls, however, once construction starts, half the number of stalls will be available. The City is

striving to ensure that construction workers park off site, lessen the need for staff to park on site, and work with the Justice Institute to use their parking facilities evenings and weekends.

As this was the last meeting of the Parks and Recreation Committee, Councillor McEvoy shared that it had been a great pleasure working with the Committee, which added a lot to the City's various projects.

Councillor Das expressed her gratitude to Committee members and shared that she had learned a lot from the Committee.

Dean Gibson, Director of Parks and Recreation, advised the Committee that although this was the last meeting of the Committee, staff will continue to engage the community through the various new advisory committees to a broader constituency. Mr. Gibson thanked Committee members for their work and encouraged everyone to continue to let the City know what is working well and what may need improvement within the City.

4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There were no items.

5.0 REPORTS

There were no items.

6.0 CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items.

7.0 NEW BUSINESS

There were no items.

8.0 NEXT MEETING

This was the final meeting of the Parks and Recreation Committee.

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting was adjourned at
8:16 p.m.

CARRIED.

Certified correct,

Original Signed

Councillor Jaimie McEvoy
Chair

Original Signed

Carilyn Cook
Committee Clerk