

M E E T I N G M I N U T E S #1

Project:	Pleasant Valley Park Master Plan Public Meeting #1		
Date:	April 13, 2004	Project code:	PVP
Presenters:	Terry Snyder, Vancouver-Clark Parks & Rec. Alex Schwartz, Mayer/Reed Chris Ingalls, Mayer/Reed		

Welcome and Introduction

The Vancouver-Clark Parks & Recreation Department is reviewing the current uses of Pleasant Valley Park and exploring what changes and improvements could be made. The outcome of the exploration will be a master plan document consisting of a preferred design alternative and supporting documentation. The master plan will guide specific park improvements in the future.

After reviewing input and ideas generated at this meeting, the design team will propose alternative concepts. These alternatives will be presented for comments at a second public open house. After considering input regarding the concepts, Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation and the design team will select a single preferred alternative. This preferred alternative will be made available for public comment prior to the documentation of a final master plan.

The park was originally constructed to provide both open space and stormwater storage in conjunction with the Pleasant Valley Highlands development. In partnership with Battle Ground School District, this 40-acre site blends with the school property to create a unique community park. Existing facilities include benches, picnic tables, walkway, open lawn area, and access to Salmon Creek.

Natural Resources

There was general agreement that the wetlands, riparian and upland habitats located in the lower portion of site are important natural resources worthy of restoration and protection. There was discussion that future improvements to this area of the park be limited in scope, compatible with passive recreation, and designed to be environmentally sensitive. Both the Clark County Habitat Protection Ordinance and the Washington Shoreline Protection Act serve to protect these habitats from inappropriate disturbance.

Residents remarked that coyote are common in the park in addition to birds and small mammals that are typical of the region.

Volunteer programs have been created to remove invasive vegetation and restore the site with native plantings. Meeting participants (several who were involved with the effort last summer) expressed an interest in supporting ongoing efforts to restore and protect the sensitive habitats in the lower portion of the site.

Meeting participants were interested in the idea of providing some interpretative signage about the ecology, restoration, and natural history of the lower site.

It was noted that water quality of Salmon Creek is impacted by both upstream and on site activities. There was discussion about possible ways to protect the riparian habitat from inappropriate uses and direct access from NE 50th.

Park Facilities & Team Sports

There were varied opinions within the group about adding new park amenities such as sports fields for soccer and baseball, restrooms, and a children's play area. Several meeting participants expressed interest in an expanded park-wide trail system that would link amenities such as benches and picnic tables. There was also interest in group sports facilities such as horseshoes, bocce' ball, and volleyball. There was discussion that during the fall season team sports fields are in short supply in the area. However, it was noted that at Pleasant Valley, current parking demands already exceed off-street availability.

There was also discussion that planting more traditional park trees (large canopy shade trees) throughout the undeveloped areas would be appreciated. It was suggested that an official off-leash dog area between the wooded slope and school's existing sports fields would be a desirable park amenity.

Parking and Circulation

Several meeting participants expressed concern over existing parking and circulation issues associated with team sports at Pleasant Valley School and other special events on campus. It was discussed that during peak use, the school's parking lot cannot adequately accommodate the number of vehicles. Visitors routinely park vehicles along NE 50th, NE 142nd, NE 47th and NE 143rd Circle during these peak times.

Concerns were raised regarding the impact of new sports fields in the park, given that the existing parking lot at the school is over capacity. It was discussed that Battle Ground School District (BGSD) and Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation would study the feasibility of a redesigned parking facility to better accommodate parking at both the park and school. It was suggested that the feasibility of new sports fields would be directly linked to the ability to provide additional off-street parking at the school or in the park. At present the school parking lot is the only parking facility that serves the park.

There was widespread support for the development of a pedestrian linkage between Pleasant Valley Park and WSU Vancouver trail system to the west. The feasibility of this linkage would need to be explored with Clark County Public Works when planning for improvements to NE Salmon Creek Ave. commences.

END MINUTES