

**APPROVED AUGUST 10<sup>TH</sup>**

**CITY OF EDMONDS  
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**

**July 27, 2016**

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Chair Lovell called the meeting of the Edmonds Planning Board to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Public Safety Complex, 250 – 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue North.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Philip Lovell, Chair  
Matthew Cheung  
Todd Cloutier  
Nathan Monroe  
Daniel Robles  
Valerie Stewart

**STAFF PRESENT**

Rob Chave, Planning Division Manager  
Carrie Hite, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director  
Jerry Bevington, Video Recorder

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**

Carreen Rubenkönig, Vice Chair (excused)  
Alicia Crank (excused)

**READING/APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**BOARD MEMBER STEWART MOVED THAT THE MINUTES OF JUNE 22, 2016 BE APPROVED AS PRESENTED. BOARD MEMBER MONROE SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGENDA**

The agenda was accepted as presented.

**AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

**Dick Van Hollebeke, Edmonds**, said he is a member of the community planning group for the Civic Center Master Plan. He is very much in favor of the process, which is a golden opportunity to design a park in the middle of the town. His interest is in creating a plan that is best for the community and results in the best overall use of the nearly eight acres of parkland. He participates on the planning group to specifically represent the viewpoint of the Edmonds Petanque Club, but not at the exclusion of other viewpoints. The Petanque Club was voted Citizen of the Year for Edmonds for all of the public outreach it has done. The Club is the largest user of the Civic Center Field as it is presently configured, and the courts draw a large number of people of all ages. The overall size of the park is 348,000 square feet, and the the Petanque Club is hoping that the master plan will accommodate eight permanent courts, each about 750 square feet, for a total area of roughly 6,600. This would be less than .5% of the overall park space. In addition, the club is hoping that the final design will include open space (perhaps 150' x 150') that can be used for many different activities, including Petanque tournaments. Rather than grass, this could be a dirt surface that is suitable for a multitude of uses. He concluded that the consultant's presentation to the Board will amaze them as to the potential possibilities, and it is important that all viewpoints are represented.

## **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTOR REPORT TO PLANNING BOARD**

Chair Lovell referred the Board to the written report that was provided by the Development Services Director dated July 8, 2016.

Board Member Stewart reported that she attended the grand opening for the Green Resource Center. She recalled that the concept was first discussed by the Planning Board in 2010 as a place where green materials could be accessible to the public and developers. Former City Council Member Strom Peterson pursued and obtained funding for the project, which is now a reality. She thanked all who were involved in the project, which the City can be proud of showcasing to the surrounding communities.

Chair Lovell asked if any action was taken by the City Council relative to the sign code. Mr. Chave said the City Council is considering a couple of amendments, and the code should be presented to the Council for final adoption on August 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## **RECOGNITION OF PARKS AND RECREATION MONTH**

Ms. Hite announced that July has been named Parks and Recreation Month by the National Recreation Association, which gives an opportunity for cities to recognize the importance and value of parks and recreation in communities. Open space, park land and park activities increase the quality of life for citizens and communities. She invited the Edmonds community to participate in the City's wide array of programs that are scheduled throughout the summer, and she commended the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services staff for all of their effort.

Chair Lovell referred to the City's proclamation, designating July as Park and Recreation Month. On behalf of the Board and as a private citizen, he thanked the Parks staff for their continuous effort with respect to parks and recreation opportunities. A lot has happened in recent years, and more is underway. Irrespective of the economic conditions that existed in previous years, by and large the citizenry of the towns and cities greatly supported their parks and recreation programs, including authorization for additional funds via park levies to supplement and add to parks programs and/or physical plans. Everyone in Edmonds, young and old, places a very high value on parks and the work that staff does.

## **UPDATE ON CIVIC CENTER MASTER PLAN**

Ms. Hite said the topic of tonight's discussion is the Civic Center Master Plan. The consultant has prepared a great presentation, and the staff and consultant are seeking guidance and additional ideas from the Planning Board as the process moves forward. She reviewed that the City closed on the purchase of the property from the Edmonds School District in February of 2016, and immediately sent out a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a consultant team to assist the community in developing a master plan for the 8-acre site in the downtown. Walker/Macy was selected as the consultant.

Ms. Hite announced that a kick-off meeting to launch the master plan was held at the May 3<sup>rd</sup> City Council Meeting and was well attended. Since that time, a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) was formed to listen to public comments, help the staff and consulting team decipher the information and provide guidance to the Planning Board and City Council as they decide what is going to be best for the community. Two PAC meetings have been held since the kick-off meeting, along with an in-person open house and virtual open house that were well attended. The staff and consulting team met with stakeholder groups over a period of three days (Boys and Girls Club, Petanque Club, Sno-King Youth Club, etc.) to solicit their thoughts. The PAC has reviewed all of the preliminary input that is now being presented to the Planning/Park Board for additional guidance. A presentation to the City Council is scheduled on August 9<sup>th</sup>. The input provided by the Planning Board and City Council will be used by the consulting team to prepare alternative designs to present at the next open house. She said she anticipates that the master plan will be a robust conversation in the community for the next six months. There are both conflicting and collaborative interests, and the community must be very thoughtful as decisions are made.

**Chris Jones, Principal and Landscape Architect, Walker/Macy**, said he has been pleasantly surprised at the amount of interest and involvement in the Civic Center Master Plan, which has been a very democratic process from his perspective. City staff has done a great job of shepherding a difficult public project through. He provided an aerial photograph of the site to illustrate the significance of place and scale of the park. He emphasized that there are no plans and/or concepts on the table, and there are not any preconceived notions of what should and should not be in the park. It is his job to see that the

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master plan is done through a democratic process that responds to community sentiment. He reviewed some of the activities that currently occur on the site:

- The Taste of Edmonds generally takes over the majority of the site once each year. He and Ms. Hite have met with the Chamber to explore options for consolidating the event's footprint so that the park can be successful 365 days per year.
- Active recreation uses include Petanque, skate park, and youth sports activities.
- There are two existing structures on site: the field house and grandstands. The Historic Preservation Commission recently recommended that the entire Civic Center site be listed on the Edmonds Register of Historic Properties. They further recommended that the fieldhouse be listed as a historic structure. While the grandstands were not included in the action, the Commission recommended that the master plan recognize the significance of place and what the grandstands reflect of the community. The grandstands are currently undergoing structural review.

Mr. Jones said that as they consider potential park programs, it is important to keep in mind that there are site and/or deed restrictions on six of the eight acres. He provided a graphic to illustrate the two acres that have no restrictions, as well as the six acres where deed restrictions apply. The restrictions include prohibiting parking and minimizing impervious surfaces. Also, large structures would be prohibited, but small structures would be allowed. No artificial turf fields would be allowed within the deed-restricted areas, either.

Mr. Jones advised that the potential park themes have been organized around the following components:

- **Civic Uses** could include a plaza, café, water feature, performance space, art, promenade, covered market space, museum display and restrooms.
- **Passive Uses** could include multi-use lawn areas, horticulture or stormwater gardens, berms, shade trees, picnic areas, strolling path and shade pavilion.
- **Active Uses** could include an exercise path, creative play, seasonal games, classes, clubhouse and concessions.
- **Event Uses** could include theater performances, markets, music, culinary events, art installations and fun runs.

Using the information collected to date and discussions by the PAC, Mr. Jones advised that nine boards were developed for the open house. The four informational boards provided contextual information on the site, the surrounding conditions and adjacencies that should be considered, the deed restrictions, and scales of similar-sized parks that people may be aware of in the Northwest. The five interactive boards revolved around the active/passive recreational elements of the site. The five boards were put up around the room and participants were asked to vote on what activities they would like to continue, what other program elements they would like to see, what active recreation activities they would like to see (including restrooms, bleachers, etc.), other ideas they have that should be captured as part of the master planning process, and where Civic Center currently falls relative to passive and active uses.

Mr. Jones said that model stations were also set up at the open house. An aerial photo of the civic site was provided, with the deed restricted area clearly identified. Puzzle pieces of different scaled program elements (i.e. soccer fields, basketball courts, parking, promenades, water features, bleachers, etc.) that could fit within the park were provided, and participants were invited to place the pieces on the site map. There were over 130 attendees at the open house, where Mayor Earling gave a brief introduction and reiterated the significance of the project to the community. The staff and consultant provided a brief presentation, and the remainder of the time was used for the community to interact with the boards and place the pins to identify the program elements they wanted to see at the park. The feedback was amazing, and the design team is very thankful for the amount of involvement the community has had. He reviewed that active uses were clearly the most important elements for the park, with passive being second and civic third. Most participants indicated a desire for existing activities to remain within the Civic Center, with a smattering of additional program elements (jogging/walking path, restrooms, horticultural gardens, etc.) The results from the on-line open house closely resembled the in-person open house. Three days of stakeholder meetings were also held and the general sentiment reflected the feedback from both the in-person and on-line open houses. However, the stakeholder meetings focused on a much higher level of conversation than the on-line and in-person open houses.

Mr. Jones advised that after the City Council briefing on August 9<sup>th</sup>, the consulting team and staff will develop alternative plans to present at the August 24<sup>th</sup> in-person and on-line open houses. He anticipates that the next open house will include a review of the information received so far, as well as a presentation of the alternatives that reflect community sentiment. Additional discussion and information will be presented to the Planning Board on September 14<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Lovell noted that the survey results can be found on line and asked if the master plan process would be similar to the approach used for the Marina Beach Park Master Plan. Mr. Jones answered affirmatively and explained that the consultant, staff and PAC will work to prepare two or three alternatives for the public to respond to. As the process moves forward, favorable elements of each of the alternatives will be combined to create a preferred alternative.

Board Member Robles noted that some elements of the park, such as parking, are necessary, but may not be desirable. He asked if civic activities ranked lower because they draw a larger crowd and parking issues result. He also asked the consultant to share his ideas about parking. Mr. Jones agreed that people shy away from the civic uses primarily because of potential impacts such as noise and parking. From experience, there is a perception that once the civic uses are developed to attract larger crowds, the park will no longer be desirable for the citizens to use. He acknowledged that parking is always a significant concern. Because there is such limited open space in the downtown, it is difficult for him to advocate for parking to take up a large portion of the park area.

Board Member Cloutier reminded the Board that, currently, the community is in a very active discussion about the renovation and/or replacement of the South County Senior Center. Should an alternative site be required for the new facility, he asked if there is room on the Civic Center property to accommodate the Senior Center facility. Mr. Jones answered that a 20,000 square foot building would likely fit on the two acres of property that are not restricted by deed. However, there has been some discussion about the Boys and Girls Club remaining on the site and potentially expanding. Board Member Cloutier said that although the fieldhouse is a historic building, it does not really fit the needs of the Boys and Girls Club. He suggested that some thought be given to creating a new facility that could serve as the Boys and Girls Club/Senior Center. He also asked if a restroom structure would be considered a minor structure or would it have to be placed within the two, unrestricted acres.

Ms. Hite said the restrictions placed on the 2-acre portion of the property by the state are very open and allow for restrooms, parking lots, and other amenities that will serve the City's needs as a park. However, the County's restrictions on the remaining 6-acre portion are more limiting. The biggest factor is that it cannot be developed with more than 10% impervious surface, or about 26,000 feet, and trails would be exempt. The impervious surface can include parking lots, picnic shelters, restrooms, etc., but it cannot be more than 10%.

Ms. Hite reminded the Planning Board that the City Council entered into a long-term land lease with the current non-profit Senior Center. That doesn't mean the community cannot have a conversation and reconsider the location of the Senior Center, but a robust group is already campaigning for funding with control of the land as it currently sits.

Mr. Chave clarified that the Historic Preservation Commission voted to look into the historic quality of the fieldhouse and site, but they felt the grandstand did not meet the characteristics necessary for inclusion on the register. They have not actually finished their assessment of the site, in general, or the Boys and Girls Club, specifically. While they have agreed there is some historic character present, they have not determined that it is eligible for the Historic Register.

Board Member Stewart asked if there have been one or two on-line surveys. Mr. Jones answered one. Board Member Stewart asked for an estimate on the number of people who responded to the on-line open houses. Mr. Jones clarified that there were 200 visitors and 135 responses. Not all the visitors responded. Board Member Stewart said it would be helpful to have a breakdown on the ages of the 135 respondents. Ms. Hite said information relative to age is not available, since only 31 of the respondents answered the demographic questions. Board Member Stewart noted that about 2/3 of the 31 people who provided demographic information were in the "over 45" category. She recalled that the PAC had a discussion about the difficulty of reaching out to the younger population, particularly in the summer. However, a young student has agreed to assist the City's effort via social media. Although the older residents have more time to attend meetings and become involved in the process, input from the younger citizens is also important to the process. She suggested they hold out for more response from the younger people during the next open house. Ms. Hite said that the past on-line open house was

launched the day after the in-person open house, and the length of time was expanded to three weeks. The same timeline will likely be used for the next series of open houses. Board Member Stewart suggested that the on-line open house should be available for a longer period of time. Mr. Jones agreed that would be possible. He explained that the purpose behind the 3-week window is that they eventually start to see the same patterns arise over time. Responses drop off significantly if the City is not actively advertising the opportunity.

Board Member Stewart said she appreciates that Petanque is a very popular activity right now, and she has walked by the courts to observe how the game is played. She emphasized that the master plan should be inclusive and provide ways to overlay activities on the same space so that one activity does not have a total monopoly. She asked if different types of surfaces could be used for Petanque and if something could be rolled out over the surface to accommodate another type of activity.

**Mr. Van Hollenbeke** answered that the courts are framed by white, 4' x 12' pressure treated timbers that are partially sunk into the ground. The current court size of 15' x 50' (750 square feet) is slightly larger than regulation size to accommodate boundaries. He acknowledged that people in other countries play Petanque in pathways, but their parks are not typically as structured as those in the United States. Grass does not work, but they have used dirt soccer fields for tournaments. The Petanque Club's concept is a multi-purpose surface of about 150' x 150' for tournaments. This would be slightly larger than the infield of a baseball field, which is 110' x 110' and could be used for a number of activities. They are also asking for 8 courts with crushed rock that would occupy 6,600 square feet in a park that is 348,000 square feet in size.

Board Member Stewart noted that Bocce is a similar sport. She asked Mr. Van Hollenbeke to share his experience with Bocce. She also asked how many of those who participate in Petanque are younger than 30 years old. Mr. Van Hollenbeke said he has played Bocce and it is very enjoyable. Petanque is another activity entirely. It is fun and simple to learn, and it intrigues a lot of people. He acknowledged that the sport appeals more to senior members of the community, but there are numerous stories about how the game (and club) has changed people's lives. They teach citizens of all ages how to play the game, including youth from the Boys and Girls Club.

Board Member Stewart voiced concern that eight might be too many Petanque courts. She suggested that it could be reduced by half. Mr. Van Hollenbeke said the club started with a handful of members and worked with the City to establish one court. Within months, the sport became very popular, and the Petanque Club raised funding for the materials and the City performed the installation of two more courts. In order to more readily include the Boys and Girls Club, the club received a grant to construct a fourth court. Normally, four to six people can play on a court. The club has over 100 members, and hundreds of other people play, as well. He emphasized that the community is predominantly seniors, and the proposed eight courts would only occupy .5% of the total park square footage.

Board Member Stewart said her background extends to 10 years working with the older adult population, and she was schooled at the University of Washington in Aging Exercise Studies. She appreciates the need for activities that are more suitable to an aging body, and Petanque works well in that regard. However, unlike Bocce, Petanque seems to appeal more to older-aged citizens. She would hate to see something exclusively set aside for just the older adult age group. She would hope there could be versatility on that same space.

Board Member Stewart noted that the potential park elements do not include an open space grass area where Frisbee and other activities could take place. She appreciates that fitness trails were mentioned as an option since they can be designed to appeal to any age.

Board Member Stewart expressed her belief that the grandstands should be removed, but she suggested that a portion could be retained as a potential lookout, pavilion or place to see the gorgeous view. She also voiced support for Board Member Cloutier's earlier recommendation that the Civic Center would be a great location for a senior center, particularly in conjunction with the Petanque courts. A combination Boys and Girls Club/Community Center/Senior Center would make sense on that site to provide a variety of activities for everyone to enjoy. Ms. Hite said one element that was very popular in the public comments was a grass, multi-use lawn area for drop in soccer, ultimate Frisbee, etc.

Board Member Cheung asked what other uses could occur on a Petanque surface. Mr. Jones said the challenge is that uses that go on top of the courts need to be moveable. He said the design team has done similar Petanque courts in parks, and

decomposed granite is a common material. They have had a lot of success putting the use within a bosque of trees and providing moveable tables and chairs under the trees can result in an elegant and nice environment. They have also designed Petanque and Bocce courts that do not have a barrier around them, and the club appears to be amenable to areas that are not completely enclosed. Whatever the secondary use, it must be moveable.

Board Member Monroe asked if a play structure would be incorporated into the site, and Mr. Jones answered affirmatively. Board Member Monroe noted that a large number of people who live near the park are older. He voiced concern that this may skew the input that comes in. Mr. Jones acknowledged that, typically, downtown parks are surrounded by denser, mixed-use development. In those instances, noise is not such a concern. The Civic Center has unique adjacency with single-family and multi-family residential development surrounding it. He said he is not going to recommend changes to the City's park program unless directed by the City and community. The community has voiced their input relative to priorities, but the PAC has recognized that some of the input may be skewed. The design team will work with staff, the City Council and the Planning Board to vet the input carefully. Board Member Monroe asked if Mr. Jones believes that the community input thus far has been 100% representative of community sentiment. Mr. Jones said it is not 100%, but the PAC had a lengthy discussion about the results and felt they were generally representative of the community desires.

Mr. Jones summarized that there are a lot of athletic fields, open space and playgrounds in Edmonds. The big question is whether the downtown park should be athletic fields or an active civic site. That is the question they tried to get answered via the survey.

Ms. Hite commented that in the next iteration, as the design team puts the components on paper and analyzes the alternatives, the intent is to reach out to more people and make sure the results are equitable. They will also consider options for limiting the number of votes to prevent potential skewing and to gain a better understanding of the demographics of respondents. She commented that a youth member participates on the PAC and will help the City reach out to the younger citizens. Mr. Jones added that the number one goal for the success of the park should be to make the plan as flexible as possible. They can't assume what the community needs will be in the future, so whatever is developed needs to be flexible.

Chair Lovell recalled that the athletic fields were originally developed to serve the adjacent high school use, which is no longer present. He expressed his belief that there are plenty of other athletic facilities in Edmonds, particularly of the nature that requires large areas. He suggested the design team be very careful about overusing the site for large-scale athletic activities. He also expressed his belief that the grandstands should be eliminated. They are very unsightly, unusable and unsafe, and they take up valuable land. Furthermore, the historic investigation left the grandstands off the list of candidates for the historic register. As to the fieldhouse, it is clear that the building is not appropriate for its current Boys and Girls Club use. The Boys and Girls Club activities are important to the City, and they have indicated a desire for a new structure of between 18,000 and 25,000 square feet. Given the deed restrictions on the site, it is difficult to consider a building of this size for any use.

Chair Lovell referred to the process that was used for the Marina Beach Park Master Plan, which included a number of parameters that dictated some direction as to what the park facilities, accommodations and infrastructure should consist of. He supports Board Member Monroe's concern that the adjacent property owners may be skewing the public comments to date. Given the park's location, he suggested there is potential for a mix of elements that can serve both the neighborhood and the general citizenry. A number of people have indicated that Petanque courts are a high priority, and this should be reflected in the design. Trees and walking paths are also high priorities that should be integrated into multiple layouts. He likes the idea of being able to use the Petanque courts for something other than the activity, itself. He said he is very sensitive to parking issues, which have also been a concern relative to the railroad crossing and the waterfront community center. The City has a parking problem already, and sooner or later it will have to be addressed.

Chair Lovell reminded the Board that there are restrictions relative to the use of the site. He suggested that a feasibility rationale or grading system should be applied to each potential element that emerges as part of the alternatives to determine the best use for the portion of property that has fewer restrictions. It is important to understand what can and cannot be done and what improvements would provide the most benefit for the valuable square footage.

Ms. Hite advised that the City is currently conducting a structural analysis of the grandstands. While the City owns the land, there are deed restrictions that require the City to follow the state process, which includes a structural analysis before the

grandstands can be removed. She also advised that the Boys and Girls Club have been involved throughout the process as a stakeholder. A member of the club also participates on the PAC. They have reflected to the City that they are very interested in staying at the Civic Center, but they are also considering other alternatives in the downtown. They have acknowledged that the current building does not serve their needs well. While they have not said they would like to build an 18,000 to 25,000 square foot building at Civic Center, they have indicated that is the model that is successful for similar clubs.

Chair Lovell commented that the master plan process is very exciting, and he is glad that there is a lot of community interest. The PAC is well engaged in the process, providing good input and raising thoughtful questions. The park is a valuable piece of property in the heart of the City, and this should be reflected in its use and programming.

Chair Lovell reviewed that the consultant and staff will present additional information to the Board on at least two more occasions before they are asked to conduct a public hearing and forward a recommendation to the City Council relative to a preferred alternative for the Civic Center Master Plan.

### **REVIEW OF EXTENDED AGENDA**

Chair Lovell asked for an update on the City Council's direction to the Board relative to the Five Corners Subarea Plan. Mr. Chave answered that the City Council indicated a desire to start the process before the end of 2016, beginning with a presentation to bring the new Board members up-to-date on the work that was done previously by a consulting team from the University of Washington.

Chair Lovell advised that the next briefing on the Civic Center Master Plan is scheduled for September 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **PLANNING BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS**

Chair Lovell did not provide any additional comments.

### **PLANNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Board Member Monroe reported on his attendance at the Citizens Economic Development Commission meeting, where they established priorities for the year and divided into subcommittees. Actual products for the Council's consideration should start to emerge in the next three to four months.

Board Member Stewart asked when the Stormwater Code Update would come before the Board for consideration. Mr. Chave answered that the Stormwater Code Update will go straight to the City Council and will not be reviewed by the Planning Board. He encouraged her to contact the Engineering Division for more information about the process.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The Board meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

**APPROVED**