



Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, Feb. 21, 2024

4:30 p.m.

Vancouver City Hall

Aspen Room

415 W. 6th Street

Vancouver, WA

Commissioners Present:

Haygood, Fletcher, Wille, Kuntz, Thompson, and Robbins

Commissioners Absent:

Piland, Otto, and Panter

Staff Present:

Perlick, Cook, Gutierrez, Guzman, Burton, Stokke, Meade, Brosius, Donovan, Heath, Nilo, Hull, and Tubberville

Guests:

None

Item 1: Call to Order

Chair Haygood called the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC) special meeting to order at 4:36 p.m. in Aspen Room at Vancouver City Hall and online via Microsoft Teams. Piland, Otto, and Panter were absent.

Haygood introduced Commissioner Jenny Thompson, who shared a brief introduction and background of her work.

Members

Jayne Haygood

President

Angilo Fletcher

Vice President

Jeremy Robbins

Mathew Kuntz

Jenny Thompson

Stephen Wille

Kerry Otto

AJ Panter, VPS

Cale Piland, EPS

Vacant, Parks Foundation

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Item 2: Approval of Minutes

PRAC approved the January 24, 2024, meeting minutes by consensus.

Item 3: Public Comment

None presented.

Item 4: Shaffer Park Master Plan Presentation

Roman Gutierrez (Park Developer, PRCS) and Melody Burton (Senior Communications Specialist, PRCS) introduced the Raymond E. Shaffer Park Master for commission approval.

Shaffer Park is currently undeveloped with a diverse and growing service area. Features that make this park unique include community access to nature in a populated city area, groves of large trees in the center and edges of the park, a grassy lawn area at the center, and wood chip trails.

Burton shared the comprehensive community outreach process for the past 2 years. Community feedback helped identify current uses of the park to be incorporated into the design, inviting users to collaborate in creating the final vision of the master plan. This process builds community and connections for future outreach. To include more voices, tools such as digital, print, and in-person resources with translations were utilized.

The first Open House was held in March of 2022, followed by a Design Workshop and online survey in February of 2023. The second Open House was held in June of 2023. Additional targeted community engagement connected with teens and the Latino community to form new relationships and inform other projects. The third Open House was held on February 3, 2024, as the final chance for the community to review master plan before its presentation to PRAC.

Gutierrez shared about the long-term vision of the master plan and highlighted that PRCS will continue to go back to the community for ongoing feedback through each phase. Proposed features include parallel parking to extend parking, refined tree canopy plans, paved circulation for paths, additional pedestrian street lighting, a fenced dog area, and additional amenities such as play areas, sport courts, and picnic areas.

The current budget has \$2.44 million set aside for Shaffer Park in the current biennium. The cost to complete all items identified on the master plan is \$12 million. Completing first phase of construction will move the park from undeveloped site to a developed community park. Grants will be explored for additional funding after master plan approval.

Phase 1 Development Plan is based on available budget and on priorities highlighted from the community. These include improvements with parking, a bike lane, a curb sidewalk, and stormwater planters. Phase 1 also includes a paved walking loop, a refresh of the existing wood chip paths, additional benches, and an improved and refreshed open lawn area. A fenced, off-leash dog area, space for forest play and a paved picnic area with tables will also be included. We are also exploring additional City funding to potentially include a Portland Loo in Phase 1. Opportunities to maintain the fruit trees are being explored with the community.

Development Timeline after PRAC approval sets Phase 1 construction to begin in 2025.

The commission engaged in an open discussion. Robbins expressed concern about the accessibility of wood chip paths. Gutierrez shared that in Phase 1 we are keeping and refreshing the existing chip trails, and in future phases convert them to soft-surface paths for long-term use, with the central paved trail still being available.

Thompson asked about the decision not to provide lighting for the entire path. Gutierrez shared that the main objective is to provide a safe route after dark, and that impacts for nearby residents were also considered. Wille recommended also considering the impacts of the lights upon pollinators for the habitat moving forward. Use of park lights for promoting park hours, possibly through use of solar lighting, were suggested to align with the Climate Action Plan.

Wille recommended providing signage to help prepare the community for the pollinator spaces, as pollinators are most active during the summer. It will be a great educational opportunity to spread awareness.

Kuntz suggested adding signage to indicate which trails are mixed-use for bikes or pedestrian only, as the pump tracks will likely attract more bike users.

Fletcher commented that the master plan is ultimately very well put-together, accessible, and addresses the needs of the community. He commended the team's incorporated feedback and community engagement in this project.

Haygood congratulated the team on phenomenal outreach and setting the bar high for future parks. She encouraged commissioners to be part of those opportunities and see what is involved with building parks.

Haygood cautioned that limited visibility behind the parallel-parked cars might be a concern for pedestrians, cyclists, and families. Fletcher seconded the concern and advised treating the area like a school zone with signage or flashing lights children crossing. Gutierrez shared we have a traffic engineer consultant on the team, and street parking will provide the opportunity to phase in the parking for the long-term lot plan.

Haygood asked if the pump track can be picked up or rearranged. Gutierrez confirmed that it will be stationary, built with a steel frame augured into the ground with a rubberized track on the steel base.

It was established that decisions related to the pavilion area are still under design under grant restrictions and will be part of ongoing community engagement. Haygood inquired about pickleball in the sport courts. Perlick addressed the proximity of housing, however we are resurfacing the courts at Fisher Basin and looking at other community-wide opportunities to meet the demand. It was confirmed that the design will include bike racks and native plants in the landscaping.

Haygood inquired about all the languages spoken in our outreach. All materials, signage and surveys were available in English, Spanish, Russian, and Ukrainian based on demographics in the surrounding service area.

Robbins inquired whether phase 1 will include van-accessible parking spaces. Gutierrez informed that the on-street parking will have 2 accessible spaces with the loading/unloading space between them with an access out of those spaces. In future phases, the lot will have additional van-accessible spaces to reduce those barriers.

Kuntz made a motion to approve the Raymond E. Shaffer Community Park full site master plan and corresponding phase 1 construction plan. The motion was seconded by Wille and unanimously approved.

Item 5: Director's Report

Perlick highlighted department updates including two new playgrounds coming to central Vancouver parks this month. Columbia Lancaster Park and Van Vleet Park were ready for an update after 30 years of play. Neighbors who live nearby helped choose playground themes and equipment through surveys and pop-up open house events.

The Family Valentine's Ball was a success earlier this month. Families had a wonderful time celebrating together at the Historic Hangar at Pearson Air Museum. Over the course of both nights, they served over 430 people.

Registration for Community Gardens opened today for returning gardeners at our five community garden sites across the City.

The recreation team has been adding a variety of fun, family-focused activities this spring, held at Firstenburg Community Center. The activities include BINGO, Family Pickleball Night, a Fort Building Competition, All Ages Trivia, and Kids Night Out sessions.

We're hosting the AARP Tax Aide program at Marshall Community Center again this year, offering free tax preparation assistance on Thursdays and Fridays through April 12.

Applications for the [Culture, Arts and Heritage Grants Program](#) are now open through April 7. This program is designed to support performances, exhibitions, activities, and public art that showcase the best of Vancouver's creative community. Grants range from \$1,000 to \$10,000 and support projects happening between July 2024 and November 2025. The Culture, Arts and Heritage Commission is also hosting a series of optional application workshops.

The [Waterfront Gateway Plaza Design survey](#) is open through the end of the month. We have currently received 317 responses to the online survey, which will be incorporated with the feedback collected at the project open house earlier this month.

There is no update from the Parks Foundation on the commission vacancy yet.

Item 6: Chair Report

None presented.

Item 7: Evergreen School District Report

None presented.

Item 8: Vancouver Public School Report

None presented.

Item 9: Open Discussion & New Business

Fletcher emphasized a job well done on the Raymond E. Shaffer Master Plan.

ADJOURNED

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:57 p.m.