

**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Tuesday, May 4, 2010**  
**Assembly Chambers, 6PM**

**I. ROLL CALL: 6:01pm**

**Members Present:** Jeff Wilson, Jeff Sloss, Kate Walters, Melissa Goldstein, Jim King, Dixie Hood, Chris Mertl, Ray Howard, James Tipps

**Assembly Liaison Absent:** Randy Wanamaker

**Staff Liaison:** Marc Matsil, Director; Helene Bennett, Administrative Assistant II, Kevin Brady, Landscape Superintendent, Gary Gillette, Docks & Harbors

- II. PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS** – Andrew Gruening, Juneau resident and avid mountain-biker would like to establish a bike trail with jumps, tracks, etc. His proposal is in the conceptual stage. Mr. Howard asked the type of mountain bikes, size of group, preferred locations being sought. Mr. Gruening said there were many hiking/cross country trails available, but would like to see greater variety. George Schaaf, Executive Director of Trail Mix, PO Box 35693, Juneau, has been working with Mr. Gruening and is willing to assist in the effort. Mr. Howard asked about the potential for Eaglecrest or Fish Creek quarry? Mr. Gruening said these were possibilities. Mr. Matsil added that a group from the Coast Guard worked with the Department four years ago to establish a BMX trail at Aantiyek Park—but have since departed Juneau. The BMX group roughed-out a trail. This may have potential.

- III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA** . Mr. Jeff Sloss motioned to approve. Approved.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

A. April 6, 2010 – Mr. Chris Mertl motion. Approved.

**V. REPORT FROM ASSEMBLY LIAISON** – not in attendance

- VI. CHAIR REPORT** – requested Friends of Capital Park attend an upcoming PRAC meeting to report on status and potential events by the group.. Mr. Matsil said he would coordinate.

**VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT** –

There are two action items and an Information Item on the PRAC Agenda.

**A. Docks & Harbor's Request to Transfer Management of Lot 5** (across from Squire's Rest) from Parks & Recreation to Docks & Harbors to develop a boat launch ramp, on-site parking and relocation of the Parks & Recreation shelter and potential small park area. Last month Gary Gillette presented this proposal as an information item to the PRAC.

**B. Playful City USA application:** Parks & Recreation is in the process of completing the application to be designated a Playful Cities USA City by Kaboom, a non profit playground advocacy group. Parks & Recreation hopes to have Juneau designated as Alaska's first Playful City USA. As a Playful City USA, Juneau would be linked to a network of municipalities that have committed to enhancing their playgrounds, identifying community needs for increased play structures and implementing plans and action to develop and maintain additional and better play structures for children of all ages. Kaboom has distributed \$7 million in playground grants in the past three years to Playful City designees. Kevin Brady, Parks & Landscape Superintendent, will give an update of application process.

**C. Trail Mix Annual Work Plan:** Work will commence this spring on a number of trails. 2009/10 was another great grant year. Trail Mix has been a sensational partner. This year's plans include:

Treadwell Ditch Trail: upgrades including construction of a 45 foot bridge at Lawson Creek, an additional 1,000 linear feet of trail improvements; construction of 13 timber bridges between Blueberry Hills access trail and Gastineau Meadows trail;

Under Thunder Trail construction funded by \$445,000 in grants (6,150 linear feet, 10 foot wide gravel trail) between Jennifer Drive and the Powerline Trail. A pier-supported boardwalk will be constructed.

Perseverance Trail upgrades funded by \$100,000 in grants will include reinforcement of bridge abutments; repair and replace bridge railings;

Lena Point Trail; repair 1,500 linear feet of trail and reconstruct wooden steps;

Eaglecrest Nordic Loop Trail improvements including construction of 4,500 linear feet trail (\$35,000 grant).

Fish Creek Park trail improvements, including construction of Fish Creek foot bridge (partially funded by \$125,000 in grants).

George Schaaf, Executive Director of Trail Mix will give an update of the upcoming trail season.

## VIII. ACTION ITEMS

- A. **Docks & Harbor's Request to Transfer Management of Lot 5** (across from Squire's Rest) from Parks & Recreation to Docks & Harbors to develop a boat launch ramp, on-site parking and relocation of the Parks & Recreation shelter and potential small park area. Gary Gillette, Docks & Harbors Project Manager stated that the existing parking, presently in Parks & Recreation jurisdiction, provides only 30 parking spaces. Patrons often park on the highway. ADOT has requested that formalized parking be established, as highway parking is a safety concern and must cease. A master plan was developed in 2005 and approved—that would have incorporated parking, a launch ramp, shelter, sea walk and park area. Mr. Gillette stated that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service objected to the quantity of the fill in sensitive eelgrass habitat and supported the parking area and Sea-Walk, but not the park area. Mr. Gillette encouraged public comment on the proposal which closes on May 17<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Hood asked if the Environmental Assessment addresses social impacts to the site? Mr. Gillette responded that potential noise levels have been researched. Ms. Hood stated that she was disappointed with present plan after the significant effort to develop the 2005 Master Plan. The reduction of green space/park area and relocation of the shelter adjacent to Glacier Highway is disheartening, she stated. Mr. Gillette said that alternatives have been reviewed, including placing the parking lot on pilings to avoid impacting eelgrass beds, but was cost prohibitive. Ms. Hood suggested that CDD become involved to assist with the parking issue. Mr. Jim King said he would like benches along the sea walk. Mr. Mertl agreed that more park area away from the road is desirable. By adding to the existing lot that is already filled, Mr. Mertl suggested that the park area and shelter be shifted away from the highway. Mr. Gillette stated that Docks & Harbors would maintain the entire site including the shelter, restroom, walkway, buffer, and parking area. Mr. Jeff Sloss motioned to transfer the management and responsibility of Lot 5 to Docks & Harbors. Motion approved.
- B. **Playful City USA Committee; Kevin Brady** –Playful City USA application is in progress. A Play Task Force will be created. If approved, Juneau would be the first in Alaska to receive the designation. Commitments 1-5. Mr. Kevin Brady requested support of the application from PRAC. The commitments include location of new playgrounds, renovation, and making play areas available to children where they live/play A goal is to reduce obesity among kids, reduce video gaming, and keep youth active. Ms. Hood asked if a National Play Date had been selected. Mr. Brady stated that it will be sometime in September. Mr. Howard asked if there are any firm financial commitments. Mr. Brady stated that grants are available through Kaboom. Mr. Mertl supports the group and asked what is the commitment of CBJ for the status? Parks & Recreation would conduct a play space audit, design an action plan for play, establish a play task force, prioritize capital projects, and celebrate an annual play day. Mr. Mertl said a national trend is to move away from static play structures, suggested that P&R would look at new opportunities similar to Project Playground. Mr. Mertl motioned that **PRAC support CBJ process to become Playful City USA Community and**

**support expansion and development of playground and play opportunities in the Juneau area.** Motion approved.

## **IX. INFORMATION ITEMS**

- A. **Trail Mix, Inc. Annual Work Plan for 2010; George Schaaf** – Major highlights of projects for the year are City projects. There are also a few State and Federal projects. Some upcoming events include: Litter free clean up--May 8<sup>th</sup>; National Trail Day--June 5<sup>th</sup> with a celebration at Eagle Beach. Governor Parnell and Mayor Botelho are scheduled to participate. Volunteer work project on Amalga Trail 8am-12pm that day, and cake for State Parks anniversary to take place at Eagle Beach. Trail Mix Crew has worked for last two weeks on Perseverance Trail due to a recent rock-slide, as well as some culvert work and brush clearing. Trail Mix has been clearing tree falls at Auke Lake, DZ, False Outer and Outer Point Trails. This year's work will include Treadwell Ditch Trail bridge and trail improvements (adding bridges to washout areas)-- will continue to work south if time permits. Under Thunder Trail development; Eaglecrest Nordic loop trail; Pt. Lena trail improvements. The Lena Point Neighborhood Association has expressed support and willingness to provide volunteer service (gravel parking lot next to trailhead just before NOAA and follows fence out to the point); Perseverance Trail—complete the trailhead kiosk that Dale Gosnell developed. Thane campground (CBJ Lands & Resources): constructed 12 platforms, some 8x8, 12x12, constructed trailer to protect trash receptacles. Mr. King, who was at Lena Point last week said there was an electrical structure by the trail before the hill, alongside a 5-gallon can which appears to be rusting away. Trail Mix will also work on Mt. Juneau trail upgrades. Mt. Roberts: Goldbelt contributes significantly to trail improvement. Rock staircase will be added to the tram terminal. Sheep Creek trail; volunteer project, take out 1<sup>st</sup> section of fall-line trail and hold off on remainder of trail to later date. Pt. Bridget State Park: coordinate volunteers from lower 48, 1500 feet of turnpike will be upgraded at Cowee Meadows Creek. USFS: Dupont Trail restoration; there was a substantial slide at mile 1. Mr. Mertl: thanked Trail Mix. Mr. Howard asked how projects are identified. Mr. Schaaf stated that he worked with the City on an annual work plan and board members determine projects on 3-year cycle. CBJ is their largest supporter; CIP process and grants play a major part.

## **X. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- A. **Youth Activities Board:** Jeff Sloss – met April 12 & 13 for annual distribution/recommendations of \$325,000 to approximately three dozen youth organizations. Recommendations forwarded to Assembly for approval/changes and still awaiting approval.
- B. **State Parks Board:** Jim King – meeting last night at Wickersham house re: tree removal. Mr. Mertl is doing historic landscape planning. Porch has been replaced and almost complete. Establishment of Channel Islands Marine Park is progressing.
- C. **Lands Committee:** Jeff Wilson – Harbors, land trade, leasing on tide lands.
- D. **Urban Forestry Committee:** Chris Mertl – Arbor Day, May 17<sup>th</sup>. Plan is to plant 20 trees at Riverside Rotary Park. Daisies Group (age 5-9), planting in Cope Park, possibly early June.
- E. **Dimond Park Aquatic Center Task Force:** Melissa Goldstein – attended the Committee of the Whole April 12<sup>th</sup>, no public comments were taken with minimal discussion. City Attorney to draft resolution for Enterprise Board to move forward to Assembly at later time. If the Assembly approves, then the referendum goes to Community to vote in the fall.
- F. **Jensen-Olson Arboretum Board:** Kate Walters – Plant sale, May 8<sup>th</sup>; Alaska Public Garden Day, May 29<sup>th</sup>; Summer picnics, June 5, July 10, August 14.
- G. **Docks & Harbors Board:** Dixie Hood—discussion of parking lots. Assembly Member Ruth Danner was in attendance.
- H. **Arctic Winter Games:** Mr. Mertl – at this time no official meeting scheduled, possibly in June.
- I. **Playful Cities USA:** Ms. Walters: Looks forward to the Playful Cities process.
- J. **Trail Mix, Inc.:** Ray Howard – last meeting, Under Thunder trail will commence construction in the spring.

## **XI. CORRESPONDENCE - none**

**XII. CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS - none**

**XIII. BOARD COMMENTS**

**James Tipps:** out of town June and possibly July meeting

**Ray Howard:** none

**Chris Mertl:** 1) Citizens would like to have WiFi available at pool and Treadwell Rink, and recreational facilities. 2) Under the Bridge open space is not zoned as parkland. The community feels the park is a low priority at this point. Mr. Mertl encouraged PRAC input. 3) requested that PRAC packages be prepared few days earlier for pickup.

**Dixie Hood:** appreciation for Chris Mertl participation.

**James Tipps** – no activity on OHV site.

**Jeff Wilson:** downtown parking study and Mental Health Trust was discussed, another potential parking lot next to Zach Gordon Youth Center. Need of parking for 500 cars, looking at possible additional structures. Two priority projects on the Governor's desk that have been recommended by the Legislature include \$1.2 million for a Centennial Hall roof, and/or an emergency generator. On Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup> Parks & Recreation and the Downtown Business Association will sponsor cultural events at Gunakadeit and Marine Parks.

**XIV. ADJOURNMENT: 8:23pm, Chris Mertl motioned. Approved.**