

*Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee
Retreat Summary
March 15,1997*

Members Present: Dan King, Tim Kelly, Kay Gouyton, Nancy Waterman, Jim King

Members Absent: Tom Thornton, Ken Dean, Alex Lukshin, Paul Grossi

Staff Present: Therese Ambrosi Smith, Director; Dave Kiel, Parks and Landscape Superintendent; Edra Lewis, Clerk Typist

I. Announcements/Discussion

Therese Smith began the meeting at 9:17 a.m. by introducing Chris Myrtle, the landscape architect for the Smith property, the Butts property, and the Pt. Stephens property sites.

Mr. Myrtle had some opening announcements, which included Arbor Day activities. He suggested a community planting day at Twin Lakes. He also stated that \$1,500 has been allocated for the purchase of interpretive signage.

Mr. Myrtle mentioned the progress he and Dave Kiel are making on a potential Urban Forestry grant. Their proposal is for the full grant amount of \$15,000 to plant trees near and around the city's streets, a much needed beautification program. Their grant proposal is second (out of seven) to UAF's proposal to test mulch, which will only cost \$3,000.

Ms. Smith noted the Brotherhood Park area, and the Mendenhall River greenbelt area in general, is showing signs of rapid erosion. Mr. Kiel mentioned a staff member of his will be attending a workshop for bank stabilization in the near future. Ms. Smith stated that there may be some new alternatives soon, such as bio-engineered bank stabilization.

Ms. Smith stated that the Bike Planner recruitment is well under way. She also noted that the youths from the Skate Park Project turned in their grant proposal on Friday, March 14.

Mr. Kelly announced he would be leaving at 1:30 p.m.

Ms. Waterman suggested a closure of the retreat at 3:00 p.m.

II. Presentation

Mr. Myrtle began the presentation with background and instruction on how a design charette is done. He explained the participants are to get as many ideas on paper as quickly as possible, creating a rough draft design. The first step in the charette is to come up with common goals and objectives. Secondly, the group will program, brainstorming possible activities to take place in the park. Next, a site analysis is done to decide where the best places are for each activity. Finally, a functional diagram and then a conceptual diagram are created.

A. Goals

Develop a comprehensive recreation plan which will allow for the purchase of the Smith property.

B. Objectives

1. Short and long term recreational benefits
2. Allow for public, non-profit, and commercial use
3. Incorporate the Smith property into an existing surrounding area
4. Protect existing natural features

5. Provide access to the features of the property
6. Enhance water use/access
7. Compliment existing shelter areas with new areas for picnicking and open space
8. Define commercial zones
9. Protect and interpret historic values
10. Develop overnight facilities
11. Develop trail system to surrounding facilities
12. Develop ammenities to support use
13. Protect natural habitat
14. Develop ADA accessible facilities
15. Allow for unprogrammed open space use

C. Program

1. Mr. Myrtle asked for suggestions of activities for the Smith property and outlying park areas.

Ms. Smith suggested two informal playing fields in the open areas on the Smith property.

Mr. Kiel stated that the park should be for natural use, meaning that Parks and Recreation should not implement playing fields or horse trails. Ms. Waterman agreed with Mr. Kiel. They both suggested that trails, cabins and shelters would be the best ammenities at the park.

Ms. Smith noted that in order to save the 200 acres in the Amalga Harbor area from condominiums, certain features, such as informal playing fields, would perhaps entice the Assembly to acquire the land.

Mrs. King suggested using the land behind the fire station area for a playing field.

Mr. Kelly stated that there are not many fields in the parks and recreation system, and that more are needed. Ms. Smith agreed with him, and noted that the area she proposed for the fields on the Smith property could have a drainage system implemented if it is too wet.

Ms. Waterman suggested surveying the Smith property with a wetlands expert.

Ms. Gouyton stated that people will evolve the use of the park after we get them access to it. If a playing field is needed, then people will use the area for that purpose. Ms. Smith agreed and stated that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee needs to show the Assembly that the Smith property will be an asset for the future.

Jim King stated that the committee is not interested in acquiring the land for its own purposed, but rather for the use of the public.

Mr. Kelly asked about including SAGA (Southeast Alaska Guidance Association) in the programming of the park. Ms. Gouyton strongly objected to the idea, stating that SAGA has evoved and continues to evolve into more of a commercial business than non-profit.

Ms. Smith gave the background on SAGA=s involvement on the Smith property and with the Department of Parks and Recreation, noting that Mr. Smith is willing to sell the City and Borough his property at a discounted rate as long as SAGA is able to remain on the property. If the property is acquired, the city will also acquire the SAGA lodge, and SAGA will become a tenant.

Ms. Goutyon sees no incompatibility with SAGA=s current involvement on the property, but stated that fifty years from now they could be a corporation. Mr. Kiel stated that the criteria the Assembly will use in consideration of acquiring the property is for SAGA to remain on the Smith property.

The program ideas the group came up with are as follows:

picnicking	skiing	hiking	camping	kayaking
playing	fishing	photography	race track	celebrations
mooring	scuba diving	model airplanes	waterbikes	biking
tide pooling	fish rearing	astronomy	education	pick-up games
gardening	farming	harvesting	rock climbing	hunting
bird watching	ORVs	equestrian	ropes course	research
fish cleaning	kite flying	sunbathing	frisbee throwing	motor bikes
youth training	arboretum	meetings	retreats	day spa
jet skiing	canoeing	boat launching	dog mushing	dog training

2. The group then went back through the above list and analyzed the feasibility of each activity. Below is the revised list:

picnicking	skiing	hiking	camping	kayaking
fishing	photographing	celebrations	mooring	scuba diving
waterbikes	biking	tide pooling	astronomy	education
gardening	bird watching	equestrian	ropes course	research
kite flying	sunbathing	frisbee throwing	youth training	harvesting
arboretum	meetings	retreats	off-shore jet skiing	canoeing
non-motorized				
boat launching				

Mr. Kelly asked about the summer conditions of the open areas of the Smith property. Ms. Waterman stated that the ground is very wet and the grass is knee deep.

Mr. Kiel stated that the cost for implementing a five-foot wide gravel equestrian trail at the proposed park, would be at least \$1,000,000. He also mentioned that the impact on the land of horse use is similar to that of motorized vehicle use.

Ms. Smith suggested setting out particular commercial concessions for the park. She stated that specifically naming the concessions allowed at the park (such as equestrian, kayaks, mountain bikes, etc.) would limit the amount of commercial use at the park.

3. Mr. Myrtle directed the group into planning facilities for each activity at the park. In this exercise, the group was able to consolidate many of the amenities for multi-purpose use. They also categorized many activities as non-programmed.

PICNICKING

covered shelters
firings
toilets
tables/benches
running water
trash policies
parking
ADA accessible

HIKING

trail system
boardwalks
ADA
signs/directional &
interpretive
bridges

EDUCATION

outdoor environmental
classroom
arboretum
seating area
bus parking
interpretive historical trail
astronomy/telescope base
focal viewing point/platform
harvesting berries
bird watching
photography

CANOEING/KAYAKING

beach launch
primitive camp site
rental facilities
(see picnicking)

SKIING

toilets
signs
parking
shelter

SUNBATHING

non-programmed

BOAT MOORING

mooring buoy
trail
beach A parking@

MEETINGS/RETREATS

barn-type structure
lodge w/kitchenette
fireplace
utilities

CELEBRATIONS

large open shelter
fireplace

SCUBA

(see picnicking)
beach

KITE FLYING

underground utilities
open space

FISHING

bank stabilization
ADA
platforms
parking

MOUNTAIN BIKING

trail system
non-programmed

The group broke at 12:15 p.m. for lunch.

D. Functional Diagram

At 1:00 p.m. the group was divided into two, Dave Kiel, Nancy Waterman, and Dan King in one, and Therese Smith, Kay Gouyton, Jim King, and Edra Lewis in the other. Each came up with several possible designs for facilities and landscaping at the Smith property and outlying areas.

The most common facilities between the two groups were an ADA accessible platform/cabin on the waterfront, ADA accessible fishing platforms along Peterson Creek, a lodge and picnic areas.

E. Conceptual Diagram

The end of the presentation by Mr. Myrtle included a consolidation of ideas from the two groups. The groups combined ideas to come up with Phase I, II and III of the project, which Mr. Myrtle will draft.

III. Adjournment

Mr. Myrtle's presentation was concluded at 3:23 p.m.

