

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

**January 13, 2011
Wellington E. Webb Building**

Attendees:

James Allen
Jay April
Paul Burton
Noel Copeland
Mary Ewing
Glenn Fee
Michelle Fenton
Scott Gilmore
Yessica Holguin
Ellie Gray Horn
Florence Navarro
Richard Ott
Paul Ryan
Derek Sandos
Bernie Sharp
Darrell Watson

Absent:

Edward Done - excused
Keith Pryor - excused
Ryan Ross - excused

Denver Parks and Recreation Staff in attendance:

Scott Robson
Dody Erickson
Chantal Unfug

Introduction and Welcome – Darrell Watson

Darrell Watson called the DPRAB meeting to order.

The minutes for the December 9, 2010 DPRAB meeting were approved. Paul Ryan had one change to the minutes dealing with a public comment. Florence Navarro made the motion to approve the minutes with the change suggested by Paul Ryan and Mary Ewing seconded.

Darrell Watson covered changes in DPR due to the departure of Kevin Patterson to the State Capital to serve as Deputy Chief of Staff to Governor Hickenlooper. Scott Robson has been appointed to serve as Manager of DPR and Chantal Unfug has assumed the position of Deputy Manger of Parks within DPR.

Public Comment

The public in attendance asked that the audio be turned down.

Ray A. Ehrenstein read a statement from Diana Helper (attached). The statement posed a series of questions relating to stewardship arrangements and how they fit it to DPR goals and purposes.

Ray A. Ehrenstein asked since we have less than ½ the acreage of park that a comparable city such as Portland, OR, should we not be very careful not to lose any park acreage?

Included with the minutes is a copy of the questions posed to staff.

Managers Report – Scott Robson

Scott Robson encourages any DPRAB member that has questions or concerns to personally give him a call to have an open dialogue on the issue.

Admission Based Events – Fees and charges have passed council. DPR will be accepting applications starting January 21st, 2011. It is important to find the right events for the right place at the right time. DPR staff will be reporting periodically about the ABE Policy during the year and will present a complete report in October on how the ABE Policy is going. This will allow the DPRAB to make informed recommendations on how to move forward.

There were questions on the Big Air Event be held on January 25-26, 2011. The Big Air Event is not considered a ABE, a flat permit fee was paid to hold the event. Permit allowed for a two day event with multiple set-up days and multiple take down days.

Big Air Event in Civic Center will be Jan. 25 and Jan. 26th from 5-9pm each night. Civic Center Park will remain open to the public during the event and there will be a good viewing area, FREE to the public within the park to the sides of the ski jump. This area should accommodate roughly 2,000 people. The Big Air Event was scheduled to coincide with the International Ski Show being held at the Colorado Convention Center on January 26-27, 2011.

Outside the park there will be a paid ticket area on Bannock Street which is estimated to accommodate roughly 8,000 people (actually attendance in this area is expected to be less however). The Office of Cultural Affairs is in charge of the Big Air Event.

Civic Center Park update

Governor-elect John Hickenlooper purposefully walked from the Denver City and County Building through Civic Center Park to the State Capital to attend his inauguration.

A lot of work has been going on in Civic Center Park. Temporary fencing is being erected to start the Broadway Terrace improvements. This will include new concrete and brick to replace sidewalks and balustrades. Public Works is removing the right turn lane in the NE corner of Civic Center and returning that acreage back to park land.

DPRAB Recognitions – Ellie Gray Horn

The Executive Committee of the DPRAB wanted to take out a moment to recognize the time and effort put forth from citizen volunteers that have served on the DPRAB.

Mary Ewing has served on the DPRAB for the past 15 years. She represents District 10 and her last appointment to the Board was by Councilwoman Jeanne Robb. She has received numerous awards over the years for her tireless work to help preserve and protect Denver Parks. Her most recent acknowledgement came during the Capital Hill United Neighbors Annual Award Ceremony.

Florence Navarro has served the second longest term on the DPRAB at this time. She has served on the DPRAB for 14 years. She holds one of the five seats on the DPRAB that are appointed by the sitting Mayor. She is a very active and productive member of the DPRAB, most recently serving as the Co-Chair of the Recreation Center Task Force.

Scott Gilmore has served on the DPRAB for the past six years. He represents District 11 and was appointed by Councilman Michael Hancock. Recently he and his wife were recognized in Westword as icons of the NE Denver community of Denver because of their work educating youth about science and careers in natural resource field.

Board Retreat Wrap-up – Florence Navarro and Mary Ewing

During the November DPRAB meeting it was decided to create a Mission that embodied what the DPRAB does and attempts to accomplish. Board members Florence Navarro, Mary Ewing, Ed Done, and Derek Sandos convened a committee to draft a Mission statement. These Board members took information that was gathered at the November retreat and created a Mission for the DPRAB. This Mission captures and represents what the DPRAB offers to the Citizens of Denver and the Staff of Denver Parks and Recreation.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

Mission Statement

Revised: January 12, 2011

Support the values of sustainability, equity, engagement, and sound economics as detailed in the March 2003 Denver Parks and Recreation Game Plan.

Provide advice to the Denver Parks and Recreation Department, which encompasses the diverse views of representatives from all Council Districts, the Mayor's Office, the Park People, registered neighborhood organizations, local non-profits, and the Denver community at-large.

Position Denver's parks and recreation centers in ways that fulfill the present needs of Denver residents while respecting the past and planning for the future.

Noel encouraged the staff to visit the Game Plan document and either update the Game Plan or hold fast to the principles outlined in the Game Plan.

Dick Ott made a motion to accept the Mission Statement as presented. There was a friendly amendment proposed to add March 2003 to the Mission Statement to clarify when the Game Plan was adopted. Dick accepted the amendment. Paul Ryan seconded the motion to accept the Mission Statement. The Mission Statement was voted on and accepted.

It was noted that the members of the committee and the entire DPRAB is a very diverse group of individuals that represent very diverse points of views.

The DPRAB needs to keep this document in our thoughts when we make decisions. We need to refer back to this Mission Statement and utilize it and make sure it does not just sit on a shelf. Hopefully this document can help facilitate improved communication between everybody.

Public Art in the Parks – Kendall Peterson – Denver Office of Cultural Affairs (DOCA)

The Denver Office of Cultural Affairs (DOCA) manages the Public Art program that was started in 1988. The collection of art in Denver comprises a total of more than 300 new and historic works. DOCA Public Art Program helps create, maintain, and repair the pieces in the collection.

If a CIP is estimated at being \$1 million dollars including construction and design and can provide a finished space for the public art then the project qualifies for the Public Art Program. One percent of the total budget of the CIP is budgeted for a public art piece. In addition some of the art pieces in Denver are funded by donations. The only time that DOCA receives funding from DPR is when a CIP within DPR exceeds \$1 million dollars. The staff of DOCA is funded by the general fund.

If you are an artist, the city releases calls to artist to make/create art for the city. The city utilizes www.weststaff.com to solicit artist for specific projects.

The city also has an Urban Arts Fund which works with artist to create murals and other projects that deal with graffiti related issues.

DOCA is always looking for individuals and community members to serve on all art selection processes.

Triangle Park – Scott Robson – Manager DPR

Scott Robson reviewed the memo provided to the DPRAB covering the current and future planning related to Eddie Mestas and Sonny Lawson Parks. This memo was also provided to Councilwoman Montero and Councilwoman Madison (see attached). At the request and direction of Councilwoman Montero, Denver Parks and Recreation (DPR) was invited to meet with her office, Denver Police Department (DPD), the Denver Rescue Mission (DRM), The Samaritan House, the Ball Park Neighbors Association and later, members of the INC and Curtis Park Neighbors Association to discuss the safety of the citizens who use Eddie Mestas Park and other neighborhood impacts in the area. The main issues brought up are the five triangle parks that are created due to the angle that Broadway crosses Downtown Denver are Denver parks and will remain Denver parks. These parks are not available to lease, for sale, and are not closing. Due to the fact that DPR has to deal with unique issues to these parks (primarily Eddie Mestas), such as homelessness, drug use, and prostitution, a possible "Stewardship Agreement" is being explored with the Denver Rescue Mission. This Stewardship Agreement would be similar in many ways past and current agreement DPR has made with other non-profits such as the Civic Center Conservancy who provides additional programming and maintenance within Civic Center Park.

Along with this process concerned property owners and community members, particularly in the Ball Park Neighborhood have initiated the concept of creating a non-taxing Metro District. This Metro District could assist in securing grant funds and solicit private donations to help fund

unidentified improvements needed in the surrounding neighborhood and Eddie Mestas in particular.

There will be three community meeting held during January to solicit public input to these developments.

Glenn Fee wanted to applaud DPR for working in a positive matter to deal with the issue of homelessness. He also stated that he could never support turning park space over to any outside organization.

Dick Ott questioned what authority does this non-taxing metro district have? Scott Robson clarified that the Metro District will have no authority. The will be a quasi-governmental organization that will be able to apply for outside funding. The City of Denver has final say on anything that happens within the park. Scott Robson stated that these discussions will be on-going through the winter.

Mary Ewing was wondering what Keith Pryor's thoughts were on this issue. Keith did not feel the process was transparent. There are representatives from the Curtis Park Neighborhood and the INC participating in this working group. Councilwoman Carla Madison is supportive of the process.

Mary also was wondering if there was daily trash collection and on-going maintenance in Eddie Mestas. Scott Robson stated not only is there regular trash collection and maintenance but the City has to contract out services to have the sidewalks in Eddie Mestas power washed on a regular basis.

Recreation Division Update for 2011 – Dody Erickson – Deputy Manger DPR

Dody Erickson gave a brief update on ongoing activities that are happening g within the Recreation Department of DPR. A main driving force behind changes within the Recreation Department is the recommendations of the 2009 Recreation Center Task Force. She distributed the recommendations to the DPRAB.

The Recreation Department rhas fostered successful relationships with operating partners and programming partners. Three Recreation Centers are being operated by partners with DPR. These partners are the Colorado Miners, StreetKidz, and the Denver Inner City Parrish. Programming partners include Silver Sneakers, YMCA, TreVista, Denver Quality Afterschool Connection, and Summer Scholars. The DPR Natural Areas Program, Wildlife Ecologist, City naturalist, and the Outdoor Recreation program combine efforts to provide outdoor education and recreation.

Additional Comments

Glenn Fee invited all DPRAB members and community to the first Mayoral Debate on January 26th at 5:30. The Debate is being sponsored by the Park People and is being held at the Denver Botanic Gardens.

The DPRAB would like to acknowledge Kevin Patterson for his 17 years of public service to City of Denver including 2 ½ years as Manager of the Denver Parks and Recreation Department. Thank you Kevin Patterson for you dedication and professionalism in your service to the City of Denver.

Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting:

When: February 10, 2011

Time: 5:30pm – 7:30pm

**Where: Wellington Webb Building
201 West Colfax
Conference Room 4G2**

Enter: Security Entrance on Court Street and 15th Street



DENVER
THE MILE HIGH CITY

Denver Parks and Recreation
Manager's Office

201 W. Colfax Ave. Dept 601
Denver, CO 80211
p: 720.913.0741
f: 720.913.0784

www.denvergov.org/parksandrecreation

MEMORANDUM

TO: DENVER PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
FROM: SCOTT ROBSON, MANAGER
SUBJECT: CURRENT AND FUTURE PLANNING RELATED TO EDDIE MESTAS
AND SONNY LAWSON PARKS
DATE: JANUARY 12, 2011
CC: COUNCILWOMAN MONTERO, COUNCILWOMAN MADISON

At the request and direction of Councilwoman Montero as early as 2009, Denver Parks and Recreation (DPR) was invited to meet with her office, Denver Police Department (DPD), the Denver Rescue Mission (DRM), The Samaritan House, the Ball Park Neighbors Association and later, members of the INC and Curtis Park Neighbors Association to discuss the safety of the citizens who use Eddie Mestas Park and other neighborhood impacts in the area. The intent of these stakeholder meetings was to identify the cause of negative issues being experienced in the Broadway corridor and brainstorm solutions to those problems.

After several meetings over the past year, concerned property owners and neighbors, particularly in the Ball Park Neighborhood, initiated the concept of a non-taxing Metro District which could be developed as a way to secure grant funds and private donations to help fund future potential unidentified improvements needed in the surrounding neighborhood and Eddie Mestas Park in particular. In December, 2010, City Council approved formation of the Metro District, or "Coordinating District". Although not initiated by DPR, the Department has remained supportive of the effort as a way to help leverage outside funding for future parks improvements. Although a future non-taxing Metro District in this area could generate much needed funding for parks, no specific future improvements to parks have yet been identified, and any improvements by the Metro District or neighborhood must first be approved by the Parks and Recreation Department and other City departments through a public planning process.

Parallel to this process, consensus was reached with the Triangle Park stakeholders group, to move forward on the concept of a draft "Stewardship Agreement" between DPR and The Denver Rescue Mission. The idea of such an agreement is to allow the Denver Rescue Mission to provide outreach services within the boundaries of Eddie Mestas Park and provide staffing within the park during operating hours. This Stewardship Agreement would be similar in many ways to past agreements DPR has made with other non-profit partners such as the Civic Center Conservancy who provides programming and maintenance services within Civic Center Park. The focus of Denver Rescue Mission within the park would be to increase education and outreach efforts, particularly to our homeless community, and to improve safety for those within the park. An additional benefit of a Stewardship Agreement with Denver Rescue Mission, would be to allow the non-profit staff to provide an added level of maintenance, security and safety for this triangle park, above and beyond what Denver Parks and Recreation can currently provide. It should be clear that Denver Parks and Recreation is not proposing the lease or sale of this parcel of land to Denver Rescue Mission or any other agency.



Although many issues related to safety and social issues must be quickly addressed at Eddie Mestas Park in particular, DPR also understands that there are a number of issues that should also be addressed at Sonny Lawson Park. Therefore, DPR and several City departments have begun discussions with Councilwoman Madison and neighbors of Sonny Lawson Park in an effort to identify difficult issues and propose solutions, which may include physical changes to the park. DPR believes that, much like we have seen occur recently around the Triangle Parks, development of new positive partnerships may also be forged to address the concerns and issues related to Sonny Lawson Park. .

Moving forward, DPR will continue to work with Councilwomen Montero and Madison, other city agencies and stakeholders surrounding both Eddie Mestas and Sonny Lawson parks to help identify comprehensive, long term solutions within the scope of our ability. Integral to identifying solutions will be the Arapahoe Square planning process which begins in earnest on January 18th. As part of the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Plan, the City of Denver's Department of Community Planning and Development and the Downtown Denver Partnership will be sponsoring a "charrette" (a multi-day collaborative design and planning workshop) for the Arapahoe Square area. A significant opportunity exists for the public to propose short and long-term improvements to parks, residential neighborhoods, and business districts within the Arapahoe Square planning process which will be held January 18th through the 21st. Your attendance at public meetings throughout the week will be crucial to the success of the charrette process.

Please mark your calendars with the following public meeting dates:

- **Tuesday, January 18th 6:00pm-8:30pm-** Public Meeting at Solera (1956 Lawrence Street)
- **Wednesday, January 19th 5:00pm-7:00pm-** Public Open House at AECOM (717 17th Street, 27th Floor)
- **Friday, January 21st 3:00pm-5:00pm-** Public Meeting at Solera (1956 Lawrence Street)

You can learn more about the Arapahoe Square charrette and view a base map of the area by visiting www.denvergov.org/ascharrette. For more information on the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Plan, please visit www.denvergov.org/northeastdowntown. If you have additional questions, you can reach me at courtland.hyser@denvergov.org or 720-865-2924.

After the Arapahoe Square charrette process is complete, DPR and other City agencies look forward to building on this planning effort by working with neighbors of our parks to design and implement specific improvements that will improve the safety for all park users while enhancing the aesthetics and enjoyment of these City properties.

Larry and Katie,

Please be sure to thank Scott and Angela for this information. We should remind them that one concern to address is the precedent that may be set. Is this Stewardship arrangement a process described in the DPR goals and purposes (or elsewhere)? Is there a written process for handling public city parks which have become unusable by the public, because DPR cannot manage them? Is there not a requirement that such acreage be replaced in that neighborhood by public park land which is usable by the public? Is there a requirement for shelters to provide, on their own, needed areas for their clients? Regarding Civic Center, this Stewardship arrangement does not appear to impede public use of that park. Will the public be welcome to use the now-unusable triangle parks at any time, if they are made usable by the Steward?

Perhaps these matters will be addressed at PRAB tonight. I'm sorry I can't get there, but urge those who attend to ask for further information.

Diana Helper

Plus my own questions:

Considering that Denver has less than 1/2 the parks space of a comparably sized Portland, Oregon, shouldn't we be careful not to lose park area? and when we must, should not compensating acreage be given?

Ray A. Ehrenstein
Overland Park N.A.
Secretary INC